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WITH

NOTES, REFERENCES AND PRACTICAL

OBSERVATIONS.

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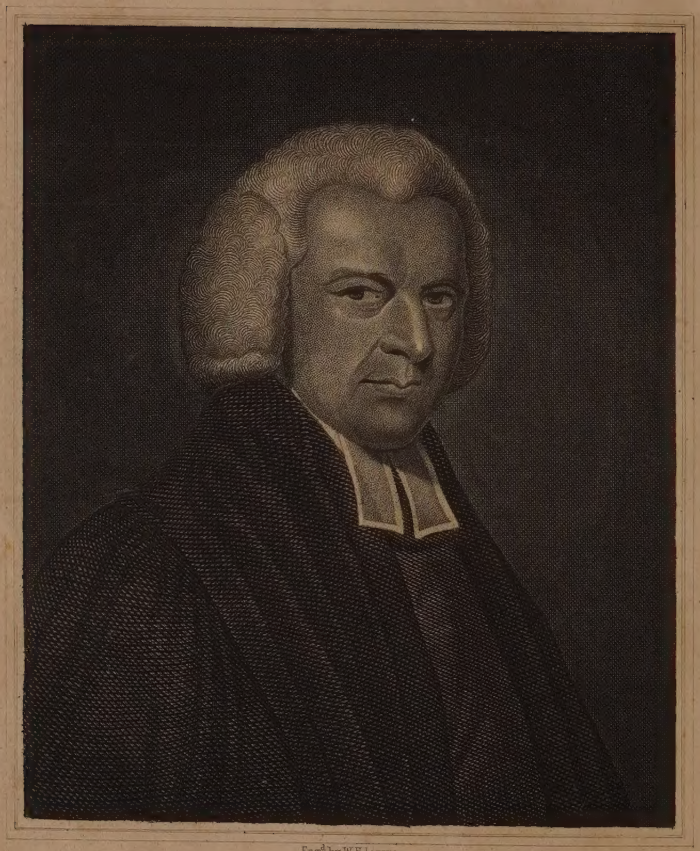

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REVp THOMAS HAWEIS, L.L.B. & M.D.

Rector of Aldwinkle, Northamptonshire, and Chaplain to the late Countess of Huntingdon

Published by Archd Fullarton & Co Glasgow

THE EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;

OR,

A COMMENTARY

ON THE

NEW TESTAMENT,

WHEREIN THE

SACRED TEXT IS EXPLAINED AND ELUCIDATED;

WITH

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS,

FOR THE USE OF FAMILIES AND PRIVATE CHRISTIANS.

BY THE REV. THOMAS HAWEIS, LL.B. M.D.
LATE RECTOR OF ALDWINKLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

MARGINAL REFERENCES AND READINGS,

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN BROWN OF HADDINGTON.

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PREFACE.

AS it is the professed belief of every Christian that the Scriptures alone contain the way of salvation, it is therefore their greatest interest as well as duty, to consult those sacred oracles, and diligently inquiring after the mind and will of God therein revealed, to follow with simplicity and sincerity the path marked out to them in this sure guide to heaven. To be a believer upon trust, or a Christian by education, is only to abuse the name, without a real possession of the thing. We must go then to the word and to the testimony, that on the foundation of scriptural knowledge we may raise the glorious superstructure of real Christianity, and be enabled, not merely to have a good hope through grace, in ourselves, but be able also to give to others a reason of the hope that is in us.

Though the sacred text attentively read, with a heart directed to him who *giveth wisdom and understanding to the simple*, will generally afford the best comment on itself, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual; yet, it will conduce not a little to enlarge our views, and to warm our hearts, if we borrow the assistances which the wise and faithful Expositors have given us, either to elucidate the more difficult passages, or to apply the more obvious to the conscience, or to spiritualize the ceremonies, or to enliven the parts purely historical, with observations practical, and naturally arising from the subject.

This exposition goes forth with this professed design, and is commended to the blessing of the Divine Spirit, who alone can make our feeble efforts effectual to the end proposed. The author has been indebted to several Expositors who have gone before, but owns his greatest obligations to Mr Henry, whose excellent Exposition hath received sufficient commendation in the many editions it hath passed. But as the length and expensiveness of so large a work prevents its usefulness to many, who can neither afford the time nor expense it requires, so manifold repetitions and explications, perhaps sometimes unnecessary or tedious, render it less acceptable to others. The following work, therefore, will be included in a compass much more convenient; and, whilst it is attempted to remove all superfluous enlargements, it is hoped, that Mr Henry's spirituality will be preserved, with what additional improvement, either in matter or manner, the reader must determine.

I desire to look up to God for help and assistance in this important work which was undertaken in the country, where a small charge afforded me more than usual leisure: and if, by the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit, it shall be made useful to the churches of Christ, I shall count my labour not in vain, and give God the praise; as I have reason to be thankful to Him, who hath blessed it, in any communications of farther knowledge or edification to my own soul.

THOMAS HAWEIS.

ALDWINCKLE,
June 28th, 1765.

Testimonials in favour of this Work.

Copy of a Letter from the Rev. Mr Venn, of Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, to the Publishers.

I have received the sheets of Mr Haweis's Evangelical Expositor. I heartily approve of his design, to make the blessed Word of God more read, and more understood. The *great Masters in Israel*, of whose Comments he intends to make much use, must render his Work valuable; and whoever knows his spirited manner of writing, and truly evangelical principles, (as he has published them to the world in his Volume of Sermons), and has a zeal for the advancement of the Redeemer's glory, will be glad to recommend, to serious Christians of all denominations, Mr Haweis's Exposition.

Huddersfield,
April 23, 1765.

Copy of a Letter from the Honourable and Reverend Mr Shirley, *Rector of Loughrea, in Ireland, to the Author.*

I had the pleasure of your Letter, and the very great pleasure of some sheets of your Exposition. I was really charmed with it; and if you conceive that my name will be of any service in the recommendation of it, I think I owe this not only to you, but to the public.

WALTER SHIRLEY.

April 13*th*, 1765.

Copy of a Letter from the Rev. Mr Townsend, *Rector of Pewsy, in Wiltshire, to the Publishers.*

I have read the sheets of Mr Haweis's Evangelical Expositor, which you sent me, and think the Work fully answers the Title. It appears to me to be far beyond any Expositor I have seen; more spirited, and fully as experimental. I can with pleasure recommend to others, a Book, from which I expect so much pleasure and edification myself.

JOSEPH TOWNSEND.

Pewsy,
April 22*d*, 1765.

Copy of a Letter from the Rev. Mr Newton, *of Olney, in Bucks, to the Publishers.*

I have perused the Sheets you sent me of the Evangelical Expositor. The design has my hearty approbation: I hope and believe it will conduce to the great end of advancing the Redeemer's glory, and the knowledge of his word and grace amongst us. So far as my influence will reach, I shall most cordially recommend it to serious Christians of every denomination.

JOHN NEWTON.

Olney,
April 16*th*, 1765.

PREFACE.

THE sum and substance of all the Scriptures is Jesus Christ. Him we have seen as the great object of faith and hope proposed in the Old Testament, and the great subject of all the foregoing prophecies. In the New, we behold him in the fulness of time appearing, accomplishing all the things written concerning himself, putting a period to the former shadowy and typical dispensation, and establishing that church which is to endure to the end of time.

Between these inspired writings, certain books are often inserted in our Bibles, called *apocryphal*, or *hidden;* books not only destitute of Divine authority, but of any authority; and which, with holy indignation, a gracious spirit grieves to behold intruded between the sacred volumes of God's word, and stamped with a kind of reverence by their situation there, though some of them are evidently infamous forgeries. Not one of them but contains evident falsehoods; and many of the stories are as absurd, ridiculous, false, and fabulous as any of the most lying romances, or heathen mythologies. It is to be lamented as one of the things our pious reformers left unfinished, that these unhallowed books should still remain in our calendar, as first lessons for near two months of the year; among which, not to mention the ridiculously absurd and lying stories of Bel and the Dragon, or Susannah and the Elders, even in the best of them, the Book of Wisdom, and the Ecclesiasticus, besides a multitude of palpable falsehoods, there are advanced many wicked and false doctrines, which a Christian cannot but regard with abhorrence; and which to hear read in the house of God, sounds still more shocking. As in the Book of Wisdom, chap. iii. 13—18. where the marriage-bed is condemned as sinful, and bastards excluded from salvation. Chap. xxv. the Divine Logos is spoken of as a vapour. Chap. viii. 20. the transmigration of souls into good or bad bodies, according to their deserts, is intimated, with other follies and falsities too many to be recapitulated. And in the Book of Ecclesiasticus the Divine Logos is said to be *created*, according to the Arian heresy, chap. xxiv. 9. Honouring parents and giving alms are said to make atonement for sin, chap. iii. 3—30. And chap. xii. 4, 5. the writer dissuades from helping sinners, or charitably relieving the ungodly; doctrines diametrically opposite to the most glorious truths of God's word; besides a number of other mistakes and untruths; which justly should expunge them from a place between the two sacred volumes, and consign them at least to the shelf, among other legends of antiquity, or the ethics of heathenism. Nor need any minister of our church count himself at all bound to the use of them, because they stand in the calendar; nor should there be any objection to the Liturgy in general, since by the preface to the Homilies we are enjoined to consider the first lessons to be read, and to change them for any other out of the New Testament which we shall judge more to edification, with a commendation on such diligence.

The book now before us, called the New Testament, contains,

1. *The four Gospels ;* in which we have an account of the appearing of the Messiah's harbinger, John the Baptist, with the promise of which, the Old Testament closed. And shortly after Christ himself is manifested in the flesh ; the history of whose life, from his miraculous conception to his death upon the cross, is contained in these four volumes: a multitude of his miracles are recorded; the sermons he preached; the doctrines he maintained; the persecutions he endured; and the fulfilment of all the prophecies concerning his incarnation, descent, the place of his nativity, the nature of his office, &c. Finally, after seeing the Saviour dying upon a cross, and laid in his grave, we are told of his glorious resurrection, confirmed by incontestable evidence, and his ascension to the right hand of God, whereby he completed the glorious work he had undertaken, and obtained eternal redemption for us.

2. *The Acts of the Apostles.* The book opens with an account of the ascension of our Lord, and the qualifications he shortly after bestowed on the apostles, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, to fulfil the commission he had before given them, to preach the gospel to every creature: in consequence of which, we are informed, they went forth spreading the gospel, working miracles, suffering a variety of persecutions, yet seeing the success of their labours in every place; forming churches not only in Judea, but more abundantly in the Gentile world, the wall of partition being now broken down: and especially we have an account of the labours of Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, witnessing to small and great the glorious truths he once persecuted, and now as zealously espoused, even to prison and to death.

3. *The Epistles ;* occasioned, many of them, by disputes which early arose in the Christian church, and thereby occasioned the great and distinguishing doctrines of Christianity to be more distinctly, explicitly, and fully committed to writing ; and the various duties thence depending, personal or relative, to God or man, to be urged upon the faithful from right principles, and from those strongest motives which the truths of Christianity furnished. Such good hath accrued to us from the unhappy divisions which we lament whilst we read some of the epistles.

4. *The Revelation of St John ;* which closes the canon of Scripture, and is prophetical of those great events which should happen in the world, and particularly as they respect the church of Christ to the end of time ; wherein are many things dark indeed and hard to be understood, the fulfilment of which will be the surest key to the events predicted ; and till then, our search after the meaning of them should be attended with humble diffidence and reverential awe, praying that God *would accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten his kingdom,* when all that is now mysterious will be unfolded.

THE

EVANGELICAL EXPOSITOR;

OR, A

PRACTICAL COMMENT UPON THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

ST MATTHEW.

Introduction.

WE have now before us, 1. *The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,* so this second part of the Holy Bible is entitled; *The New Covenant,* so it might as well be rendered; the word signifies both; but when it is (as here) spoken of as Christ's act and deed, it is most properly rendered a Testament, for he is the Testator, and it becomes of force *by his death,* Heb. iv. 16, 17; nor is there, as in covenants, a previous treaty between the parties; but what is granted is owing to the will, the free will, the good will of the Testator Jesus Christ. This is called a New Testament, to distinguish it from that which was given by Moses, and was now antiquated, and to signify that it should be always new, and should never wax old, and grow out of date.

2. We have before us *the four gospels:* Gospel signifies good news or glad tidings; and this history of Christ's coming *into the world to save sinners,* is, without doubt, the best news that ever came from heaven to earth; the angel gave it this title, Luke ii. 10. Ευαγγελιζομαι ὑμιν, *I bring you good tidings;* I bring the gospel to you. And the prophet foretold it, Isa. lii. 7. lxi. 1. where it is said, that in the days of the Messiah *good tidings* should be preached. Gospel is an old Saxon word; it is God's spell or word. The whole New Testament is the Gospel; St Paul calls it his gospel, because he was one of the preachers of it. O that we may each of us make it ours, by our cordial acceptance of it and subjection to it! But the four books which contain the history of the Redeemer, we commonly call the four gospels, and the inspired penmen of them the evangelists; not *exclusively,* for all the preachers of the gospel are evangelists, but *by way of eminence.*

3. We have before us *The gospel according to St Matthew.* The penman was by birth a Jew, by calling a publican, till Christ commanded his attendance, and then he left the *receipt of custom* to follow him, and was one of those that accompanied him *all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was taken up,* Acts i. 21, 22. and was therefore a competent witness of what he has here recorded. He is said to have written this history about eight years after Christ's ascension. Many of the ancients say he wrote it in the Hebrew or Syriac language, but the tradition is sufficiently disproved by Dr Whitby; doubtless it was written in Greek, as the other parts of the New Testament were; not in that language which was peculiar to the Jews, whose church and state were near a period, but that which was common to the world, and in which the knowledge of Christ would be most effectually transmitted to the nations of the earth; yet it is probable there might be an edition of it in Hebrew, published by St Matthew himself, at the same time that he wrote it in Greek; the former for the Jews, the latter for the Gentiles, when he left Judea to go and preach among the Gentiles. Let us bless God that we have it, and have it in a language we understand.

CHAP. I.

This Evangelist begins with the account of Christ's parentage and birth, his ancestors from whom he descended, and the manner of his entry into the world, to make it appear that he was indeed the Messiah promised; for it was foretold that he should be the Son of David, *and should be* born of a virgin; *and that he was so is here plainly shown; for here is,* 1. *His pedigree from Abraham, in forty-two generations, three fourteens,* ver. 1—17. 2. *An account of the circumstances of his birth, so far as was requisite to show that he was* born of a virgin, ver. 18—25.

1. THE [a] book of the generation of Jesus Christ, [b] the son of David, [c] the son of Abraham. 2. [d] Abraham begat Isaac; and [e] Isaac begat Jacob; and [f] Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; 3. And [g] Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and [h] Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; 4. And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat [i] Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; 5. And Salmon begat Booz of [k] Rachab; and [l] Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; 6. And [m] Jesse begat David the king; and [n] David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias; 7. And [o] Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; 8. And [p] Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; 9. And [q] Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; 10. And [r] Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; 11. And * Josias begat [s] Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: 12. And after they were brought to Babylon, [t] Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; 13. And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; 14. And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; 15. And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; 16. And Jacob begat [u] Joseph the husband of Mary, of [x] whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. 17. So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

a Luke 3. 23—38. with Gen. 5. 1. & 10. 1. & 6. 9. & 2. 4. & 11. 10, 27. & 25. 12. & 36. 1, 9. Num. 1. 20. Ruth. 4. 18.
b 2 Sam. 7. 12—14. Ps. 132. 11. Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. & 33. 15. ch. 22. 42. Luke 1. 31, 32. Acts 13. 23. Rom. 1. 3.
c Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 28. 14. Luke 3. 23—34. Gal. 3. 16.
d Gen. 21. 3. Acts 7. 8. Heb. 11. 11, 12, 17. Luke 3. 34. Josh. 24. 3.
e Gen. 25. 26. Josh. 24. 4.
f Gen. 29. 35. Acts 7. 8. Gen. xxix, xxx, xlvi. Exod. 1. 1—4. 1 Chr. 2. 1, 2.
g Gen. 38. 27. 1 Chr. 2. 4.
h Ruth 4. 18—22. 1 Chr. 2. 5, 9—15. Luke 3. 31—33.
i Num. 1. 7. & 10. 14.
k Josh. 2. & 6. 22—25. Heb. 11. 31. Jam. 2. 25.
l Ruth ii—iv. 1 Chr. 2. 11, 12.
m 1 Sam. 16. 1. & 17. 12. 1 Chr. 2. 15.
n 2 Sam. 12. 24. 1 Chr. 3. 5. & 14. 4.
o 1 Chr. 3. 10—17. 1 Kin. 11. 43. & 14. 31. & 15. 8. 2 Chr. 9. 31. & 12. 16. & 14. 1.
p 1 Kin. 15. 24. 2 Kin. 8. 16. & 14. 21. 2 Chr. 17. 1. & 21. 1. & 26. 1.
q 2 Kin. 15. 7, 38. & 16. 20. 2 Chr. 26. 23. & 27. 29. & 28. 27.
r 2 Kin. 20. 21. & 21. 18, 26. 1 Chr. 3. 13, 14. 2 Chr. 32. 33. & 33. 20, 25.
* Some read, *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jechonias.*
s Or Jehoiakim. 1 Chr. 3. 15, 16. 2 Kin. 23. 30, 34. & 24. 17. 2 Chr. 36. 1, 4, 10.
t 2 Kin. 24. 12. & 25. 27. 1 Chr. 3. 17, 19. Hag. 1. 1, 12. & 2. 2, 23. Ezra 3. 2. & 5. 2. Neh. 7. 7. & 12. 1. Luke 3. 27.
u Ver. 18, 19. Luke 1. 27. & 2. 4, 5, 43.
x Ver. 18, 20, 25. Luke 1. 35. & 2. 7. Mark 6. 3. Is. 7. 14. & 11. 1. & 53. 2. & 9. 6. Mic. 5. 2. Jer. 31. 22. Rom. 1. 3. & 9. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 16. John 1. 14. Gen. 3. 15.

Verses 1—17. As the Old Testament opened with the generation of the heaven and the earth, the New begins with the generation of Him who, in the fulness of time, became incarnate for man's redemption from the curse he had brought upon himself, and under which the whole creation groaned. We have here his genealogy from authentic records, to prove the accomplishment of the prophecies which went before concerning him, as sprung, according to the flesh, from David and Abraham, Gen. xiii. 3. 2 Sam. vii. 12. for which purpose these genealogical tables are produced, abundantly sufficient for the conviction of those in that day, that Jesus was descended from these patriarchs, whatever cavils have since been raised, or difficulties started against them.

In this genealogy we may observe, (1.) That the line of descent is not always through the first-born, but in many, as Abraham, Jacob, Judah, David, &c. from the younger sons. (2.) That of the four women mentioned, we have two Gentiles and two adulteresses, who would seem to add no honour to their descendants: but herein we have an intimation, that Christ's salvation was not designed to be confined to the Jewish people, but to be extended to the Gentiles also; and that the most guilty need not despair, when they see that our Lord, in taking *the likeness of sinful flesh*, humbles himself to derive his descent from such as these. (3.) In the genealogy there are several persons passed over; for what reason it is difficult, and of little import to resolve; and the lineal descendant, though at the distance of three generations, is said to be the son of his remote ancestor, as in the case of Ozias, ver. 8. and some suppose of Jesse also. (4.) The generations are divided into three fourteens; not that there were no more persons really in the descent, but that the Evangelist thought fit to mention no more. In the first, we see the family of David rising to the throne; in the second, a race of kings descended from him; in the last, the royal family declines even to a poor carpenter; so fading is this world's greatness. Yet then, when to human view all prospect of the kingdom's being restored to David's house seemed desperate, Jesus arose to sit on his father's throne, Luke i. 32; when God promises we never need despair. (5.) Jesus is called *Christ*, ver. 16. or *Messiah*, the Anointed One, uniting in his person the threefold offices, to which men were anointed under the law, of prophet, priest, and king; and all his followers are called *Christians*; an honourable title, and most applicable to those who have indeed received *an unction from the Holy One*, and are consecrated to God *as kings and priests*, to reign at last with their exalted Head.

Year of the World 4000.

18. ¶ Now the [y] birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was † espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child [z] of the Holy Ghost. 19. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her [a] a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20. But while he thought on these things, behold, [b] the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is ‡ conceived in her [c] is of the Holy Ghost. 21. [d] And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his

y Luke 1. 27.
† It was usual for some space to intervene, generally a year or six months, between the espousals and the nuptials. Deut. 20. 7. — *Beausobre.*
z Luke 1. 35. Jer. 31. 22. Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 10. 5.
a Deut. 24. 1. & 22. 21—25.
b Luke 1. 10, 26. ch. 2. 13. & 4. 11.
‡ Gr. *begotten.*
c Ver. 18. Luke 1. 35. Heb. 10. 5 Jer. 31. 22.
d Luke 1. 31. & 2. 7, 21. Gen. 3. 15. Is. 7. 14.

name JESUS: [c] for he shall save his people from their sins. 22. Now all this was done, that [f] it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23. [g] Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and [h] they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, [i] God with us. 24. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, [k] did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25. And knew her not till [l] she had brought forth her first-born son: and he called his name JESUS.

c Gen. 22. 18. & 49. 10. Ps. 72. 17. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Dan. 9. 24. Hos. 1. 7. Acts 4. 12. & 5. 31. & 13. 23, 32, 38. Tit. 2. 14. Heb. 7. 25. 1 John 3. 5, 8. Rev. 1. 5, 6. 1 Pet. 1. 19.

f Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Is. 44. 26. 1 Thes. 5. 24. Tit. 1. 1, 2. Heb. 6. 18.

g Is. 7. 14. Gen. 3. 15. Jer. 31. 22.

h Or *his name shall be called.* Acts 26. 19.

i John 1. 14. Rom. 1. 3, 4. & 9. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Is. 9. 6.

k Deut. 12. 32. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Acts 26. 19.

l Ver. 21. Luke 1. 7, 21. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Heb. 7. 25.

Verses 18—25. The account of the birth of Jesus follows his genealogy. And we have here,

1. His miraculous conception, ver. 18. His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph; but before the marriage was consummated she was found with child, through the wondrous operation of the Holy Ghost, who formed Christ's human nature, that it might be pure from every spot of that corruption that naturally descends with his being to every son of Adam; and that he might thus be a Lamb without blemish, fit for God's altar.

2. Joseph's prudent resolve, ver. 19. Probably Mary herself communicated to him the circumstances of her case; and though a thousand suggestions might rise up to question her veracity, and to take her to his bed in such a situation, he could not think of, being *a just man;* yet was he unwilling withal *to make her a public example*, and to have her punished with death, as an adulteress: her artless story and unaffected simplicity, though strange the relation, might well have caused him to hesitate; and where the shadow of a doubt remains, a just man will ever lean to the side of mercy and charity; therefore he resolved *to put her away privily*, as little as possible to wound her character, whilst duty bids him preserve his own. *Note*, (1.) Though apparently the greatest injuries may be done us, it is wise to suppress rash anger, and deliberate before we punish. (2.) In very dark cases, where any circumstances appear that will admit of a favourable interpretation, charity, which thinketh no evil, will gladly entertain them.

3. The Lord relieves Joseph from his perplexity: while he deliberates what was fit to be done for God's glory and his own peace, in Mary's case, the angel of the Lord in a dream directs him how to act. For when we are in doubt, yet in simplicity desire to know and follow God's will, we shall be directed, if not by an angel, or a dream, yet by some word of God, or intimation of providence. Joseph is now diverted from his purpose, and bid, without hesitation, take to him his wife, since her conception is not the fruit of adultery, but of the Holy Ghost; and the angel calls him *Joseph, thou son of David*, to lead his thoughts from this extraordinary circumstance to the Messiah, who should descend from him: assuring him withal, that this child now conceived is designed to be the very person, as the name given him imports; he shall be called *Jesus*, or the Saviour; this being the great end of his appearing; to *save his people from their sins*, from the punishment and the power of them. *Note*, They to whom Jesus is a Saviour, are hereby distinguished; they are saved not only from guilt, but from corruption; every one who nameth the name of Christ, must depart from iniquity, or they are none of his; yet from him alone it cometh that they are enabled so to do.

4. The accomplishment of the Scriptures herein is observed by the Evangelist. The prophecy of Isaiah, chap. vii. 14. had foretold, *a virgin should conceive, and bring forth a son, and his name be called Immanuel*, which was now fulfilled, Mary being that virgin, and God himself become incarnate in her womb; and thus uniting in his own person the two natures, the divine and human, Jesus was enabled to execute the office of a Saviour, having a body to offer for the sins of men, and infinite value to enhance the sacrifice, arising from the dignity of his person, by which means God became reconciled to us, and we, who were far off, were brought nigh unto God. How mysterious this union! Let us wonder, love, and adore!

5. Joseph no sooner awaked than he obeyed the heavenly vision, which carried undoubted evidence to his mind of its original, and publicly celebrated his marriage, though he knew not Mary as a wife; at least not till after the birth of Jesus: whether afterwards he did or no is not said, and immaterial for us to know; this holy abstinence of Joseph was sufficient to show the child Jesus was the virgin's son, and in obedience to the angel's command, he called his name Jesus. *Note*, (1.) When God commands, we must obey without hesitation. (2.) Since Jesus is now come into the world, we are called upon to accept of his salvation; for if we neglect or despise it, *how shall we escape?*

CHAP. II.—YEAR OF THE WORLD, 4000.

In this chapter we have the history of our Saviour's infancy, where we find, 1. *The wise men's solicitous inquiry after Christ,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Their devout attendance on him, when they found out where he was,* ver. 9—12. 3. *Christ's flight into Egypt to avoid the cruelty of Herod,* ver. 13—18. 4. *Christ's return out of Egypt into the land of Israel again,* ver. 19—23.

1. NOW, when [a] Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the King, [b] behold, there came wise men from [c] the east to Jerusalem, 2. Saying, Where is he that is [d] born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. 3. ¶ When Herod the king had heard *these things*, [e] he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4. And when he had gathered all [f] the chief priests and [g] scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6. [h] And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a [i] Governor, that shall [k] rule my people Israel. 7. Then Herod, when he had [l] privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, [m] Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that [n] I may come and worship him also.

Year of the world 4000, and 4th before our common account called *Anno Domini*, or *year of our Lord.*

a Mic. 5. 2. Luke 2. 4—7. ch. 1. 25. Gen. 49. 10. Dan. 9. 24—26. Hag. 2. 7, 9. Mal. 3. 7, 14.

b Gen. 22. 18. & 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 60. 3. Zech. 8. 23.

c Gen. 25. 6, 18. Job 1. 3. Judg. 6. 3. 1 Kin. 4. 30.

d Is. 9. 6, 7. & 52. 13. Num. 24. 17. Is. 60. 3.

e Ps. 2. 1—6. Acts 4. 27, 28. John 15. 18. ch. 8. 29.

f Heads of the 24 courses. 1 Chr. 24. 4—18. 2 Chr 36. 14.

g Ezra 7. 11, 12. 1 Chr. 24. 6. 2 Chr. 34. 13. ch. 7. 29. & 13. 52. Jer. 8. 8.

h Mic. 5. 2. John 7. 42.

i Ps. 9. 6, 7. Ps. 2. 6. Col. 1. 18. Eph. 1. 22.

k Or *feed.* Is. 40. 11. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. & 37. 24.

l Gen. 3. 1. Exod. 1. 10. Ps. 10. 8, 9. & 12. 2. & 40. 14. & 45. 21. & 64. 4.

m Job 5. 12. 1 Kin. 19. 2. Is. 59. 13—15.

n 2 Sam. 15. 7 1 Kin. 21. 9. Tit. 1. 16. Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. ch. 46. 48, 49. ver. 16.

Verses 1—8. Though the birth of Jesus, the King of kings, was ushered into the world with none of those rejoicings that

usually attend the nativity of the princes of the earth, we have some instances of very distinguished notice paid to the infant Saviour.

1. Wise men came from the east, led by the observance of an extraordinary star which appeared in the heavens: who they were, and from whence they came, we are not clearly told; the most approved opinion seems to be, that they were of the Persian Magi, among whom some tradition seems to have obtained of a great prince at that time about to come into the world; which might arise from Balaam's prophecy, or from their acquaintance with the Jewish scriptures, which, during the captivity, were probably brought among them; and this expectation, Tacitus observes, was spread through the east. As these Magi were much conversant in astronomy, the uncommon luminous phenomenon, a meteor, or star, which they observed over Judea, might have led them thither, concluding this was the signal of his appearing, as they might be assured also by a divine impulse on their minds. They were Gentiles it is certain, and this was a happy presage of their future conversion: and their wisdom most eminently appeared in coming to him, the knowledge of whom alone could make them wise unto salvation. The highest attainments in science without this wisdom, are no better than splendid ignorance.

2. They directed their journey to Jerusalem, the capital, naturally concluding there to meet with all needful information. *Herod* at that time reigned in Judea, an Edomite, set up by the Romans, under whose power the Jews were, the sceptre being now departed from Shiloh; and to him it should seem they applied themselves, inquiring after the child who was born King of the Jews, concerning which they speak with the greatest confidence; and having seen his star in the east, the intimation of his birth, were come to worship him; either to pay him their civil homage, or to offer divine adoration. *Note*, (1.) They who know the value of Christ's favour, will stick at no pains in following him whithersoever he calls them. (1.) Jesus is truly the object worthy of our adoration, even in his lowest humiliation; the Babe in the manger is still the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

3. This inquiry of the wise men exceedingly affected Herod. He could be no stranger to the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the time of the accomplishment of them was confessedly now at hand. He was troubled therefore lest his own throne should be shaken, and all the people who heard the story seem to have been alike disturbed, fearing the tumults which they might suppose would be the consequence of a struggle for the crown, as they had in general no notion of the Messiah as a spiritual Saviour, but as a mighty prince and conqueror. *Note*, Worldly hearts are ever afraid, lest the spreading of the kingdom of Jesus should clash with their interests.

4. To give them a solution of the question, and perhaps to gain particular information himself for purposes his mind already harboured, he called a council of the chief priests, those most distinguished for station and abilities, and the scribes, learned in the law, and most conversant in the prophecies, that he might have their concurring sentiments concerning the place where *the Christ*, the Messiah, should be born. And thus by divine providence, this wicked king, who consulted them with the vilest design, is made the instrument of obtaining a distinguished suffrage, even from the wisest of the Jewish nation, to the place of the Messiah's birth, and where the babe Jesus actually was born.

5. They are unanimous in their opinion, for the prophet Micah hath expressly determined the place to be Bethlehem of Judea, chap. v. 2. and they cite the prophecy, in sense the same with the original, though with some variation in the expression. Thence the Ruler and Governor of his Israel should arise, and who is and ever will be the Lord of the redeemed, reigning in their hearts, and bringing them into subjection to his blessed self.

6. Herod hereupon dismisses the wise men in search of this child, after examining them in private with the greatest accuracy concerning the time when the star appeared, and having concerted in his own mind the bloody project of cutting off him whom he eyed already with jealousy, as the rival of his throne; and therefore he strictly charges them, after having made diligent search at Bethlehem, to return and acquaint him with the place of his abode; hypocritically pretending a desire to pay his worship to the young child born and destined of God to such distinguished honour. So often hath the mask of religion concealed the foulest designs.

None of his courtiers were sent with these strangers; perhaps he was afraid to awaken the suspicion of the parents of Jesus, his ambition and cruelty being fully known; or so God, in his overruling providence, ordered it, who taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and can divert the enemies of his people from using the most obvious means which they seem to have in their power, to distress or destroy them.

9. ¶ When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the * star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10. When they saw the star, they ° rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11. ¶ And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and [p] worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they [q] presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. 12. And, being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, [r] they departed into their own country another way.

* It appears to have been a fiery meteor in the lower sky. Ps. 25. 12. Prov. 2. 1—6, 8, 11. 2 Pet. 1. 19.

° Luke 2. 10, 11. Deut. 32. 43. Ps. xcvi—c. & 105. 3.

[p] Ps. 2. 12. & 45. 11. John 5. 23. Ps. 22. 29. & 72. 17.

[q] Or *offered*. Ps. 72. 10—15. Is. 60. 6. with Gen. 43. 11. 25. 1 Sam. 9. 7, 8. & 10. 27. 1 Kin. 10. 2. Prov. 18. 16.

[r] Exod. 1. 17. Acts 4. 19. & 5. 29.

Verses 9—12. With attention and respect, the wise men received their directions, and departed in search of the King of the Jews. And,

1. We find them happily conducted to the spot where he is. The star which they had seen at Christ's birth, afterwards disappeared, at least, if, as some suggest, it led them to the borders of Judea, it then left them, but now returned, hanging low in the sky, and moving on before them till it stood over the house where Jesus was: for before this, it seems, his parents had changed the place of his birth, a stable, for a more commodious abode. The return of the star, as it promised them a happy issue of their journey, rejoiced them exceedingly; and under its guidance being led to the house, they entered without farther inquiry; and finding the child with his virgin mother, they immediately prostrated themselves before him, worshipping him as their God, or honouring him as their King. And according to the eastern custom of making presents to their monarchs, when they make their addresses to them, they opened their treasures, and presented to him gold, frankincense, and myrrh, Isa. xl. 6. and thus also providentially supplied Joseph, and Mary with a sufficiency for the long journey they were quickly after called to undertake. *Note*, (1.) When we are found in the way of duty, using the means God hath given us, we shall not be left without a guide. (2.) The word of God, and the ministry of it, is now this star to lead us to Jesus, and blessed and happy are they who follow its direction. (3.) When for a while we have been left in the darkness of affliction, temptation, or desertion, with double joy we behold the re-appearing of the day-

star to our benighted souls, and rejoice with exceeding great joy. (4.) Jesus is the object of our adorations; to him every knee must bow. (5.) The Lord, by strange and unexpected ways, often supplies the wants of his people; they who trust him will assuredly own, that he hath never failed them in time of need.

2. To prevent their return to Jerusalem, according to Herod's desire, God, by a dream which carried its own evidence that it came from him, probably the very day or night after their arrival at Bethlehem, warned them not to go back to Herod, and accordingly they immediately departed into their own country another way. So easily can God blast the malicious designs of the ungodly.

13. And when they were departed, behold, * the angel of the Lord [s] appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, [t] Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14. † When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt; 15. And was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, [u] Out of Egypt have I called my son.

* *The angel*: rather an angel of the Lord.—*Bishop Pearce.*

s Ch. 1. 20. Num. 12. 8. Heb. 1. 1.

t Hos. 11. 1. Rev. 12. 4. ch. 10. 23.

† Whether this happened about two months, or about a year after Christ's birth, we know not.

u Hos. 11. 1. with Num. 24. 8.

Verses 13—15. No sooner were the wise men departed, than God, who knew the cruel intention of Herod, takes care of the safety of the child Jesus.

1. The Lord, in a dream, apprises Joseph of the danger to which the young child was exposed, and bids him without delay secure the babe with his mother in Egypt, from the fury of this bloody king, and expect further directions there. Immediately, that very night, he arose and fled with his family to this appointed place of refuge, and there continued till the death of Herod, which soon followed the massacre of the infants. *Note*, (1.) The place where God's people suffered the bitterest persecution, affords an asylum for his Son; so easily can he, who hath in his hands the hearts of all men, make our once inveterate enemies our firmest friends. (2.) God's commands, the faithful heart obeys without hesitation or delay; having committed our all to him, we must be safe under his guidance.

2. Particular notice is taken of the fulfilling of the Scriptures herein; *Out of Egypt have I called my Son*, Hos. xi. 1. which, whatever reference it hath to Israel as a people, had now its most direct accomplishment in the flight of Jesus thither, and his return from thence.

16 ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, [x] and sent forth, and [y] slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. 17. Then was ‡ fulfilled that which was spoken by [z] Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18. In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

x Prov. 27. 3. Dan. 3. 13.

y Prov. 1. 16. Is. 59. 7. ch. 10. 34. John 15. 18. Prov. 20. 21. & 21. 30. Thus the time of Christ's birth was publicly marked; and none left to rival his honours.

‡ Again fulfilled, as it had been at the captivity of Babylon.

z Jer. 31. 15. with Gen. 35. 19. Josh. 18. 21, 23. Jer. 40. 1. & 41. 3. The 3d year before the account called *Anno Domini*.

Verses 16—18. We are told here, as we might have expected from the character of this wicked prince,

1. The fury he was in, at being disappointed of the wise men. He waited from day to day, in expectation of receiving intelligence from them; but hearing at last they were gone home another way, his jealousy was more inflamed against his supposed rival, and his wrath more exasperated.

2. The politic, but inhuman, contrivance he formed to rid himself of his fears. He slew all the male children under two years of age, in all Bethlehem, and the territory belonging to it; being satisfied, from the information he had received of the wise men, that the infant king could not exceed that age, and therefore must perish in the general massacre. An instance of barbarity which, though most agreeable to the character of that savage monarch, who had with his own hand slain his own children, we cannot read without horror; so that Augustus might well say, *it was better to be Herod's swine than his son*. The first crown of martyrdom for Jesus was won by these infant sufferers, and the honour to which they are advanced, infinitely repays the torments they endured.

3. The fulfilment of the Scripture herein is again observed; and to this event, no doubt, the prophet had immediate regard, Jer. xxxi. 15. For though we see it fulfilled in a measure, when the sword of the Chaldeans, and the captivity of the Jews which ensued, awakened Rachel, as it were from her grave, which was near Bethlehem, to lament her children destroyed or led to Babylon; yet, in a peculiarly striking manner, may this tender mother's griefs be now said to overflow, when so many of her daughters raved with inconsolable anguish for their infants torn from their bosom, and writhing on the spear of inhuman murderers. *Note*, Though God forbids us not, with acutest anguish, to bewail the ravages death makes in our families, inconsolable grief is sinful. Christians must never sorrow as if they had no hope, or as if their comforts were all bound up in a dying worm.

19. ¶ But when Herod was dead, [a] behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20. Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. 21. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22. But when he heard that ‖ Archelaus § did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, [b] being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: 23. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a [c] Nazarene.

a Ch. 1. 20. ver. 13. Ps. 32. 7, 8. Prov. 3. 5, 6. Ps. 91. 11, 12. Exod. 4. 19.

‖ Who was very furious and cruel.

§ *Did reign*: being declared king by his father's will, but afterwards Augustus Cesar reduced him to the inferior dignity of ethnarch, and took from him the half of his dominions.—*Diodati.*

b Ps. 46. 1. & 32. 8. & 121. 8. & 48. 14. 1 Sam. 2. 9.

c i. e. *branch, the Saviour, separated*, or *crowned one*. Is. 11. 1. Zech. 6. 12. Job 7. 10. Num. 6. 2. Judg. 13. 5, 7.

Verses 19—23. The sojourning of our Lord in Egypt was but short. Quickly after the massacre of the infants, Herod was struck with a mortal disease, loathsome and incurable, that made him a spectacle to others, and a torment to himself. So soon can God humble proud tyrants, and make them feel that wrath they would not fear. Hereupon,

1. The Lord sent his angel, who informed Joseph, in a dream, of Herod's death, and bids him arise, since he may now safely return to the land of Israel. They who are driven far from the

ordinances of God, and his people, wish to be no longer absent from them than necessity obliges them.

2. Joseph is all obedience: cheerful readiness in following God's direction, being the sure effect of real devotedness to his will. He returns with the child and his mother to the land of Israel; but hearing that Archelaus, a son of Herod, and an inheritor of his brutal temper, reigned in Judea, he was justly afraid of settling under his jurisdiction; and in this emergence again the Lord signifies his pleasure to him by his angel, and points him out a place of safety in the obscure retreat of Nazareth, a little town in Galilee, then under the government of Antipas, another of Herod's children, but a man of a milder temper than his brother. *Note*, (1.) They who are willing to follow the path of duty, if they knew it, shall be directed aright. (2.) No danger must deter us, when we have God's call to go; but we must not willingly rush into temptation. (3.) God will find a quiet resting place for his people, sometimes under the sun, but assuredly above it.

3. This was done also, that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said, *He shall be called a Nazarene;* either this refers to Isa. xi. 1. where Christ is called a branch, *netzer*, out of the root of Jesse, the city Nazareth deriving its name from this word: or to Judg. xiii. 5. Samson being the type of the great Nazarite and Saviour, Jesus. Or rather, in general, the prophecies which foretold his mean appearance, and the contempt and reproach he should be exposed to, were thus fulfilled: Nazareth being a despicable place, and his very coming from thence was urged by his enemies as an argument against his mission, *Can any good thing come out of* so mean and contemptible a place as *Nazareth? Note*, They who are followers of Jesus of Nazareth, need not be ashamed of his reproach, nor of any opprobrious names with which his enemies or theirs may seek to render them odious or despicable. The disciple is then but as his Lord.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 27.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The life, doctrine, and baptism of John*, ver. 1—12. 2. *Jesus baptized of him*, ver. 13—17.

a Mark 1. 4. Luke 3. 2, 3. & 1. 5—25, 57—80. John 1. 6, 7, 20. Josh. 15, 61. Is. 40. 3.
b Ch. 4. 17. Acts 2. 38, 39. & 3. 19. Luke 13, 3, 5. Isa. 55. 7. Ezek. 33. 11.
c Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 13, 14. *i. e.* the gospel-dispensation. ch. 4. 17. & xiii, xxv.
d Is. 40. 3. Mark 1. 3. Luke 3. 4. John 1. 23. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 2, 5, 6.
e Mark 1. 6. 2 Kin. 1. 8. Mal. 4. 5. Luke 1. 17. Zech. 13, 4.
f Ch. 11. 18. Lev. 11. 22.
g Mark 1. 5. Luke 16. 16. & 3. 3, 7. John 1. 6, 7, 15—28. & 5. 35. ch. 11. 12. Acts 19. 3, 4, 18. & 2. 38, 39. Mal. 4. 6.

1. IN those days came [a] John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2. And saying, [b] Repent ye; for [c] the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, [d] The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4. And the same John [e] had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and [f] his meat was locusts and wild honey. 5. ¶ [g] Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6. And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

Verses 1—6. Prophecy, under the Old Testament, closed with the promise of the coming of Elijah, that is, of one in his spirit and temper; and here we find that prophecy accomplished in John the Baptist, so called from the ordinance of baptism he administered to his disciples; who appeared *in those days*, not immediately after the events related in the preceding chapter, but at about twenty-seven or twenty-eight years' distance; during which time we never but once hear any thing of our blessed Lord, who lived in obscurity, and not improbably maintained himself by manual labour. We have,

1. The place where John opened his ministry, in the wilderness of Judea; not a place literally uninhabited, but a place not so populous as the other parts of the country. See Josh. xv. 61, 62.

2. The doctrine he preached: *Repentance;* a change of mind and principles, and of manners and practice, in both which respects the Jewish people were exceedingly corrupt: and this he urges on that evangelical consideration, that *the kingdom of heaven is at hand;* the kingdom of the Messiah, the gospel dispensation, which affords the strongest engagements to draw the minds of sinners to return to God, from the views of the riches of his grace therein revealed. *Note*, (1.) It is a sense of God's pardoning love, revealed in the gospel, that alone can work the effectual repentance unto salvation never to be repented of. (2.) The kingdom of Jesus is the kingdom of heaven; for all who are now partakers of his grace are heirs of his glory, and sure to reign with him for ever. (3.) All the members of Christ's kingdom are real penitents, whose minds and hearts are changed by grace, and their lives renewed in holiness.

3. Herein John fulfilled the prophecy delivered concerning him, Isa. xl. 3, 4. *The voice of one crying*, loud as the ox bellows; intimating the fervour and vehemence with which John preached, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.* As the harbinger or herald, he goes before to clear the way for the King of glory, preaching that repentance which was so peculiarly needful at a time when the traditions of men had made God's word of no effect, and the corruption of the general practice was the natural effect of their corrupt principles; and pointing them, from their sinful courses, to him who was *the way, the truth, and the life*, by whom alone they could be saved. *Note*, (1.) The ways of sin are crooked ways, that lead down to death and hell. (2.) Nothing can save us from them but repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. His garb and diet were austere, as his word was startling. He seemed an uncouth courier to prepare the way of the eternal King. A rough garment, girt with a leathern girdle, was his clothing, as being the promised Elias, see 2 Kings i. 8. and his meat was plain and abstemious, such as the wilderness afforded, locusts and wild honey. *Note*, They who preach mortification and repentance to others, should themselves show a becoming indifference to this world, and the gratifications of it.

5. A numerous auditory attended his ministry; struck by the singularity of his appearance and manners, and, above all, by the power of the word he preached. Multitudes from Jerusalem, Judea, and the country beyond Jordan, resorted to him, a general expectation of the Messiah being now raised through the land: and so far were many affected with his discourses, that they made profession of repentance, confessed their sins, and were baptized in Jordan. But, among a multitude of professors, the sequel showed there were few real penitents. Uncommon zeal and striking delivery will often collect an audience, and excite curiosity; but divine grace alone can effect conversion.

It hath been a much disputed point respecting the manner of administering the ordinance of baptism; whether by immersion or sprinkling; and where the form is rested upon, instead of the power of godliness, there is room open for abundant debate. I must confess, for my own part, I see no reason to suppose such immense multitudes were all dipped in Jordan; nor how it would be practicable to provide dipping garments for them: nor does the word βαπτιζω (*baptizo*) convey the same meaning as βαπτω (*bapto*) but rather seems to intimate sprinkling, or pouring water upon them; and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which this baptism of John's prefigured, would lead us strongly to that meaning of the word. But whilst we should avoid all rigid censures on those who differ from us in these ceremonials, and see that in whatever manner baptism be administered, we

do not rest upon the ordinance; it is an essential concern, that our souls be really partakers of the thing signified, even sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, and saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

7. ¶ But when he saw many of [h] the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, [i] O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the [k] wrath to come? 8. [l] Bring forth therefore fruits * meet for repentance: 9. And think not to say within yourselves, [m] We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able [n] of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10. And [o] now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: [p] therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 11. [q] I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me [r] is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: [s] he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: 12. [t] Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

h Acts 15. 5. & 26. 5. & 23. 8, 9. ch. 22, 23, 34. & 23. 1—29. Luke 7. 30.
i Ch. 12. 34. & 23, 33. Luke 3. 7. & 13. 9, 11. Acts 23. 3.
k 1 Thes. 1. 10. 2. Thes. 1. 9. Rom. 5. 9.
l Acts 26. 20. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 4—10. 2 Cor. 7. 1, 11.
* Or *answerable to amendment of life.*
m John 8. 33, 39. Acts 13. 26. Jer. 7. 4.
n Josh. 4. 3, 8. with ch. 8. 11, 12 & 21. 43. Luke 19. 40.
o Deut. 20. 20. Luke 3. 9. & 23. 31. & 19. 42. John 12. 35. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Heb. 2. 1, 3. & 3. 7—13. & 4. 1. & 10. 26—29.
p Ch. 7. 19. John 15. 2, 6. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Is. 33. 14. Heb. 6. 8. & 10. 27. Ezek. 15. 5.
q Mark 1. 8. Luke 3. 10. John 1. 26. Acts 1. 5. & 11. 16. & 19. 4.
r John 1. 15, 27. & 3. 28—36. Luke 1. 16, 17.
s Is. 44. 3. Mal. 3. 2, 3. Gal. 4. 6. Tit. 3. 5. Acts 1. 5. & 2. 3, 4. & 11. 15. John 1. 33.
t Luke 3. 17. ch. 13. 30, 42 Mal. 4. 1. & 3. 3. Mic. 4. 12. Job 21. 18.

Verses 7—12. The Pharisees and Sadducees were men of very different characters; the one pretended uncommon sanctity, and were rigid observers of the rituals of religion, deriving their name from that separation of themselves from other men, in which they gloried. The Sadducees, on the other hand, so denominated from their master, Sadok, were the very reverse; avowedly infidel in their principles, and it is to be feared, as licentious in their practice. Yet many of both these sects, either struck with John's preaching, or more probably to gain the higher veneration with the people, who were strongly engaged in John's favour, as a prophet sent from God, applied to him for baptism; and to them he here addresses his discourse.

1. He opens with a most severe reproof, and mortifying appellation. *O generation of vipers*, specious, yet venomous as a serpent, *who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* either from their temporal calamities which were approaching, and their repentance might have averted; or from the eternal ruin they had provoked by their pride, hypocrisy, infidelity, and wickedness. *Note*, (1.) To flee from the wrath to come, is every sinner's great concern: but none will take the warning till they see and feel the imminence of their danger. (2.) Ministers must deal plainly and freely with men's consciences; nor must the self-righteous formalist be addressed with less severity than the abandoned sinner.

2. He admonishes them of their duty. *Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance;* without which all the water in the river would never profit them any thing: for all who are baptized unto repentance, must see that in all humility and lowliness of mind, in all patience and perseverance in well-doing, in all holy conversation and godliness, they prove the truth of the grace which is in them; else shall the baptized sinner be as the heathen man and the publican.

3. He cautions them against trusting to their external privileges, on which he knew they depended for acceptance before God. Because they were Abraham's children, they flattered themselves with safety, and thought repentance in their case unnecessary; but John will undeceive them; and pointing probably to those stones which Joshua set up in Jordan, Josh. iv. 20. assured them God could from these raise up children to Abraham, and needed not his descendants after the flesh to compose his church. *Note*, (1.) Many flatter themselves, that their being members of the visible church, and having partaken of baptism and the Lord's supper, will stand them in stead in the day of God, who will find themselves wofully disappointed. (2.) Ministers must lay open those refuges of lies, to which the self-righteous and the sinner betake themselves, and rouse those to a sense of their danger who rock themselves asleep in vain imaginations. (3.) The nearer we are related to great and good men, so far from being a protection to us, it will but aggravate our guilt, if we degenerate from their piety.

4. He gives them fair warning. The time was short ere judgment would begin at the house of God: the axe was now laid to the root of the tree, by the preaching of the gospel; and the last moment of probation expiring. If they rejected the counsel of God, and refused to repent and amend their ways, then they were marked for ruin, as trees that bear no fruit, fit only for fuel. The temporal judgments of God shall consume them with their city; or, worse, the eternal wrath of God shall overwhelm them in hell. *Note*, The day of grace is a precious season, not to be trifled with; our eternity of happiness or misery depends on our neglect or improvement of it.

5. He directs them to that glorious personage, whose forerunner he was; acknowledging his pre-eminence in all things. He could indeed call them to repentance, and administer baptism to those who make profession of it; but a greater than himself must give the grace to repent; concerning whom, he owns he was not worthy to perform the meanest offices to him, even to carry his shoes after him: so lowly are the saints of God in their own eyes. *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire;* either at the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 3. or his influences, like fire, should purify, warm, and enliven their souls. Or, as some suggest, this baptism may refer to the judgments he would pour out on the impenitent; when, having, like the husbandman, separated the wheat, his people from the chaff of hypocrites and unfaithful professors, he would burn up the latter with unquenchable fire. *Note*, (1.) The operations of God's Spirit in the believer's heart, like fire, illuminate his understanding, consume his vile affections; and raise him, as the flame mounts upwards, to high and heavenly things. (2.) The church is Christ's floor; in it there is a mixed multitude of good and bad, faithful and hypocrites, as the chaff and wheat lying together; but the day is near when the separation shall be made; sometimes even here, by the divine word and providences; assuredly at Christ's appearing, when the eternal state of men shall be determined. The redeemed then shall be gathered as the wheat into God's garner in heaven, separated from all chaff for ever, and not a grain lost: and the impenitent and reprobate be consigned to the everlasting burnings.

13. ¶ [u] Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14. But John forbade him, saying, [x] I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15. And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now; for [y] thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16. [z] And Jesus when he was baptized,

An. Dom. 29.
u Mark 1. 9. Luke 3. 21. with ch. 2. 22.
x Gen. 32. 10. 1 Chr. 29. 14. 2 Chr. 2. 6. Eph. 3. 8.
y Ps. 40. 6—8. Jer. 30. 21. Heb. 7. 22. Is. 42. 21. Dan. 9. 24. Phil. 2. 6—8. Gal. 4. 4, 5. Rom. 5. 15—21. & 3. 25, 26. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Is. liii.
z Mark 1. 10. Luke 3. 21, 22. John 1. 32, 33. & 3. 34. Ps. 45. 7. & 89. 20. Is. 11. 2—4. & 42. 1. & 61. 1. Col. 1. 10.

went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a * dove, and lighting upon him: 17. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, [a] This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

* The emblem of purity, gentleness, and love.—*Scott.*

[a] Ps. 2. 7. Is. 42. 1, 4, 21. ch. 12. 18. & 17. 5. Mark 1. 11. Luke 3. 22. & 9. 35. 2 Pet. 1. 17. Col. 2. 13. Eph. 1. 6.

Verses 13—17. Christ, who had hitherto lived in obscurity, began now to enter upon his glorious work; and, in order thereto, comes to John to be baptized, whose preaching had raised men's expectations concerning the glorious person of whom he spoke. Not that Christ needed this baptism, but he would show his approbation of it, as well as receive that public testimony that John on this occasion was appointed to bear to him.

1. John, who knew Jesus by divine revelation, John i. 33. appears unwilling to admit his Master to the ordinance of baptism which he administered. He who had no sin, could surely need no repentance. Besides, counting himself unworthy of pouring water upon him, from whom himself needed the greater baptism of the Spirit, he would humbly have excused himself from the office. *I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? Note,* (1.) The most holy souls are ever the most humble. (2.) Christ's condescensions are so amazing, that our faith sometimes is ready to stagger at the view of them. (3.) The greatest saints and prophets have need of the baptism of Jesus; both of the sprinkling of his blood to cleanse their consciences, and of the influences of his Spirit to purify their hearts; and they are always most sensible of their wants. (4.) They who preach repentance to others, had need be deeply concerned to be baptized with the Holy Ghost themselves, lest, after having been the means of saving others they themselves should be cast away.

2. The Lord overrules John's objection. In his present state of humiliation, it became him to submit to this, among other divine institutions, that he might in all things be a pattern of righteousness, and therefore John must for the present comply, nor does he any longer hesitate, but admitted him to baptism accordingly, fully satisfied in the will and wisdom of his Lord. *Note,* (1.) It is becoming to countenance and encourage every good work; and those who may be higher in wisdom and grace than their teachers, are bound nevertheless to attend their ministry, and set an example to others. (2.) Christ fulfilled all righteousness, ceremonial as well as moral; and by his obedience is become the end of the law, for righteousness, to every one that believeth. (3.) There are often reasons for the divine procedure, concerning which we must be content to be ignorant. *Thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.*

3. God is pleased to bear a signal attestation to the glory of the Redeemer on this occasion. Immediately as he went up from the river's brink, or *from the water,* where he had been baptized, *the heavens were opened,* a chasm being made in the firmament as if the everlasting doors were wide unfolded, and John, as well as Jesus, beheld the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, in a hovering dove-like motion, and it rested upon, or over his head. He being constituted the great prophet of his people, as the man Christ Jesus had the Spirit without measure bestowed upon him, to enable him for the discharge of his office; and in him, as the head of his church, all fulness dwells, that he may from thence communicate both gifts and graces to his members, according to their wants. And besides the visible appearance here described, an audible voice was heard from the excellent glory, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* God's *Son,* not by creation, as angels, or by adoption as the saints, but by filiation peculiar to himself, being self-existent and eternal as the Father, yet standing in this relation towards him. *Beloved,* because the express image of his person; and being now become incarnate for our redemption, according to the eternal counsels, therefore, God the Father delighted in him, expressing his entire satisfaction in his undertaking: *in whom I am well pleased;* which he never could say of any of the sons of men beside, all having sinned and come short of the glory of God. Jesus alone is the one glorious character, on which God can look with approbation; whose righteousness is perfect, and for whose sake it is, as having made the atonement, that any of the sons of men can find acceptance before God. Because he is well pleased with Jesus, he hath now opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers in him; and whosoever cometh to God by him, shall be in no wise cast out. Thus, whilst every other character, considered in itself, from the first man to the last, must be God's abhorrence, since altogether born in sin; we may, notwithstanding, be sure of acceptance in this beloved; and shall be regarded as complete in him, when we by faith receive him as God hath sent him forth to us, as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; our all in all.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 29.

When Jesus entered upon his ministry, John is scarce heard of again, as the stars disappear when the sun arises. We have in this chapter, 1. *The temptation Christ underwent, the triple assault the tempter made upon him, and the repulse he gave to each assault,* ver. 1—11. 2. *The teaching work he undertook, the places he preached in,* ver. 12—16. *and the subject he preached on,* ver. 17. 3. *His calling of disciples, Peter and Andrew, James and John,* ver. 18—22. 4. *His curing of diseases,* ver. 23, 24. *and the great resort of people to him, both to be taught and to be healed.*

1. THEN was [a] Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be [b] tempted of the devil. 2. And when he had [c] fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward [d] an hungered. 3. And when the tempter came to him, he said, [e] If thou be the son of God command that these stones be made bread. 4. But he answered and said, [f] It is written, [g] Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5. [h] Then the devil taketh him up into the [i] holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6. And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, [k] He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7. Jesus said unto him, [l] It is written again, [m] Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8. [n] Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9. And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10. Then saith Jesus unto

[a] Mark 1. 12, 13. Luke 4. 1—13. 1 Kin. 18. 12. Ezek. 3. 14. & 8. 3. & 11. 1, 24. & 40. 2. & 43. 5. Acts 8. 39.
[b] Heb. 4. 15. & 2. 18. Gen. 3. 15. John 14. 30.
[c] Exod. 34. 28. Deut. 9. 9, 18. 1 Kin. 19. 8.
[d] Mark 1. 13. Luke 4. 2. ch. 21. 18. John 4. 6.
[e] Luke 4. 2, 3. with ch. 3. 17. & 17. 5.
[f] Eph. 6. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 9.
[g] Deut. 8. 3. Exod. 23. 25. Luke 4. 4. & 12. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 5. Prov. 30. 22. & 30. 8.
[h] Job 1. 11—19. & 2. 6. John 19. 11.
[i] Neh. 11. 1. Is. 48. 2. & 52. 1. Dan. 9. 16. ch. 5. 35. & 27. 53.
[k] Ps. 91. 11, 12. Luke 4. 9—11 1 Tim. 3. 16. ver. 11.
[l] Ver. 4, 10. Rom 15. 4. Eph. 6. 17 1 Pet. 5. 9.
[m] Deut. 6. 16. Luke 4. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 9. Heb. 3. 8, 9. Exod. 17. 2, 7. Num. 14. 22. Ps. 78. 18. & 106. 14.
[n] Luke 4. 5—7. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 1 Cor 7. 31. 1 John 2. 15, 16. Jam. 4. 4. Ps. 17. 14.

o Ch. 16. 23. Jam. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 9.
p Deut. 6. 13. & 10. 20. 1 Sam. 7. 3. Luke 4. 8.
q Jam. 4. 7. Luke 4. 13. Mark 1. 13. 1 Tim. 3. 46. ch. 26. 53.

him, ° Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, ᵖ Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11. ᑫ Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Verses 1—11. Jesus being now prepared for the battle, enters the lists against the great enemy of souls, whose kingdom he came to destroy. We have,

1. The time of this conflict. *Then*, immediately after he had received the attestation of God to his Sonship, and the fulness of the Spirit for the exercise of his office as Mediator. *Note*, (1.) Before God calls us into temptation, he will furnish us with spiritual strength. (2.) Great manifestations are often the prelude to our severest conflicts. (3.) The confidence of our adoption of God, will be the most effectual shield to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

2. The place. *In the wilderness;* far from the abode of men, amidst lonely wastes, where only the savages of the forest roamed, to give the enemy every advantage against him, and therein more gloriously to display his own power and all-sufficiency. The first man fell in a paradise of delights: the second man stood unmoved against every blast of temptation, firm as the rocks of the wilderness, his present dreary dwelling.

3. The preparatives to the combat. *He was led up of the Spirit*, by a divine impulse on his mind, into the higher, more mountainous, and uninhabited part of the country; and this with design to meet the tempter and defeat all his wiles. And hereunto he condescended, (1.) That feeling what sore temptations mean, he might be a compassionate high priest, having been tempted in all points as we are, only without sin. (2.) To encourage us to trust him in every time of need. He who defeated that enemy once himself, can by the same strength make us more than conquerors. Forty days, like Moses on the mount, he continued there alone, and without sustenance: at last he felt all those acute cravings of hunger, which, as man, he was subject to, in common with us, and which gave the enemy another advantage against him, and rendered the Redeemer's triumphs more illustrious. The first representative of mankind, when wallowing in plenty, was tempted by one forbidden tree; the last Covenant-head of his people, though famishing for want, is deaf to every solicitation of the wicked one.

4. The temptations themselves; a three-fold cord, and yet broken with ease. The design of them was to shake Christ's confidence in God, and lead him to some dishonourable step; which, had it been possible, must have utterly unqualified him for the work of redemption.

(1.) In the first temptation, the devil sought to lead him to a distrust of God's providential care and goodness; and in order thereto, *the tempter came to him.* He had by his secret suggestions, during the forty days before, sought to disturb the mind of Jesus, but in vain; now therefore he assumes a visible form: not such a fearful figure as our early misguided apprehensions suggest, and our delusive prints hold him forth, but some pleasing human shape, or perhaps transformed into an angel of light. The tempter well knew the circumstances of our Lord, and directed his assaults where the weakest side appeared: he hoped the cravings of hunger might lead him to some undue means of relief. Thus vigilant and crafty is the wily adversary to suit his temptation to our situation and condition; and particularly in want and distress, to suggest some sinful expedient to extricate ourselves from our troubles, without waiting God's leisure, or consulting his will. He often says, Better steal than starve; though God says, It is better die than sin. He prefaces his temptation with a sly insinuation: *If thou be the son of God;* as if he doubted the fact, though so lately the voice from heaven had affirmed it: and he desired to shake the faith of Jesus, suggesting that if this really were the case, it was inconceivable that God would leave such a one to starve in the wilderness. Or, *seeing thou art the son of God*, he admits the fact and wishes to see a present exertion of his divine power in a miracle so necessary for his own support: *command that these stones be made bread. Note*, (1.) The great battery of the devil is raised against our faith; for if the foundation of our confidence be shaken, the superstructure must needs totter. He is ever striking at this, to make the children of God doubt their adoption; and in order thereto, he urges against them sometimes their outward distresses, sometimes their inward weaknesses and infirmities, as if both the one and the other were inconsistent with the relation they claim. (2.) If once the enemy can engage us to entertain hard thoughts of God, then he is sure to prevail.

Christ repels the assaults of the wicked one with the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and therein teaches us how to ward off the like temptations. *He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* The Lord hath other ways of supporting men's bodies than by bread merely; and therefore it was not so absolutely necessary for his sustenance, but that he could be supported without it; nor would he, at Satan's instigation, do that which might look like distrust of his Father's care, doubt of his word, or suspicion of his relation to him. *Note*, (1.) The written word is the only rule of our faith and practice: if Christ himself adhered to that alone, let no pretences of the Spirit's superior teaching, lead us off from this sure guide. (2.) God's time is the best time: and *he that believeth will not make haste*, will take no rash step for his own relief under his trials, but patiently expect the salvation of God.

(2.) The first attack being repelled, a second is prepared; since he cannot lead the Saviour to distrust or despair, he will try to puff him up with presumption. So unwearied is the tempter, and often changing his wiles, according to our circumstances, from one extreme to the other.

He taketh him up, by divine permission, with the consent of Jesus, who suffered the devil to have such power over his body, and to carry him *into the holy city*, (Jerusalem,) so called from the peculiar privileges it enjoyed of God's worship and ordinances, *and set him upon a pinnacle or wing of the temple;* one of the battlements probably, which were of an immense height. And since Jesus had expressed such confidence in his Father, and unshaken dependence on his word, he grounds thereon his temptation, *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down*, and give an incontestible proof of it to the priests and people worshipping below; who will no doubt receive thee as the Messiah, when thus coming as if immediately from heaven into the temple; nor will there be any danger in the experiment, since *it is written*, and therein thou art fully satisfied, *he shall give his angels*, &c. The application of which words to Christ was right; but a part of the text is artfully suppressed, *in all thy ways;* for out of the way of duty we may never hope for protection. And it is misapplied, being designed not to tempt men to rush into temptation, presuming upon the divine care, but to engage the faithful to trust God in time of trial, assured of divine support. From all which we may observe, (1.) That one grand engine of the tempter is, to make our heads giddy by setting us up on high. The pinnacle of the temple is a dangerous exaltation. Those who are eminent in station, fortune, or reputation, advanced to dignities in church or state, or distinguished with abilities, gifts, graces, or even success in their ministry, need to tremble for themselves; and the higher they stand, to cleave the faster to Jesus their temple, lest their exaltation prove their destruction. (2.) Though the devil can tempt, he cannot compel. Sin is our own act: and without our consent, the most dire temptations fasten not the least evil on our consciences. Should we be

tempted to the greatest crimes, to self-murder, or blasphemy, the Son of God was himself thus tempted, yet without sin. (3.) Scriptures may be suggested by the enemy to the minds of God's people, much to their distress and discouragement on the one hand; or, on the other, to lull their consciences in a fatal security: therefore we must search the Scriptures diligently, that we may know what is God's mind therein, and be kept from those dangerous errors and delusions which often the Scriptures are vouched to patronize. (4.) We must never separate the means from the end; nor expect, out of God's way, the protection of his providence and grace. Though Jesus is a Saviour to the uttermost, we may not sin that grace may abound; and predestination to life eternal necessarily includes the diligent improvement of all the means needful to make our election sure.

The same word of truth supplies our Lord with a full confutation of Satan's sophistry; for in the Scriptures there is an answer ready for every case; and we can be in no circumstance or temptation, but that word will afford us direction, strength, and comfort, *It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* The tempter hath said, *It is written;* but the Scripture cannot contradict itself, and therefore to know the mind of God, we must compare spiritual things with spiritual, and not mutilate the word of truth, nor apply it contrary to the intention of the Spirit. To trust God is duty; to tempt him is sinful. Christ needed no confirmation of what he was already assured; nor was he called unnecessarily to make an experiment of God's power in such a miraculous preservation.

(3.) Once more, though baffled, the enemy returns to the charge, and summoning up all his force in one blow, by the most glaring display of this world's glory, tempts our Lord to the horrid crime of idolatry. The sorest of our temptations is sometimes reserved for the last, that God's power and grace may be more gloriously displayed, and the devil's malice most bitterly disappointed.

Again the devil taketh him up; probably transported him through the air, *into an exceeding high mountain,* that the fictitious scene he was about to display might appear real; *and there he showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.* Whatever grandeur, wealth, pleasure, reigned in them, were set before him in the most enlivened colours, to catch his fancy, and engage his admiration: and all these he offers to bestow on him on one condition which thousands, without any such reward, were daily doing: *If thou wilt fall down and worship me.* A proposal so horrid would not bear a thought, and is rejected with detestation: *Get thee hence, Satan;* such insolence provoked the Saviour's righteous indignation, and he drives the tempter from his presence, unable to endure such a daring attempt upon the majesty of Jehovah, the only object of worship; *for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* *Note,* (1.) The minds of God's greatest saints may be sometimes harassed with the most blasphemous suggestions, and they should not count this as if some strange thing happened unto them. (2.) The glory of the world is the grand snare the enemy lays for men's souls; and it looks very desirable to the eye of sense; but faith sees through the delusion, beholds vanity stamped on every thing beneath the sun, and scorns *all this* which Satan offers, as dung and loss compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and the glories of his grace. (3.) Some temptations come under the guise of plausibility and harmlessness, and require recollection before we can discover the craft of the devil; others bring the brand of hell in their forehead, and would bear men down merely with the weight of the present advantage thence accruing: these must not be parlied with a moment, but rejected with abhorrence. (4.) God is alone the object of worship; and whatever else be made the idol of our adoration, whether the horrid forms of monsters in a pagod, or the images of saints, and virgins, and crucifixes, in a popish chapel, it is no better than falling down to the devil.

5. Satan, now vanquished, and unable to resist the commanding word of Jesus, quits the field. He found him more than man, invulnerable in every part, and feels himself a vanquished foe. Thus shall the sons of God, through this great Captain of their salvation, tread Satan under their feet; enabled to wrestle with spiritual wickedness, and to prevail against the powers of darkness. Though hard the conflict, the victory is sure to all who stand fast, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

6. The angels, the attendant servants of Jesus, now visibly appeared, and ministered unto him. They had beheld, as spectators, the conflict and triumphs of the Lord, and now congratulate his victory, and supply him with those needful refreshments which his exhausted body craved. *Note,* (1.) Christ alone obtained the victory for us; his own arm hath brought salvation unto him. (2.) Angels minister to the heirs of salvation; we need not fear, therefore, what devils can do against us. (3.) Though our relief be for a while delayed, it shall assuredly come at last. *Trust in the Lord,* therefore, *and verily thou shalt be fed.* (4.) Our Master was himself tempted, that he might feel for us, and supply us with all needful supports, when we are in like manner sore thrust at that we should fall.

A. D. 30.

12. ¶ [r] Now, when Jesus had heard that John was * cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; 13. [s] And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14. [t] That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 15. [u] The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16. The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. 17. ¶ [x] From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for [y] the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[r] Mark 1. 14. & 6. 17. Luke 4. 14. & 3. 19, 20. John 4. 43. ch. 14. 3.
* Or *delivered up.*
[s] Luke 4. 30, 31. Mark 6. 1—6.
[t] Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Is. 44. 26. Tit. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 24. 2 Tim. 2 13. Heb. 6. 17, 18. Ps. 12. 6. Prov. 30. 5, 6.
[u] Is. 9. 1, 2. & 29. 18. & 30. 26. & 42. 6, 7. & 60. 1—3. & 11. 10. & 52. 15. & 53. 11. Zech. 14. 7, 8.

A. D. 30.

[x] Mark 1. 14. Luke 9. 2. ch. 3. 2. & 10. 7.
[y] Gospel dispensation. Ch. xiii, xxv. Acts 1. 3, 8.

Verses 12—17. Christ now having entered upon his ministry, began to publish the glad tidings of that salvation he came to procure. Many events are recorded which intervened between his temptations on the mount and his abode at Capernaum; these we shall meet with in the other evangelists. Matthew hastens forward to the time when John was cast into prison; on which occasion Jesus departed from Nazareth to Galilee, and fixed his abode at Capernaum, a city in the tribe of Nephthali, bordering on Zabulon, situate on the sea of Tiberias, called elsewhere the lake of Gennesareth. The men of Nazareth had rejected him, Luke iv. 29. and therefore God justly leaves them to themselves, and sends his Son and his gospel to a place that will more cheerfully welcome them.

1. Especial notice is here taken of the fulfilment of the Scripture in this removal of our Lord; as Esaias had before of old prophesied, *that the people* in these regions of Zabulon and Nephthali, called *Galilee of the Gentiles* from the intermixture of a multitude of strangers of other nations among the Jews; *which sat in darkness,* in spiritual darkness and ignorance: *saw a great light,* Christ the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in his wings, and bringing life, and light, and liberty to those *who sat in the region and shadow of death,* dead in trespasses and sins, till quickened by the effectual power of the Saviour's grace, and enlightened by the glorious gospel he preached. *Note* (1.) They

who are destitute of the knowledge of Christ, are in darkness respecting all the things that make for their everlasting peace, and near the borders of eternal death. (2.) Christ is to the soul what the sun is to the world; yea, more; for he is not only the author of light, but gives the faculty of vision also, without which the light would shine in darkness, and the darkness never comprehend it. (3.) The way in which spiritual light is diffused, is, by the preaching of the gospel; where this is not truly ministered, darkness must needs reign uncontrolled.

2. We are told what was the subject of his ministry from the time he began to open his commission; *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;* the same words and the same subject on which John, his harbinger, had preached before: for in the great essential doctrines, all faithful ministers of the gospel perfectly agree. Jesus preached repentance not only as what *we must do*, but *what he would give*, without which in vain were every call to repent.

z Mark 1. 16. Luke 5. 2. John 1. 42.
a Num. 34. 11. Deut. 3. 17. Josh. 11. 2. & 19. 35. ch. 14. 34. John 6. 1.
b John 1. 37. Acts 2. 1. ch. 16. 24. 1 Cor. 11. 1.
c Luke 5. 10. Ezek. 47. 10. Acts iii—xix. 1 Cor. 3. 5.
d Ps. 119. 60. Gal. 1. 16. ch. 10. 37. & 19. 27. Mark 10. 28. 1 Kin. 19. 19, 20.
e Mark 1. 19. ch. 10. 2. & 17. 1. & 20. 20, 21. & 26. 37. Luke 9. 54. Acts 12. 1, 18. Rev. 1. 1.
f Mark 1. 20. Luke 14. 33. & 5. 11. 1 Kin. 19. 19, 20.

18. ¶ [z] And Jesus, walking by the [a] sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19. And he said unto them, [b] follow me, and I will make you [c] fishers of men. 20. And they [d] straightway left *their* nets, and followed him. 21. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, [e] James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and he called them. 22. [f] And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

Verses 18—22. Christ being now about to erect his kingdom in the world, he is pleased to make choice of certain persons to be the constant attendants of his ministry, and spectators of his miracles, that they might afterwards go forth to tell of the things they had heard and seen, and spread the gospel of their Master to the ends of the earth.

1. The persons he made choice of were such, as to human view were very unfit instruments for the work; but the more evident would it be that the power was of God, and not of them, when afterwards they appeared so mighty in word and deed. They were by occupation fishermen, whom Jesus, as he walked by the seashore, saw employed in their honest and laborious vocation: the first two were casting a net into the sea; brethren by blood as well as business; their names Simon and Andrew; men unlettered, unknown, and unnoticed: the next two were of the like employment, and with their father Zebedee mending their nets. *Note*, (1.) Not only to the poor, was the gospel preached by our Lord, but from them the great pillars of the church were taken: let them therefore never be despised. (2.) It is happy in a family, when brethren in blood are brethren in the Lord, and heirs together of the grace of life. (3.) Industry is highly commendable: and Jesus wills that all his servants should be found well employed; idleness is the sure characteristic of Satan's service.

2. They had it seems before, see John i. 37. become acquainted with Christ, but now they are called to constant attendance upon him, *Follow me;* and, by an image taken from their present employment, he lets them know the more honourable service for which he designed them, *I will make you fishers of men*, the instruments of gathering souls by the gospel into his church. And what he calls them to, he will qualify them for: in following him they shall learn a wisdom which the schools can never teach them. *Note*, (1.) Unless ministers have a divine call, as well as a human ordination, they will run without being sent, and can expect no blessing in their work. (2.) None can truly preach Christ, who have not first faithfully followed him. (3.) If in our ordinary vocations diligence is necessary, how much more needful is it, that fishers of men should be indefatigable and laborious, when the gain of immortal souls will so amply repay their toils.

3. These disciples immediately obeyed the call, quitting their employment, and leaving their dearest relatives, to devote and attach themselves entirely to their divine Lord and Master: such power had his constraining word, and so readily and cheerfully did they follow him. *Note*, (1.) When Christ effectually calls a sinner, such power accompanies his word, as draws the heart by irresistible bonds of love unto his blessed self. (2.) There are seasons, when for the sake of Christ we must be ready to part with all. (3.) Those who are employed in the ministry, have especial need to detach themselves from worldly concerns, that they may give themselves wholly up to their awful trust and charge.

g Gen. 3. 15. & 49. 10. Deut. 18 15, 18. Is. 61. 1. & 42. 4, 7. & 35. 3—6. ch. 9. 35. Mark 1. 25. Luke 4. 43, 44.
h Luke 4. 37, 40. Is. 52. 13. & 53. 12. & 45. 22. Exod. 15. 26. Dan. 2. 44. Acts 10. 38. Gen. 3. 15. & 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 49. 6. & 60. 1, 2. Zech. 8. 20—23. Deut. 32. 43. Heb. 7. 26. John 6. 37. Rev. 7. 4, 9, 10. Mark 3. 7.
* A small province, so called because it contained ten cities; it lay on the border of Palestine, towards Syria. Mark 7. 31.—*Diodati.*

23. ¶ And [g] Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. 24. And [h] his fame went throughout all Syria. And they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. 25. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from** Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judea, and *from* beyond Jordan.

Verses 23—25. We have here,

1. Christ's labours as a preacher. All Galilee heard his teaching; he appeared publicly in their synagogues, and published *the gospel of the kingdom*, the glad tidings of salvation, exhorting his hearers to that repentance and newness of life, which became those who had received the grace of God in truth.

2. His cures as a physician, wrought in confirmation of his doctrine. He did good to men's bodies as well as souls, and, by a word, healed *all manner of sickness and diseases* among the people, however violent, inveterate, or of long standing: the incurables of other physicians went from him restored to perfect health and soundness. Nor did he merely relieve the most tormenting disorders of the body, but the more deplorable ones of the mind: the lunatic recovered the perfect exercise of his reason: and the possessed, whose bodies by divine permission Satan's legions had seized and miserably harassed, were set free, and the foul fiends ejected. No painful operations, no tedious course of medicine, almost as bad as the malady, were employed: a word, a touch completed the cure; and all was *freely* done, without money and without price. The most wretched, the poorest never applied in vain. No marvel that his fame spread through the adjacent coasts of Syria, and that multitudes of patients sought this great Physician's help. His cures bespoke his character, and vouched for his mission; they were innumerable, public, immediate, perfect, such as none could dispute or gainsay, his very enemies being judges. And they represent the more noble cures of men's souls, by divine grace, from all the diseases of sin, wherein we see the Saviour's power still displayed.

2. His popularity arising from both. An immense auditory from all parts, near and distant, assembled, curious to hear, or desirous to be healed, or convinced by his preaching and miracles, or enviously waiting for an opportunity to destroy him. *Note*, (1.) The preachers of the gospel will be generally popular; their message engages the attention of an auditory. (2.) Multitudes hear the gospel, but few receive it to the saving of their souls.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 30.

This chapter, with the two following, contains our Saviour's sermon on the mount; the design of which seems to be not only to rescue the law from the corrupt glosses of the elders, but, by opening its spirituality, to show the necessity of a better righteousness than our own, in order to our acceptance with God. After the preparatory circumstances, ver. 1, 2. *He shows*, 1. *Wherein true blessedness consists*, ver. 3—12. 2. *Prescribes the standing rules of his disciples' duty*, ver. 13—20. 3. *Gives the true exposition of God's law, in opposition to the corrupt glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees*, ver. 21—48.

1. AND seeing the multitudes, [a] he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, [b] his disciples came unto him: 2. And he [c] opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,—

a Is. 42. 2. John 5. 41.
b Ch. 4. 18—22. & 10. 2—4. Luke 6. 13—16.
c Prov. 10. 21. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Deut 18. 15, 18. Is. 50. 4. Prov. 8. 1, 2, 6. & 1. 20, &c.

Verses 1, 2. Among the multitudes who followed him, many professed themselves his disciples. For their sakes therefore especially, as well as for the improvement of all who attended him, he took the present opportunity to lay open to them at large the doctrines of truth. For the convenience of being heard, he went up to a mountain, where, surrounded by his disciples and seated amidst the attentive throng, *He opened his mouth, and taught them*; whilst they hung upon his lips, and in silence, with their eyes fixed on him, drank in the sacred truths he uttered. *Note*, It is enlivening and encouraging to the ministers of the gospel, to behold a numerous and attentive auditory; and that is sacred fire, which not the desire of being popular, but the hope of being extensively useful, kindles in their heart, and gives energy and warmth to their discourse.

3. [d] Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4. [e] Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. 5. [f] Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. 6. [g] Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. 7. [h] Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. 8. [i] Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9. [k] Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10. [l] Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11. [m] Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you * falsely for my sake. 12. [n] Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for [o] so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

d Is. 57. 15. & 66. 2. & 61. 1. Prov. 16. 19. & 29. 23. ch. 11. 25. & 13. 16. & 19. 23. Luke 6. 20, 24. & 14. 21, 33. Ps. 51. 17. 1 Cor. 1. 26—31. Jam. 2. 5.
e Ezek. 7. 16. & 9. 4. Is. 61. 3. Eccl. 7. 2, 3. Luke 6. 21. & 16. 25. John 16. 20. 2 Cor. 1. 4, 7. Jam. 1. 12. Rev. 7. 17. Is. 35. 10. & 51. 11, 12. & 30. 19. & 57. 18. Ps. 51. 17.
f Ps. 22. 26. & 37. 11. & 76. 9. & 149. 4. Is. 57. 15, 16. Zeph. 2. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 4, 13. Rev. 5. 10.
g Luke 1. 53. & 6. 21, 25. Ps. 42. 1, 2. & 63. 1, 2. & 84. 2. & 17. 15. & 65. 4. John 4. 14. & 6. 35. & 7. 37, 38. Is. 65. 13. & 44. 3. & 55. 10. Rev. 7. 17.
h Jam. 2. 13. Ps. 41. 1—3. & 18. 25. & 37. 25, 26. Prov. 14. 21. & 19. 17. ch. 6. 14. Mark 11. 25. Heb. 6. 10. Dan. 4. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 16. Heb. 4. 16.
i 1 Tim. 1. 5. Heb. 9. 14. & 10. 22. Ps. 18. 23. & 15. 2. & 24. 4. 1 John 3. 2, 3. Job 19. 26, 27. 1 Cor. 13. 12.
k 2 Cor. 5. 20. Rom. 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 4. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 16. Heb. 13. 20. & 12. 14. Rom. 14. 17—19.
l Luke 6. 22, 23. 1 Pet. 3. 14. & 4. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 12. & 3. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 8—17. 2 Thes. 1. 5—7. Rom. 8. 17, 18.
m Luke 6. 22. & 7. 33, 34. Ps. 35. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

* Gr. *lying*.
n Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 13. Luke 6. 23. Acts 5. 41. & 16. 25. Col. 1. 24.
o Neh. 9. 26. 2 Chr. 36. 16. ch. 23. 31—37. Acts 7. 52. 1 Thes. 2. 15.

Verses 3—12. To be happy is the universal desire; but whilst all pursue this as their aim, few, very few attain the accomplishment of their wishes; and the reason is evident: they mistake both where man's true happiness consists, and the means which lead to it; consequently are ever bewildered in a fruitless search, and tormented with continual disappointment. To divert us from our wrong pursuits, to inform us what is our true good, and to direct us to the attainment of real blessedness, is the gracious design of our adored Lord. Yet, to many, the doctrines he advances will appear paradoxical and strange; though, blessed be his name, every enlightened and converted soul will own, that, however strange they seem to others, they are found by his happy experience, to be indeed the true sayings of God.

In eight characters Christ shows wherein true blessedness consists; and pronounces on each, *Blessed are ye:* at present they are the truly happy souls on earth, and their reward awaiteth them eternally in heaven. O may this blessedness be mine!

The first beatitude:

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Wherein then does this *poverty of spirit* consist? I answer, (1.) In a deep and humbling sense of our own spiritual wants and wretchedness, which brings off the sinner from every dependance upon his own goodness for acceptance with God, and his own abilities to walk and please him, to a constant renunciation of himself, to a repose in his confidence on the blood and righteousness of Jesus alone, as his title to God's regard, and on the grace of Jesus for all-sufficiency to think or act aright. (2.) In an entire resignation of ourselves to God, and contentment with our lot; sitting loose to the world, and all the things of it; in poverty cheerful, our minds conformed to our condition; in prosperity humble, condescending, kind, and sympathizing with the necessitous. (3.) In low thoughts of ourselves, our abilities, attainments, and possessions, of whatever kind: in honour preferring others to ourselves, the last and least in our own opinion, and seeing much, very much to humble us, in the view of our misimprovement of those blessings which God hath bestowed on us, and in which he hath made us to differ from others. Now such as these are blessed in the present satisfaction arising from the exercise of such a spirit and temper, and in a happy freedom from the murmurs, repinings, discontent, and mortifications which make the proud and discontented perpetually uneasy. They are blessed with the experience of God's love and favour, who looks with delight and approbation on him that is poor and of a contrite spirit: and, as the summit of all felicity; *theirs is the kingdom of heaven;* the riches of the kingdom of grace below, and all the unsearchable riches of Christ and glory above, are their assured and eternal portion.

The second beatitude:

Blessed are they that mourn. We are apt to count mourners miserable, and to judge of happiness by the smiles of the countenance; but Christ teaches us a different lesson. Not that all who mourn are blessed: there is the mourning of discontent, the sorrow of the world that worketh death, the inconsolable tears of those who lament, like Micah, after their idols, and the melancholy of despair: these bring a curse and torment, instead of a blessing. The mourning here commended is, (1.) A penitential mourning over sin, in the views of our base ingratitude; a mourning after God, under darkness and desertion; a mourning over the dishonour brought upon him by the impieties of the

wicked, and the unfaithfulness of his people; a mourning over the distresses of the miserable, and especially a mourning over lost souls, which makes our tears, like those of Jesus, flow, whilst we are pouring forth before God our fervent prayers on their behalf. These are blessed: the tears shed for sin have a sweetness unutterable: a sacred pleasure mingles with them, to which all the noisy mirth of fools, exclusive of the heaviness which succeeds, is not to be compared; and they are the seed of eternal joy: for *they shall be comforted*, here below in a sense of God's love shed abroad in their hearts, in the consolations arising from a sense of pardoning love, in the sacred delight of beholding sinners turned from the evil of their ways; and, hereafter, in the eternal fruition of God, and the inconceivable blessedness thence arising, when every tear shall be wiped from our eyes, and we shall drink of pure, unsullied, and eternal pleasures, as out of a river.

The third beatitude:

Blessed are the meek. Respecting God, submissive to his word and providences; never replying against the one, or murmuring against the other: *respecting man*, mild, inoffensive, easy to be entreated, unmoved with provocation, forbearing and forgiving, resenting no injuries, actuated by no private revenge, in patience and peace possessing their souls; yet not mean-spirited, cowardly, and tame, through fear of man; but whilst in their own cause gentle as the lamb, in the cause of God and truth bold as lions; zealous to maintain the rights of others, whilst they recede from their own; and steady patrons of the injured and absent. They are blessed; they are, like their Lord, happy in themselves; beloved of all who know the value of such a spirit, and dear in the sight of God. *They shall inherit the earth*, shall have as much of this present world as is for their good; but above all, and what seems here chiefly intended, they shall have a part in that better *new earth*, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and be counted inheritors among the saints in light.

The fourth beatitude:

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. The righteousness here spoken of as the object of desire is, (1.) *The imputed righteousness* of Jesus Christ, which the guilty sinner who feels his spiritual nakedness, eagerly longs for, as the famished cry for food, or the parched throat craves the cooling draught, assured without it he must perish. (2.) *The implanted righteousness* which the Spirit of Jesus communicates: and for this the poor and helpless sinner hungers more than for his daily bread; inasmuch as the life and health of his soul are infinitely preferable to the life and health of his body. These *are blessed* souls, for every such desire is in a measure the proof of our possessing the righteousness after which we pant; *and they shall be filled* out of the fulness of Jesus, who hath enough of both to supply all our wants, to make them completely righteous in himself here, and to fill them with joy and peace in believing, and hereafter to perfect them in holiness, and bring them to happiness eternal.

The fifth beatitude:

Blessed are the merciful. This is the most amiable character of God, and herein his people resemble him. (1.) Mercy is *their* temper; they have a heart that can be touched with human wretchedness; and though they may not have it always in their power to relieve, they are ever tenderly compassionate towards the distresses of the miserable. (2.) Mercy *is their practice;* so far as their power extends, they are ready to show mercy; yea, they take delight therein, and count this work its own reward. They are merciful *to men's souls;* pitying and instructing the ignorant, warning the unruly, comforting the feeble minded, helping the weak, and labouring to snatch the wicked as brands from the burning. They are merciful to *men's bodies;* relieving the necessities of the poor, the friendless, and the destitute; they are eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, physicians to the sick, supports to the aged and infirm; ready to assist with their advice, their purse, or influence; according to the various distresses of those who apply to them: yea, diligent to discover those objects of modest worth and neglected indigence, that are ashamed or backward to apply for relief. They are merciful even *to the brute beasts;* not only their servants and labourers are never vexed with unreasonable burdens; their very cattle share their clemency, and own the kind and tender master. This is blessedness. They who are thus like God in spirit, will taste something of divine felicity; and of all the joys beneath the sun, none will be found comparable with the exalted pleasure of doing good. And *they shall obtain mercy;* such merciful ones plead no merit; the more they are enabled to do, the less opinion they entertain of their deserts, as every advance in grace brings proportionably greater light, and therewith greater humility. They cast themselves, therefore, wholly on the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, and they shall find mercy of the Lord in the great day; and more they need not wish for, since his mercy includes eternal life and glory.

The sixth beatitude:

Blessed are the pure in heart; who, by faith, are cleansed from all allowed hypocrisy, covetousness, pride, and sensuality; jealous to keep themselves unspotted from the world; maintaining undefiled religion; in simplicity and godly sincerity walking with God; and desiring, as the summit of their happiness, to be perfect as their Father who is in heaven is perfect. They are blessed in the present paths of pleasantness and peace in which they go, and *they shall see God* as the consummation of all felicity; be with him where he is; be like him as he is; and, from the light of his countenance, and the constant effusions of his love, drink in blessedness unutterable and eternal.

The seventh beatitude:

Blessed are the peace-makers; men of peace themselves, and desirous to cultivate the like disposition among others: following it with all men, as far as is consistent with truth and purity; averse to all disputes and angry contentions; softening the spirits of the exasperated; and kindly interposing, though sometimes at the expense of much ill will, to repair the breaches, and heal the divisions, which the fiery and self-willed spirits of others have occasioned; the first to forgive, the last to be offended; and, where others prepare themselves for battle, still ready, though injured, to seek reconciliation. Such men shall be *blessed* in their deed: they shall be accounted faithful subjects of the Prince of peace, and *be called the children of God*, who is the God of peace; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, appointed to reign with him in glory everlasting.

The eighth beatitude:

Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake. All who follow Christ must expect his cross; and every godly man, as long as a child of wickedness is in the world, must suffer persecution of one kind or other: where power is with oppressors, there it will reach to fines, imprisonment, and even death itself; where milder governments give protection from grosser injuries, there the lower methods of reviling, calumny, falsehood, insult, ridicule, and vile misrepresentation, will be the lot of Christ's disciples. Various pretexts, indeed, are commonly used to give a specious colouring to this conduct in lands professing godliness, as if it was not righteousness men persecuted, but what they were pleased to call enthusiasm, or to stamp with some other opprobrious name: but whatever occasional offences may have been given, the ground and root of the malignity shown against the people of God is, their profession of the doctrines of the divine righteousness, which the proud and wise men must ever scoff at; and the practice of experimental godliness, which is equally reproving and offensive to the formal and pro-

fane: on which accounts therefore, now and ever, the few faithful must expect to follow Jesus bearing his reproach. But however they are regarded among men, they are pronounced blessed by the Author of all blessing, and theirs *is the kingdom of heaven.* Nor need any now marvel at these things among us, when among God's professing people of old, *the prophets* were so *persecuted* before us, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Elijah, &c. and therefore we are commanded *to rejoice and be exceeding glad* to be numbered among such worthies; and expect that *great reward* in glory which God hath promised to those who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek, with them, glory, honour, and immortality.

13. ¶ [p] Ye are the salt of the earth: [q] but if the salt hath lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14. [r] Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15. Neither do men [s] light a candle, and put it under † a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16. Let your light so shine before men; [t] that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

p Col. 4. 6. 2 Cor. 2. 14, 16.
q Mark 9. 49, 50. Luke 14. 34. Heb. 6. 4—6. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21.
r John 1. 9. Phil. 2. 15. Rev. 1. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 5. John 12. 36. Luke 16. 8. Eph. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 6. 14. Prov. 4. 18.
s Mark 4. 21. Luke 8. 16. & 11. 33.
† The modius was about a peck measure.
t 1 Pet. 2. 12. Phil. 2. 15, 16. Prov. 4. 18. John 15. 8. 1 Pet. 3. 1, 10. 1 Cor. 14. 25.

Verses 13—16. These words are directed to the disciples in general, and to the apostles and ministers of Christ in particular, and their character is set forth under two similitudes.

1. As the *salt of the earth.* Their lives and conversations must be exemplary; not only free from taint themselves, that is, from the allowed practice of sin, but endeavouring to preserve others from the putrefaction of it; seasoning the earth with the doctrines of the gospel; diffusing the *savour of the knowledge of Christ* in every place, and thus becoming blessings to mankind. But should they depart from the truth, disgrace their character, degenerate into lukewarmness and indifference, or apostatize to erroneous principles and licentious practices, their state, if not utterly desperate, is seldom ever retrieved; like stars, they fall to rise no more: though their profession may continue, their savour is lost; they become insipid and tasteless, and are doomed *to be cast out and trodden under foot of men,* as worthless and contemptible, expelled from the communion of the saints below, and everlastingly excluded from the assembly of the blessed above.

2. As *the light of the world,* to spread the bright truths of salvation among benighted mortals, and point out to them the path which leads to eternal day; especially to lead sinners to Christ, the light of life: and in so doing, they would be distinguished as *a city set on a hill,* and needed peculiar circumspection whilst so many eyes would be fixed upon them. Every minister, every Christian, stands on an eminence; more is expected from them than from others, and many watch for their halting; as candles are lighted not to be covered; but to be set *on a candlestick and give light to all in the house,* so were they endued with gifts and graces to illuminate the church of Christ, and diffuse the gospel word around, neither through fear nor shame concealing ought of the whole counsel of God; and in their lives, as well as lips, must their light shine, in every work of faith and labour of love which may be profitable to men's bodies or souls; that, whilst others are stirred up to holy emulation thereby, abundant praise also may redound to God, who is then eminently glorified, when his people bring forth much fruit.

17. ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, [u] but to fulfil. 18. For verily I say unto you, [x] Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19. [y] Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the [z] kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them,* the same shall be [a] called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed [b] *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye [c] shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

u Ch. 3. 15. Ps. 40. 6—3. Is. 42. 21. Gal. 4. 4, 5. Rom. 10. 4. & 3. 31. & 8. 3, 4. Col. 2. 17. Gal. 3. 24. John 8. 29.
x Luke 16. 17. Is. 51. 6. & 40. 8. Rom. 3. 31. & 8. 3, 4. & 10. 4. Dan. 9. 24. John 17. 4.
y Jam. 2. 10. Ps. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 3. 15. 1 Sam. 2. 30.
z Ver. 3, 20. ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17. & 13. 11, 31, 41, 43. & 25. 1, 14, 34.
a 1 Sam. 2. 30. ch. 19. 28. Dan. 12. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 4.
b Ch. 23. 3—28. Rom. 9. 31. & 10. 3. Luke 11. 39. & 18. 11. ch. 15. 3.
c John 3. 3, 5. Heb. 12. 14. Rev. 21. 27. & 19. 8.

Verses 17—20. As the former verses seemed particularly addressed to his disciples, our Lord here more generally directs his discourse to the multitude.

1. He obviates the prejudices he knew many would entertain, and confutes the objections his enemies would make, as if he was about to abrogate the law, and introduce a new system, when in fact he only meant to rescue the oracles of God from the corrupt glosses the false teachers had put on them.

(1.) He is not come to destroy the law and the prophets, as some of them might think, but to fulfil them. To fulfil the *moral law,* by his own perfect obedience; *the ceremonial,* by answering, in his own person and oblation of himself, all the types and figures; the *prophets,* by accomplishing all their predictions; yea, and so far from loosening the obligations to obedience, he came in perfect correspondence with God's ministers before him, to enforce them, and to vindicate the everlasting rule of moral righteousness, from the mistakes and adulterations of the Scribes and Pharisees; to explain its spirituality and extent, and from right principles, to urge the practice of true holiness.

(2.) He asserts the perpetuity and eternal obligation of the moral law: whilst heaven and earth endures, not a tittle shall pass from it unaccomplished, nor the least of its commands ever be abolished. It is the transcript of God's holiness; he can require nothing less; the least failure is eternally mortal; and though we are relieved by the blood and righteousness of our Divine Substitute, from the condemning power of the law, our duty still remains the same, and we are as much as ever bound to regard this as the one unerring rule of obedience. Whoever, therefore, dares avowedly to transgress the least command, and *teach others to do so* by his example or his preaching, as if it might be done with impunity, which was the case with many of the Rabbins of that day, he shall be rejected of God as least esteemed and worthless, and have no part in the kingdom of heaven; whilst they who, by the purity of their doctrine and the exemplariness of their conduct, enforce the necessity of obedience to every command, accounting none too trivial to be observed, they shall be esteemed and honoured of God as faithful here, and exalted to eternal glory hereafter. *Note,* (1.) The least sin hath eternal death for its wages. (2.) They who extenuate the evil of sin, and promise transgressors impunity, will be reckoned with as the most daring rebels against God's government.

2. He professes it his purpose to enforce a righteousness beyond that of their most admired characters, the Scribes and Pharisees, who were thought even to go to works of supereroga-

tion; and yet, what perhaps they would hear with astonishment, he assures his hearers, their righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, or they may never hope to enter the kingdom of heaven. The most extensive Pharisaical righteousness of doctrinal orthodoxy, scrupulous exactness in the forms of religion, abstinence from grosser vices, accompanied with whatever alms, or fastings, or prayers, comes infinitely short of the spirituality of God's law; a perfect righteousness is required, which can alone be found in the adored Jesus, and that everlasting righteousness he was ordained to *bring in*, which faith embraces, and, working by love, its genuine fruit, enables the redeemed to act on principles a Pharisee never knew; it purifies the heart, engages the soul to a universal delight in the law of God after the inward man, and begets the desire of unreserved obedience thereunto. And though in many things we will offend, yet are our persons and services then acceptable to God in Jesus Christ, whilst all the duties of the formal and self-righteous, when strained to the highest pitch, are only a greater abomination in the sight of God.

21. ¶ Ye have heard that it was said ‡ by them of old time, [d] Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22. But [e] I say unto you, That [f] whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, [g] Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou [h] fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23. [i] Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24. Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25. [k] Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26. Verily I say unto thee, [l] Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

‡ Or *to them.*
d Exod. 20. 13. Deut. 5. 17. Gen. 9. 5, 6. Lev. 24. 21. Num. 35. 16, 17, 30.
e Is. 50. 4. Deut. 18. 18. Exod. 23. 21. Heb. 2. 3.
f 1 John 3. 15. Prov. 3. 29.
g Empty fop. 1 Sam. 20. 3. 2 Sam. 16. 7. & 6. 20. not Jam. 2. 20.
h Graceless wretch; not as ch. 3. 7. & 12. 34. & 23. 13, 17, &c. John 8. 44. Acts 13. 10. & 23. 3.
i Prov. 25. 8, 9. Mark 9. 50. 1 Tim. 2. 8. Rom. 12. 18. & 14. 19. Phil. 4. 7. Eph. 4. 26, 27. Heb. 13. 1. Jam. 3. 13—18. Job 42. 8. Lev. 19. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 7.
k Luke 12. 58. Gen. 32. 3—20. 1 Sam. 25. 28. Prov. 25. 8. with Job 22. 21. Ps. 32. 6. Is. 55. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Heb. 3. 7—13.
l Luke 12. 59. Prov 25. 8. John 15. 22. with 2 Thes. 1. 9. ch. 13. 41. & 25. 46.

Verses 21—26. Our Lord here gives a spiritual exposition of part of the moral law, and very different from that of their Pharisaical teachers.

1. He begins with the sixth commandment. *Ye have heard* out of the law, read in the synagogue every sabbath day, *that it was said by them of old time*, by *the ancients*, the elders, who expounded the law, or *to the ancients*, their forefathers, *thou shalt not kill;* and, confining the command merely to the act of murder, they taught, that only such as had been thus capitally criminal, were liable to the sword of justice, either of God or man, excluding all inferior deeds of the like tendency, from being accounted breaches of the law. But Christ teaches them far otherwise: *I say unto you*, and he speaks as having authority, *that* not only you are forbidden to murder yourselves or any other person, directly or indirectly, but whosoever entertains rash or causeless anger, or harbours a malicious wish or design against any man, though it never be executed, is liable to God's judgment, and criminal at his bar, as a murderer in his heart. If the evil within break forth into opprobrious or contemptuous language, such as, *Thou empty fellow*, it deserves the cognizance of the Sanhedrim; but if it proceeds yet farther, to bitter revilings and rash censures, to say, *Thou fool*, thou vile reprobate, such a breach of the law shall be punished with hell fire. This should, (1.) Awaken in our minds a deep sense of our guilt and sin, and humble us before God in the review of our past transgressions; well may we cry on the rehearsal of this law, *Lord have mercy upon us.* (2.) It should make us more watchful over our hearts, to suppress the risings of anger on trivial provocations, the inadvertencies or mistakes of others, or our own groundless surmises; yea, though the provocation be great, and the cause of anger just, we must see that it be not excessive, vehement, hurtful, or abiding. Our lips should be under the like restraint, that nothing hasty, perverse, spiteful, contemptible, reproachful, insolent, abusive, or malignant, proceed out of our mouth. The right government of the tongue is the sure proof of grace in the heart.

2. He recommends the exercise of that Christian love and peace, which is the fulfilling of the law; and if offences come, as they will in this corrupted state, we should be ever ready to confess our faults, ask pardon, make restitution, and seek reconciliation; and this,

(1.) Because till then we can offer to God no acceptable service; for all our worship and duties without charity are nothing worth. If therefore we have done an injury to any man, such as the breach of the commandment above remarked, before we presume to offer our gifts at God's altar, our praises, prayers, or whatever religious services we propose, we must reflect wherein and how much we have offended, and seek immediate reconciliation; since hatred and uncharitableness would make our best works an abomination, and love is better than all burnt-offering. Should our brother continue inexorable, and refuse all the submissions we are ready to make, we may not then be restrained from drawing near to God, and may humbly expect that forgiveness from him which we cannot obtain from man.

(2.) Because till this is done, the wrath of God abideth on us. For as it would be highly prudent for the debtor to seek to accommodate matters with his creditor before a suit commences, lest he should be summoned before the civil magistrate, and, the proof being clear, he should be consigned to the officer and cast into prison, without the possibility of deliverance; much more should the guilty sinner solicitously desire reconciliation with God and man, lest dying in hatred and uncharitableness, his iniquities should witness against him at God's bar, and he should perish everlastingly. God is every sinner's *adversary;* our eternity depends on being at peace with him; therefore we need be anxious about it: the moment of time which is hurrying by, is the space allotted us to agree with him; therefore every delay is highly dangerous: if we die in unpardoned sin, we have nothing to expect but a fearful judgment, where we are sure to be cast; the officers of vengeance are ready to execute the sentence, and the prison of hell is prepared to receive the condemned soul, where, in everlasting burnings, the guilty must be for ever paying, yet be never able to discharge the debt they owe to inexorable Justice.

27. ¶ Ye have heard that it was said ‖ by them of old time, [m] Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28. But I say unto you, [n] That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29. [o] And if thy right eye [p] offend thee,

‖ Gr. *to them.*
m Exod. 20. 14. Deut. 5. 18. Lev. 20. 10. Deut. 22. 21—25. Eph. 5. 5. Heb. 13. 4.
n Job 31. 1. Prov. 6. 25. 2 Pet. 2. 14.
o Ch. 18. 8, 9. & 19, 20. Mark 9. 43, 45, 47.
p Or *do cause thee to offend.* Ps. 119. 37. Job 31. 1. 2 Pet. 2. 14. Col. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 27. Rom. 8. 13. Gal. 5. 24. Prov. 1. 10, 15. & 4. 14, 15. & 5. 8—14.

pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into * hell. 30. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. 31. It hath been said, [q] Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: 32. But I say unto you, That [r] whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of † fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

* The Greek word *Gehenna*, here rendered *hell*, is compounded of two Hebrew words *gai* Hinnom, that is *the valley of Hinnom*, a place near Jerusalem, in which children were cruellysacrificed by fire to Moloch the idol of the Ammonites: 2 Chr. 33. 6. It was also called Tophet. In process of time this place came to be considered an emblem of hell; and its name was employed to designate that placeof torment, reserved for the wicked in a future state.—*Jones' Bib. Dict.*

q Deut. 24. 1. ch. 9. 7. Mark 10. 4.

r Mark 10. 11, 12. Luke 16. 18. 1. Cor. 7. 10, 11.

Mal. 2. 14, 15. ch. 19. 9. Rom. 7. 3. † Fornication before marriage, or adultery after it.

Verses 27—32. The seventh commandment is here expounded by the same infallible interpreter; and well may we say, in the view of the spirituality of the law, *Thy commandment is exceeding broad.* The commandment delivered *to the ancients*, at mount Sinai said, *Thou shalt not commit adultery;* and the Pharisaical expositors had confined the breach of it literally to this grossest act of lewdness, excluding all the lower degrees of impurity in thought, word, or deed: but Christ gives a very different extent to the command, to confound their proud claims, who dared to boast they were *no adulterers.* Luke xviii. 11.

1. Every unchaste desire in the heart, is adultery in the sight of God. The eye, the hand, the feet, the tongue, that by amorous glances, wanton dalliance, or impure discourse, tend to kindle the unhallowed fire of lust, or blow it up into a flame; and every contrivance to gratify this impurity of heart, though it be never brought to effect, involves the conscience in the same horrid guilt.

2. We are commanded therefore to cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye which would lead us to offend; not literally indeed to maim or mutilate our bodies, though that, if commanded, should be readily complied with, rather than commit sin; but figuratively it signifies, however near and dear to us the sin may be, by long habit become incorporated as it were with our very frame, and hard to part with, as these most useful members of our bodies, yet must it be torn away, and cast from us with abhorrence. The *heart* must be kept with all diligence; no lewd vain thoughts harboured, especially when alone, solitude being often a great temptation to impurity. *The eyes* must be restrained from gazing on a tempting object, and kept as under a covenant from looking on a maid; yea every object which would awaken evil desire must be shunned; lascivious representations on the stage, impure pictures, books of amours, lewd plays, &c. not to forget curious, expensive, and indecent dress, that exposes the person with a design to catch the wandering eye, and at once declares the spirit of the temptress, whilst it is a net to ensnare unstable souls. *The hand*, the foot, that can convey the silent inuendo, must be restrained from every motion of evil, *since he that toucheth her shall not be innocent. The tongue* must be rather plucked out, than utter corrupt communication; or be suffered, by discourse grossly impure, or more dangerously and wittily lascivious, in sly insinuations and double meanings, to breathe poison into the ears of the unwary. As the grand means to restrain these evils, every approach to them must be guarded by daily abstinence and self-denial, making no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

3. A powerful argument is used to enforce this. Raging appetite will not be conquered by any thing short of the terrors of the Lord. The damnation of hell is the wages of uncleanness; and they who burn with impure desires, must lie down in everlasting burnings, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; and dearly do men purchase carnal delights at this price of eternal misery. The sentence is repeated, because men are very unwilling to believe what sounds so terrible in their ears; but the decree is fixed and immutable; those who refuse to fear it now must feel it for ever. Better therefore, far better is it to suffer the present crucifixion of vile affections, than indulge them at the penalty of never ending torments.

4. All divorce is unlawful, except in the case of adultery. The Jews indeed, for the hardness of their hearts, were permitted to put away their wives by a public instrument before witnesses; but this was contrary to the original institution of marriage, and therefore our Lord utterly condemns all separation, except in case of a breach of the matrimonial bond: and should the person divorced marry again, she would commit adultery, as well as he who should take her to wife, and the crimes of both would also lie at the door of him who put her away; for they who lead others into sin, shall be chargeable with all the guilt they bring upon them.

33. ¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said ‡ by them of old time, [s] Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: 34. But I say unto you, [t] Swear not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's [u] throne: 35. Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is [x] the city of the great King. 36. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black: 37. [y] But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these [z] cometh of evil.

‡ Gr. *to the ancients.*

s Exod. 20. 7. Lev. 19. 12. Deut. 5. 11. & 23. 21—23. Num. 30. 2. Eccl. 5. 4. Ps. 76. 11. & 50. 14. & 119. 106. & 61. 5, 8. Nah. 1. 15.

t Jam. 5. 12. Eccl. 9. 2.

u Is. 66. 1. & 57. 15. Ps. 115. 3, 16. & 99. 5. ch. 23. 22. Rev. 4. 2.

x 2 Chr. 6. 6. Ps. 48. 2. & 87. 1, 2. & 78. 68, 69.

y Jam. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 1. 17, 18.

z Ch. 15. 19. & 13. 19.

Verses 33—37. The third commandment forbade perjury, and enjoined the performance of the vows which were made unto the Lord, or to men, under the sanction of an oath in his name; and hereunto the scribes restricted the commandment, accounting oaths in common allowable, if true; reckoning it no sin to swear by the creatures, and that such oaths laid them under no obligation to fulfil them: but Christ would give them a better exposition.

I say unto you, Swear not at all. Not that every oath is unlawful, since in matters of controversy, before a judge, an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife; and on solemn occasions, such appeals to God are high acts of religious worship, see 2 Cor. i. 23. but all rash swearing, on trivial occasions, in common discourse, is forbidden, with all unnecessary multiplication of oaths, under which this land groans. God's sacred name must never be taken in the lips thoughtlessly, irreverently, wantonly; nor may we use any creature to swear by, neither heaven nor earth, nor the temple, nor our heads, our lives, our souls; much less the idols of heathenism, such as Jupiter or the like, this being equally criminal as to swear by the name of God himself. *Therefore our communication must be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay:* simply affirming or denying, without oath or imprecation; *for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil*, or *from the evil one* the devil, or from the fountain of evil in the corrupted heart. Where more than simple affirmation or denial is thought to be necessary, there is implied a suspicion of veracity, which every rash oath for confirmation will serve but to increase; for they

who make no conscience of an oath, cannot be supposed to make conscience of a lie.

38. ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, [a] An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39. But I say unto you, [b] That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40. And [c] if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also. 41. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. 42. [d] Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

a Exod. 21. 24. Lev. 24. 20. Deut. 19. 19, 21.
b Prov. 20. 22. & 24. 29. Lev. 19. 18. Luke 6. 29. Rom. 12. 17, 19. 1 Cor. 6. 7. Is. 50. 6. Lam. 3. 30. 1 Thes. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9.
c Luke 6. 29. 1 Cor. 6. 7. ch. 27. 32.
d Deut. 15. 8, 10. Luke 6. 30—35. Rom. 12. 20. Prov. 3. 27, 28. & 19. 17.

Verses 38—42. The law of retaliation, Exod. xxi. 24. which permitted the magistrate to execute a punishment of the same kind as the injury; or, as some suppose, to fix a mulct upon the offender equivalent to the harm done; had been grievously abused to extortion, and pleaded in vindication of private revenge. Christ therefore teaches his disciples of what spirit they should be. Magistracy is God's institution, and the punishment of men's crimes righteous and just, but all private revenge is forbidden. It is true indeed that self-preservation, the care of our families, the honour of God, and the good of society, may often make the redress of injuries not only lawful, but necessary; but in innumerable instances our duty is, meekly and silently to bear and forbear.

1. If a man strike us on the right cheek, or otherwise injure our person, or treat us with indignity, we may not render evil for evil, and by a return of the blow inflame the quarrel, but put up with it; or, if it be needful, put the case into the hand of the civil magistrate: and though our patience may be counted pusillanimity, and our forbearing may expose us to fresh insults, as if in fact we turned the other cheek, yet it is infinitely better for conscience' sake towards God, thus to suffer, than to maintain our character, or gratify our revenge, by a challenge or a fray, which must provoke his wrath and end in our perdition.

2. In cases of injury to our property, whether by litigious, malicious, and false persecutions, or in private disputes, though our coat were taken from us, it were better, for peace' sake, to give our inner garment too, than fly to the law for redress: for if the matter of injury be small, which we may sustain without hurting our families, it is not only the most pious, but most prudent also, to sit down with the first loss, since the expenses of the suit often exceed the value of what we may recover.

3. If we are compelled by force to accompany a person a mile, rather than struggle or contend, it is better to go two. And thus in all other cases of affronts and injuries the like rule holds. Hard tasks indeed for flesh and blood! but let it be remembered, *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.*

4. We must not only revenge no injuries, but do every kindness in our power to our neighbour; ready to relieve the wants of every real object of charity which presents itself to us, according to our abilities; and freely lending, without interest, to the industrious, but necessitous: a small sum to help such a one in his trade, without any real loss to ourselves, may be of vast service to him. And in the manner also of exercising our bounty we never should appear reluctant, frowning, or giving as if it was extorted from us; but be happy to have it in our power to relieve the wants of our poor petitioners.

43. ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, [e] Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44. But I say unto you, [f] Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; 45. That [g] ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: [h] for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46. [i] For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the [k] publicans the same? 47. And [l] if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more *than others?* do not even the publicans so? 48. ¶ [m] Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

e Lev. 19. 17, 18. Exod. 17. 14, 16. Deut. 7. 1, 2. & 23. 3—6. & 25. 7. Ps. 139. 21, 22.
f Luke 6. 27. & 23. 34. 2 Kin. 6. 22. Acts 7. 60. Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 14, 20. 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 3. 9.
g May be manifested. John 13. 35. 1 John 3. 1, 14—18. Luke 6. 35, 36.
h Job 25. 3. & 5. 10. & 38. 26. Acts 14. 17. Ps 145. 9.
i Luke 6. 32. ver. 47.
k Infamously wicked tax-gatherers, ch. 9. 10, 11. & 11. 19. & 18. 17. & 21. 31, 32. Luke 18. 11, 13.
l Exod. 23. 4, 5. Lev. 19. 17, 18. Deut. 15. 7, 8. & 22. 1. ch. 10. 12. with Luke 10. 5.
m Lev. 11. 44. & 19. 2. & 20. 7, 26. Luke 6. 36. Job 2. 3. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Eph. 5. 1, 2. Phil. 4. 8. Col. 1. 28. & 3. 8—15. & 4. 12. Jam. 1. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. 1 John 2. 6 29. & 3. 3—10.

Verses 43—48. The whole law being fulfilled in one word, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, this is here insisted upon, and who that neighbour is, declared.

The Jewish expositors had vilely corrupted this divine precept by the addition they had made to it, *Thou shalt hate thine enemy.* And as they confined their neighbour to those merely of their own religion and nation, they interpreted this as a command to hate all mankind beside, in direct opposition to the letter of God's law, Exod. xxiii. 4, 5. Deut. xxiii. 7. But Christ teaches us very differently.

1. He recommends universal charity: *I say unto you, Love your enemies.* We cannot place confidence or take complacence in them or their evil ways; but we must bear all good will towards them, remark with satisfaction whatever is commendable in them, and sincerely desire their present and eternal happiness; returning their curses with blessings, showing every act of kindness to their bodies and souls, who express the bitterest enmity against us; and, if they will suffer us to do no more, at least praying for those who dispitefully use and persecute us; such being the treatment the true disciples of Jesus may expect, and such the gracious returns they are bound to make. And this is the distinguishing spirit of Christianity, and what nothing but the grace of Jesus can produce.

2. He enforces his command with these strong arguments:

(1.) In so doing we shall resemble our Father who is in heaven, and prove our adoption of him, who, in the distribution of his providential mercies, causes his sun to rise, and his rain to fall indiscriminately upon the evil and the good. *Note*, (1.) Our commonest, though most unnoticed blessings, are those for which we are most deeply indebted to God. (2.) No man's state is to be known by any outward gifts of providence; the just and unjust share them alike. (3.) If God thus sets us the example, we must diligently copy it.

(2). We must show the distinguishing spirit of our profession, and adorn it. If we loved only them who love us, or paid civility and respect to our brethren alone, what thanks would be due, where the obligation was reciprocal, and where even publicans would rival us. We must do more than others, if we profess more; not confining our regards to our nearest friends or relations, to those of our own party or nation, but opening our hearts wide as the world, and doing good to all, even to the evil and unthankful.

(3.) Our eye must be fixed not on the attainments of others, but on that perfection which is in our Father; and to be perfect like him, should be our holy ambition; not that we shall be able

absolutely to attain thereunto, but after this we must reach, and take up with nothing short of it. And as this must be our study, labour, and prayer in general; so particularly in this love towards our enemies, should we desire to resemble him, which is a temper truly divine and godlike.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 30.

Christ having, in the former chapter, armed his disciples against the corrupt doctrines and opinions of the Scribes and Pharisees, next rebukes the corrupt practices of which they were notoriously guilty, hypocrisy and worldly-mindedness; sins which, of all others, the professors of religion need to guard against, as most easily besetting those who have escaped the grosser pollutions that are in the world, through lust. We are here cautioned, 1. *Against hypocrisy; we must not be as the hypocrites are, nor do as the hypocrites do.* (1.) *In giving of alms,* ver. 1—4. (2.) *In prayer,* ver. 5—8. *We are here taught what to pray for, and how to pray,* ver. 9—13. *And to forgive,* ver. 14, 15. (3.) *In fasting,* ver. 16—18. 2. *Against worldly-mindedness,* [1.] *In our choice, which is the destroying sin of hypocrites,* ver. 19—24. [2.] *In our cares, which is the disquieting sin of many gracious souls,* ver. 25—34.

1. TAKE heed that ye do not your [a] alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward * of your Father which is in heaven. 2. Therefore [b] when thou doest *thine* alms, [c] do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have [d] their reward. 3. But, when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; 4. [e] That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father, which [f] seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee [g] openly.

a Or *righteousness.* Deut. 24. 13. Ps. 112. 9. Dan. 4. 27. 2 Cor. 9. 9, 10.
* Or *with.*
b Rom. 12. 8. Eph. 4. 28. Prov. 19. 17.
c Or *cause not a trumpet to be sounded.* Prov. 20. 6. 2 Kin. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Hos. 10. 1. Zech. 7. 5, 6.
d Ver. 5, 16. *i. e.* human applause.
e Luke 14. 14. 1 Cor. 10. 31. ver. 3.
f Ver. 6, 18. Ps. 44. 21. Jer. 23. 24. Ps. 139. 12. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23. Jer. 17. 10.
g Ch. 25. 34. Dan. 7. 10, 18, 27. Luke 14. 14. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Rev. 20. 12. Eccl. 12. 14.

Verses 1—4. Having before rescued the law from the false expositions of the Pharisees, our Lord here shows the true religion of the heart, as expressed in the three great duties of alms, prayer, and fasting, in which these deluded teachers gloried, but erred exceedingly in the performance of them.

1. Our Lord cautions us against all ostentatious show, in bestowing our alms. *Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them;* hypocrisy is a subtle sin, and where we are least apprehensive of danger is ever ready to insinuate itself; yet the fear of being wrong must not keep us from doing right. Alms giving is every Christian's bounden duty; and though not to be trusted upon as our righteousness before God, nor done to engage the applause of men; must nevertheless, according to our ability, be practised for God's glory, and the assistance of our brethren: and God, who is not unrighteous, will remember and reward *the works of faith, and labours of love.*

2. He describes the methods the hypocrites used to proclaim their own goodness, and solicit the estimation of others. They *sound a trumpet,* either literally to gather the poor to their doors; or they gave their alms in the most public manner, on purpose that they might be seen and admired.

3. They had the reward they sought, and all they had to expect; the ignorant blessed their liberality, and praised their charity. *Note,* The hypocrite's portion is all in hand, and hereafter he hath nothing to hope for.

4. Christ gives direction concerning the proper way of doing our alms. *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth;* the expression is proverbial, and intimates the secrecy we should use: never designedly letting others know our alms deeds, nor desirous they should be acquainted with them. And with regard to ourselves, we should forget them; and never dwell upon them, even in our thoughts, to flatter our own vain-glory and self-conceit.

5. Such good deeds as these, flowing from faith which worketh by love, shall not fail of their reward; secret as they are. He that seeth in secret will record them; and, when we have forgotten them, and would be ashamed to hear them mentioned, he will remember and recompense them openly, before men and angels, at the resurrection of the just.

5. ¶ And [h] when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are:* for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. 6. But thou, when thou prayest, [i] enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, [k] shall reward thee openly. 7. But when ye pray, [l] use not vain repetitions, as the * heathen *do:* for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8. Be not ye therefore like unto them: [m] for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.

h Ch. 23. 14. Luke 18. 11.
i 2 Kin. 4. 33. Is. 26. 20. ch. 14. 23. & 26. 39—44.
k See ver. 4.
l Eccl. 5. 2, 3, 6. 1 Kin. 18. 26—29.
* Thus, in one place of the Greek poet Æschylus, 100 verses are filled with a repetition of the same invocations to the gods. So the priests of Baal called from morning to noon, *O Baal, hear us.* 1 Kings 18. 26. And the Ephesians, for the space of two hours, cried *great is Diana.* Acts 19. 24.—*Dr Hammond.*
m Ver. 32. John 16. 27. Neh. 9. 32. Ps. 139. 1—5. & 38. 9.

Verses 5—8. Prayer next comes to be considered. It were an open declaration of impiety, irreligion, and Atheism, to live without some acknowledgment of God's goodness, and profession of dependence on his care: at least, none who bear the name of Christian can be supposed to live without prayer, any more than the body can live without breath. We have here two grand directions concerning this most necessary duty.

1. That it be not performed hypocritically, *to be seen of men.* The Pharisees chose the synagogues, and the corners of the streets, for the places of their devotions, that men's eyes might be upon them, *standing* up, that they might be more conspicuous; and *loving* the work, merely for the sake of the reward they proposed to themselves; which they received, and a miserable reward it was, to be applauded of poor mortals, like themselves, when they were abhorred of the great and holy God. Our Lord teaches his disciples to pray in a different manner; public places are unfit for private prayer. We must retire therefore from the observation of men, as much as may be; not only to avoid ostentation, but in order to be alone with God, removed from all interruption that would distract our thoughts; and out of the hearing of others, that we may freely speak before our Father who is in secret; to whom alone it should be our desire to approve ourselves, comparatively indifferent what men may think or say of us, if he regards us with paternal love, and expecting from him the answer of our petitions, which he promises to bestow. For he *who seeth in secret,* though invisible to us, is yet present with us, and acquainted with our inmost soul, and will *reward* us openly; answering our requests in present blessings, owning us at the great day of his appearing and glory, and bestowing the promised eternal reward, a reward not indeed of debt, but of grace.

2. That we use not *vain repetitions as the heathen do,* who

think that they shall be heard for their much speaking; not that *repetitions* or *much speaking* in prayer are condemned; seeing the same petitions may be often reiterated, and speak thus the deepest sensibility of our wants, and the greatest importunity of desire, Matt. xxvi. 44. Dan. ix. 18. Psalm cxxxvi. as also when our wants are many and great on particular occasions, and our spirit at liberty, we are never restrained from pouring out all our requests into the bosom of our compassionate God and Father, Luke vi. 12. The practice censured is, (1.) *The vain babblings* of those who pray by rote, like Papists, as they tell their beads, repeating so many Ave Maries, or Pater Nosters; and constantly, without life or spirituality, going over the same dull round of words, like a packhorse with his bells, pleased with the tinkling of his own unmeaning music. (2.) The *much speaking* which arises from an affectation of prolixity, especially in social prayer, where, instead of speaking to God, men love to hear the sound of their own voices, and want others to admire their gifts, their fluency, their fervency, and zeal; making a vast parade of words, adoration, thanksgiving, requests, intercessions, &c. like Baal's priests, from morning unto noon, crying, O Baal, hear us: such lip labour is not only lost labour, but worse, an abomination unto the Lord, and to be avoided by all his spiritual worshippers. For our *Father*, who is in heaven, *knoweth what things* we *have need of before* we *ask him*, therefore does not want to be particularly informed, as if he were ignorant; or was to be prevailed upon merely by our cries. But, as our Father, he expects to be called upon, and is ever ready to hear and answer us; omniscient, he knows our necessities; and all-sufficient, he will relieve them; even when we through our blindness, know not what to ask, or, through our ignorance, ask amiss; yea, sometimes cannot ask at all, overwhelmed with distress, and speaking only in tears and groans which cannot be uttered, Rom. vii. 27.

9. After this manner therefore pray ye: [n] Our Father which art in heaven, [o] Hallowed be thy name. 10. [p] Thy kingdom come. [q] Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. 11. [r] Give us this day our daily bread. 12. [s] And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. 13. [t] And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: [u] For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. 14. ¶ [x] For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

n Luke 11. 2. Ps. 8. 1. & 115. 3. Is. 66. 1.
o John 12. 28. Is. 6. 3. & 8. 13. Ps. 111. 9. & cxlv—cl.
p Ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17. Ps. 103. 19, 21. Is. 2. 2, 3. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14.
q Ps. xciii.—c, cxiv—cl. ch. 16. 28. Rev. 22. 20. ch. 26. 42. Acts 21. 14. Ps. 103. 19—21.
r Ch. 4. 4. Prov. 30. 8. Luke 11. 3. Exod. 16. 21. 1 Tim. 5. 8. & 6. 8. Job 23. 12. John 6. 3. Gen. 43. 25—34. Is. 58. 10, 11.
s Is. 43. 25. Ps. 130. 4, 8. ch. 18. 21, 22. Col. 3. 13.
t Ch. 26. 41. John 17. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 1 Pet. 5. 8. 2 Chr. 12. 7, 9. 2 Pet. 2. 9. Rev. 3. 10. u 1 Chr. 29. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Eph. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Ps. 47. 2, 7. & 96. 7, 8. & 135. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Eph. 3. 21. x Ch. 18. 21—35. Mark 11. 25, 26. Eph. 4. 32. Col. 3. 15. Prov. 21. 13. Jam. 2. 13.

Verses 9—15. Having condemned the prayers of formality and pride, our Lord here suggests both matter and words for our use.

The prayer before us may be considered both as a form and as a directory. It is concise, yet comprehensive, containing our chief wants in a few words; not that we are always bound to the use of it, or should regard it as more sacred than other prayers of the Scripture; but, being in frequent use, we need be well acquainted with its meaning, that when we repeat it *we may pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also.*

We have,

1. The preface. *Our father which art in heaven.* The great object of prayer is God alone; the encouraging motives to approach him are, that he is *our Father;* our reconciled God and Father in Christ Jesus, from whose paternal heart we may expect the tenderest compassions and most gracious attention; and as he is *in heaven*, adored by saints and angels, he knows our necessities better than we can express them, and hath all power to supply them exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think; so that we may come to him in faith, nothing doubting. As *our* common Father also, we are taught the spirit of love and charity, which should breathe in all our prayers; and profess ourselves hereby one of those many brethren whom, through Christ Jesus, he is bringing to glory: and for whom, as they for us, we are mutual advocates.

2. The petitions. They are six in number; the first three more immediately relate to God's glory, the last to our own wants.

(1.) *Hallowed be thy name.* The *name* of God comprehends his being, perfections, and all the manifestations he hath made of himself in his works and word. That it may be *hallowed*, or *sanctified*, signifies our ascription of praise to him, according to his excellent greatness: and our desire that he may be ever more and more exalted: that we ourselves and all others may believe in him, love him, fear and serve him, as we ought to do; and in our lips and lives show forth his glory; and that since all good is from him all may be ascribed to him.

(2.) *Thy kingdom come.* The kingdom of the Messiah seems principally here intended, which was now ready to appear; and being once set up in the world, we are required to pray for its enlargement and final consummation. As a *kingdom of grace*, we beg it may be erected in our own hearts more and more, till every thought be brought into the obedience of Christ; that it may diffuse its benign influence far and wide, and the light of the gospel word, and the power of the gospel grace cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea; that God may thus accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten that eternal *kingdom of glory*, when all his saints collected round his throne shall, to eternity, adore him, enjoy his favour, and be made for ever happy in his service.

(3.) *Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven;* God is glorified, and his kingdom comes when his will is made ours; his preceptive will obeyed, his providential will acquiesced in: thus we pray that, without dispute, we may receive the revelation he hath given us, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, receive him as our King, and approve ourselves obedient subjects to his government in all things; never murmuring against his commands as severe, or his prohibitions as grievous, but counting his will to be always holy, just, and good. We pray for resignation to all his afflictive dispensations, contentment in every station, submission under every burden, and a heart to bless him, not only when he gives, but when he takes away: in short, that we may be as the clay in the hands of the potter, to be, act, and suffer, according to the good pleasure of his will; and this cheerfully, universally, continually, as the spirits of just men made perfect, and the spotless angels fulfil his will in heaven. *Note*, (1.) It is mockery of God to pray that his will may be done, and daily live in allowed opposition to it. (2.) None may hope to serve God in heaven, who have not made on earth his glory their end, his word their rule, his will their delight.

(4.) *Give us this day our daily bread;* either for our souls, the bread of life that we may be strengthened in the inner man, and increase with the increase of God; or for our bodies, the food which is convenient for us; not delicacies, but necessaries; not such as pampered appetite craves, but what, used with temperance and sobriety, may best fit us for the work of our station, and God's service. We ask *our* own bread; not what we have a right to, for all is God's gift, but what is honestly come by, neither the bread of idleness nor deceit; we are taught to ask *daily* for it, as acknowledging our dependence upon God for all we have and enjoy; and *for this* day only, not excluding a provident care, but as mindful of our jeopardy every hour, as dead

to carking solicitude and perplexing suggestions about futurity, and content to trust him for the morrow, in the use of the same means we employ to-day. And this we beg for others as well as ourselves, that they and we may praise God together, who filleth our hearts with food and gladness. Thus all repining, envy, and discontent, will be excluded; content with our allotted portion, we shall wish for nothing more.

(5.) *And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.* Our debts are our sins: having failed in the debt of duty, we become liable to the debt of punishment. These sins are innumerable, great, and aggravated; and we have nothing to pay, unable to make the least satisfaction for them to divine justice: they are daily increasing, and if God deals with us according to our deserts, we are undone for ever. Therefore we cry, *forgive;* which intimates the deep and humble sense we have of our miserable and insolvent state, and our hope in the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, for pardon. However numberless, great, and aggravated our sins may be, they are not beyond the blood of atonement, and God's boundless grace: he can pardon even beyond all that we can ask. A plea also is put into our mouths, not as meritorious, but as an argument founded on God's promise, ver. 14. and an encouragement to our own souls to hope in his mercy, *as we forgive our debtors;* for if we do so, how much more shall the Father of mercies forgive us! Whilst on the other hand, we may not dare to hope or pray for pardon, if we can retain allowed malice against one creature upon earth, and do not *from the heart* forgive our brother his trespasses. Though the offences or injuries done us may have been ever so great, we are called upon to pardon them fully, freely, without reserve, or upbraiding: yea, to forget them, as though they had never been; and how reasonable the injunction, when none can ever have offended us as we have provoked God! since he, therefore, for Christ's sake hath forgiven us, so ought we to forgive one another. To pray this petition, with rancour, resentment, or ill-will abiding in the heart, would be to imprecate a curse upon our souls, instead of obtaining a blessing.

(6.) *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;* conscious of our own weakness, we beg to be kept from the power of temptation, or to be supported under our trials that we may not fall. Not that God can be tempted with evil, or tempteth any man; but if he withholds his grace, our own corrupted hearts naturally rush into the snare, and our adversary, the devil, is ever going about seeking whom he may devour; from his power, *that wicked one,* the author of all evil, we pray to be delivered: so that, if assaulted, we may not be overcome by him: and from all the evil with which we are compassed on every side, from the evil world with all its snares, from evil men with all their wiles, or violence: from our own evil hearts with all their traitor lusts; from the evil of sin and punishment, in time or in eternity.

3. The doxology and conclusion. *For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.* Which may be considered as a solemn ascription of praise to God; as an act of faith in his power and grace: and a plea to enforce our petitions, in which God's own glory is so greatly concerned. All praise and honour are in the highest to be ascribed to him; whilst, after all, we must own he is far exalted above all blessing and praise. His power is able to supply all our wants, we may therefore confidently trust him; since his is the kingdom, we may expect protection, and his own glory engages him to grant the requests which his word and Spirit teach us to ask. We may therefore well add our warm Amen; earnest that our requests may be answered, and God therein glorified: in faith resting assured that it will be so, and therefore rising from our knees rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

[y] Is. 58. 4, 5. 1 Kin. 21. 27. Luke 18. 12, 14. with ch. 9. 14. Joel 2. 12—17.

16. ¶ Moreover, [y] when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they * disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. 17. But thou, when thou fastest, [z] anoint thine head, and wash thy face: 18. That thou [a] appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which [b] seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

* That is, look rueful, and 'suffer their faces to remain unwashed and their heads unanointed.'—*Bishop Pearce.*

[z] Ruth 3. 3. Eccl. 9. 8. 2 Sam. 14. 2.

[a] 2 Cor. 5. 9. & 10. 18. Col. 3. 22—24. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

[b] See ver. 4. Acts 9. 11. John 1. 48.

Verses 16—18. Having given directions for almsgiving and prayer, our Lord proceeds to fasting, a needful, though much neglected duty. This flesh needs the curb of constant mortification, and our sins call for such humiliation. We are here,

1. Cautioned against the hypocritical show of the Pharisees. They made a vast parade of mortification, outwardly disfiguring their faces, and putting on an affected rueful countenance, pretending that deep contrition of soul which they never felt, that men might admire the austerity of their lives, and reverence them for their extraordinary sanctity, and so far they had their reward. They were highly esteemed among men: but how poor a consideration this, when, for their hypocrisy, they were an abomination in the sight of God. *Note,* Many who have denied the cravings of the body, have fallen victims to the pride of their heart.

2. We are directed how to fast. As the humiliation is before God, we must studiously avoid all external show; appear in dress and countenance as on other days, alike dead to men's applause or censures, desiring only God's acceptance and regard in Christ Jesus, which in this way we are sure to find, and our Father who seeth in secret shall reward us openly.

19. ¶ [c] Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20. [d] But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21. [e] For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 22. ¶ [f] The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23. But if [g] thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, [h] how great *is* that darkness! 24. ¶ [i] No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and † mammon.

[c] Ps. 62. 10. Prov. 23. 4, 5. ch. 19. 21. Luke 12. 33. & 21. 34. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 17. Heb. 13. 5. Jam. 5. 1—4. & 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15.

[d] Luke 12. 33. & 18. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. ch. 19. 21. Col. 3. 1—3.

[e] Luke 12. 34. Phil. 3. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 18. Col. 3. 1—4.

[f] Luke 11. 34—36. Rom. 12. 8. 1 Cor. 10. 31

[g] Mark 7. 21. ch. 20. 15. Prov. 23. 6. Deut. 15. 9. & 28. 54, 56.

[h] Is. 5. 20. Rom. 1. 21, 22, 28. 1 Cor. 1. 19—21. 2 Cor. 4. 4.

[i] Luke 16. 13. ch. 4. 10. Josh. 24. 19 Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15, 16.

† *i. e.* riches, gains, and treasures, which are the idols of carnal hearts, set up in opposition to God.

Verses 19—24. No sin is so besetting and dangerous to the professors of religion, as worldly mindedness; and where it prevails, there is no surer proof of the hypocrisy of the heart. Against this, therefore, our Lord especially warns his disciples.

1. He cautions them against laying up *their treasures upon earth.* Nothing under the sun should be regarded by us as our portion; nor ought we, with increasing eagerness, to be still

grasping at more, and continually adding to our stores; we must neither take up our rest in these things, nor depend upon them as a substantial and abiding good, for a thousand accidents may deprive us of all. The moth may corrupt our garments; the rain, blasting, mildew, or vermin destroy our corn: and thieves rob us of that gold and silver we treasured up with so much care. It were folly therefore to count these our treasures.

2. He tells us how we may secure a better, and a more enduring substance. *Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven:* in the way of God's grace seek to secure the riches of his glory: especially by a right employment of this world's wealth, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness: send your wealth before you in works of charity, and then you will find it again, with abundant interest, laid up in that sure place, where it will be exposed neither to corruption nor violence.

3. He enforces his advice by that weighty argument, that *where your treasure is, there will your heart be also;* if it be on earth, our minds will be earthly, sensual; if in heaven, our hearts will be drawn up to high and heavenly things; for as the needle follows the magnet, so do our affections pursue what we count our treasure; where this is, thither are our desires drawn out; our hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, are all influenced hereby. When God is made our portion, then on him will our souls be fixed.

4. According to a man's spirit and temper, so will his conduct be. *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single,* which was a common and well known phrase for a liberal temper, *then thy whole body will be full of light;* the actions will all correspond with the principle, and the whole conversation will abound with good, to the glory of God; *but if thine eye be evil,* if a sordid temper governs thee, *thy whole body will be full of darkness,* all the faculties will be enslaved by it: the whole conduct influenced by it to use mean, avaricious, and base ways to gratify such a spirit. *If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* if covetousness extinguish every generous and noble sentiment in the soul, what a train of vile and unbecoming deeds will follow, whilst every consideration is absorbed in that one of gain, greedily sought by any means, lawful or unlawful! and the consequence must needs be, that such a one will sink into eternal darkness and misery. Such seems to be the sense of the words, which most exactly corresponds with the context. Some by *the eye,* understand *practical judgment;* according as that is endued with just discernment, or is erroneous and corrupt, so will the corresponding practice be good or evil; and this particularly will appear in the preference given to heavenly or earthly treasures.

5. We must make our choice which world we will have, and which master we will serve, the commands of both being incompatible. There is no dividing the heart: God will have all or none; but the hypocrite wants to secure both worlds together, and to serve God just so far as consists with his interest and convenience; *but no man can serve two masters,* whose commands are contradictory; and never were two masters more opposite than *God and mammon. God* demands the heart, enjoins contentment, honesty, charity, deadness to this world, and bids his servants forego their ease, their gain, their honour, their esteem among men, to seek in the first place, his kingdom and righteousness. *Mammon* commends the glittering stores of this vain world; bids his servants eat, drink, and be merry, pursue their worldly interests, honours, and esteem; mind chiefly themselves, live *for* themselves, spend *on* themselves, and, by every means secure wealth as the principal thing, and man's chief good. Thus opposite are these masters; the service of the one must be attended with abhorrence of the other; we are called upon to make our choice, and let us remember eternity depends upon it.

25. Therefore I say unto you, [i] [k] Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26. [l] Behold the *fowls of the air: for they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27. [m] Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his [n] stature? 28. And [o] why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29. And yet I say unto you, That even [p] Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, [q] which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye [r] of little faith? 31. Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32. ([s] For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for [t] your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33. [u] But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. 34. [x] Take therefore no [z] thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

i Ps. 55. 22. Luke 12. 22. 1 Cor. 7. 32. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 6. 8.
k Gr. *Be not anxiously careful,* Ver. 31, 34.
l Job 38. 41. Ps. 104. 27, 28. & 147. 9. Luke 12. 24.
* There is no where to be found so just and so elegant a reproof of eagerness and anxiety in worldly pursuits, closed with so forcible an exhortation to confidence in the goodness of the Creator as in this passage. —*S. Jenyns.*
m Luke 12. 25, 26. Ps. 75. 6. Eccl. 9. 11.
n Or *age.* John 9. 21, 23.
o Ver. 25, 31, 34. Luke 12. 27. Ps. 4. 6.
p 1 Kin. iv, ix, x. 2 Chr. i, viii, ix.
q Ps. 129. 6. & 102. 4. Is. 40. 6, 7. 1 Pet. 1. 24.
r Is. 50 10. ch. 14. 31. Mark 9. 24.
s Ch. 5. 46, 47. Ps. 4. 6. & 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19.
t Luke 12. 30 Phil. 4. 19. 1 Pet. 5. 7. ver. 8.
u Luke 12. 31. John 6. 27. 1 Kin. 3. 11—13. Ps. 34. 9, 10. & 37. 8, 19, 25, 29. Mark 10. 30 1 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Luke 10. 42. 1 Cor. 3. 22. Rom. 8. 31, 32.
x Exod. 16. 18—20. ver. 11, 25. Prov. 16. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 8.
y Gr. *anxious thought.* Ver. 25, 27, 28, 31.

Verses 25—34. Many think themselves far removed from covetousness, whose hearts, notwithstanding, are overcharged with the cares of this life; and though not sordidly avaricious, evidently show their affections more set on things on earth, than the things in heaven. We have therefore,

1. An admonition against all inordinate anxiety about a worldly provision. *Take no thought,* &c. There is a thoughtfulness and care needful and commendable, Prov. xxvii. 23. Our families cannot be otherwise provided for, nor the duties of our station discharged: but the caution here given, is levelled against tormenting solicitude, and unbelieving distrust of God's providence, which is as dishonourable to him, as distressing to ourselves. Our life is in his hands, and whilst we are employing the appointed means in dependence upon his blessing, we must with satisfaction cast our care upon him, to give us sickness or health, comforts or crosses, want or abundance, as he pleases; and when we do so, we have his promise to assure us, we shall have just that which is good for us.

2. Christ enforces his admonition by several considerations, which, if we seriously thought upon, would ever furnish us with abundant arguments to silence all disquieting carefulness.

[1.] If God gives the greater blessings, will he withhold the less? *Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* If God hath freely given us these without our thought

or care, and hitherto hath preserved them amidst innumerable dangers, can it be supposed he will suffer us to perish for lack of food or raiment?

[2.] *Behold the fowls of the air*, numerous and voracious as they are: without any care of theirs, by the Divine Providence a daily provision is made for them, *though they sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns.* And if God thus provides for them, *are ye not much better than they?* more excellent in nature, and therefore, much more the objects of his care; can *the heirs of heaven* be famished, when *the fowls of heaven* are fed?

[3.] Unprofitable, as well as unnecessary, are all our anxious cares. *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature*, or *age?* Will our solicitude add to our height, or will our thoughtfulness lengthen our lives a year, a month, a day, an hour beyond the boundary decreed? How vain and foolish then to disquiet ourselves about other things equally out of our power? We are called upon here to make a virtue of necessity, and submit quietly to the determinations of Providence.

[4.] To silence our carefulness about raiment, Christ points to the flowers, which were probably near him, and made the application more beautifully striking. *Consider the lilies of the field*, that grow without care or culture, without toil or labour; yet even *Solomon*, on his throne, adorned with the richest robes, *in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field*, which is so worthless, fading, and transitory, *which to-day is*, in such beauty, *and to-morrow is cast into the oven* to burn, *shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith! Note*, (1.) All our anxiety about worldly things arises from unbelief. (2.) It is the height of folly and vanity to be proud of fine clothes, when every flower of the field must far outshine us. (3.) Every object around us, if our minds be rightly disposed, will afford us arguments of faith, and quiet dependence on God's care.

[5.] Such anxiety is heathenish, and utterly unbecoming those who have the light of revelation. Gentiles indeed, who have no knowledge of a particular providence, may be concerned after these things, and imagine they must get them merely by their own care and labour; but it is a shame for Christians, who are better taught, not to show the excellency of their principles by the nobler practice of deadness to the world and confidence in God.

[6.] *Our heavenly Father knoweth we have need of all these things*; and therefore we may confidently expect the supply of every want. He hath a father's bowels to feel for us; we have a sure interest in him; he knows our wants, and, be they ever so many or great, he can abundantly relieve them. His care for us, makes our carefulness for ourselves needless.

3. Christ directs us to the proper object of our cares; *Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.* Religion is our great business: to be a living member of Christ's church, is infinitely more our concern, than how our bodies shall be fed; and *his righteousness*, which is our title to the kingdom, is the robe we should be more solicitous to put on than any other raiment; and with this divine righteousness, internal purity must be sought with diligence, in the use of every means of grace: and, in the *first* place, counting all but dung and loss, compared with the great concerns of our souls, and the eternal world, which should in a measure, swallow up all other considerations. Indeed the trifles of time will sit light upon those who have the glories of eternity in view. Besides, this is the way to secure all the rest of our wants; for he who is able abundantly to supply them, is pleased to assure us, that then *all these things shall be added unto us*; they shall be thrown in, *as over and above* all the spiritual blessings. Oh! that we were but wise to know our true interests! we should find, by experience, nothing was ever lost by faith unfeigned, and diligent caring for the soul.

4. As the conclusion of the matter, we are, without solicitude about futurity, to cast our care upon God, who will care for us. *Take no thought for the morrow*; which doth not forbid prudent foresight, or enjoin an absolute disregard about our business or our families, but all perplexing anxiety, all disquieting fears about what may never happen, or, if it doth, may give us no such trouble as we apprehend; and all unbelieving distrust of God. Our business is to mind present duty, and leave events to God. *The morrow shall take thought for the things of itself*; it is folly to be disquieted about what may never come to pass. Who knows whether to-morrow belongs to time or to eternity? and if it return, He who supplied our wants to-day, will supply our wants to-morrow. *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*; we need not anticipate our troubles, or torment ourselves with imaginary ills: each day has sufficient, without borrowing to-morrow's burden to increase the load; and which not all our previous cares and fears will make the lighter. It is God's curse on the wicked world, that they are self-tormentors; whilst they who live by faith, may always rejoice in hope.

CHAP. VII.—anno domini, 30.

This chapter continues and concludes Christ's sermon on the mount. We have, 1. *Some rules concerning censure and reproof*, ver. 1—6. 2. *Encouragements given us to pray to God for what we need*, ver. 7—11. 3. *The necessity of strictness in conversation urged upon us*, ver. 12—14. 4. *A caution given us to take heed of false prophets*, ver. 15—20. 5. *The conclusion of the sermon* ver. 21—27. 6. *The impression which Christ's doctrine made upon his hearers*, ver. 28, 29.

1. JUDGE[a] not, that ye be not judged. 2. [b] For with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. 3. [c] And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4. [d] Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the * mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a † beam *is* in thine own eye? 5. Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. 6. ¶ [e] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

[a] Luke 6. 37. Is. 65. 5. Rom. 2. 1. & 14. 3, 4, 10, 13. 1 Cor. 4. 3—5. Jam. 4. 11, 12. & 2. 13. & 3. 1. Gal. 6. 1, 2.

[b] Judg. 1. 7. Ps. 18. 25, 26. & 41. 2. Mark 4. 24 Luke 6. 38. 2 Cor. 9. 6. Jam. 2. 13. Gen. 4. 7. Obad. 15. Eph. 6. 8. 2 Thes. 1. 6.

[c] Luke 6. 41. Lam. 3. 40. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

[d] Luke 6. 42. & 18. 11.

* Lesser sin.

† Greater sin.

[e] Prov. 9. 7, 8. & 23. 9. Phil. 3. 2. ch. 10. 11, 14. & 15. 26. Acts 13. 45—47. Heb. 10. 29. & 2. 3.

Verses 1—6. The proud and self-righteous are ever most censorious. Against such is this reproof levelled.

1. Our Lord forbids all rash judgment, unreasonable jealousies, evil surmisings, and rigid censures. *Judge not*, uncharitably, unmercifully, under a spirit of revenge or prejudice; decide not concerning a man's spiritual state, from some single act or circumstance, nor pretend to know his heart, much less to determine concerning his everlasting state; to his own master he standeth or falleth. This precept doth not forbid the judgment of the civil magistrate, nor our forming conclusions of others' state, as well as our own, agreeably to the word of God: for though our own judgment may be fallible, his must be according to truth.

The prohibition is enforced by a weighty reason; *Judge not, that ye be not judged.* Our charity and mercifulness to others will be the means of securing the like favourable judgment to

ourselves; whilst a spirit of censoriousness will provoke the resentment and ill-will of others, and be returned generally in as liberal abuse: besides, what is infinitely more to be feared, God will give judgment without mercy to those who showed no mercy; and with rigour of severest justice, will call those to his bar who dared usurp his throne, and sit as self-authorised judges of their brethren.

2. He gives us some rules about reproof; not forbidding the kind jealousy of love, but condemning the magisterial rebukes of self-sufficient pride. Before we look at others' faults, we should well consider if there be not greater in ourselves. For how unreasonable and unjust would it be, with malignant eye to mark, aggravate, and with severity, condemn the infirmities and follies of others, the mote which is in their eye, whilst we extenuate, excuse, or justify what is far more culpable, the beam which is in our own? or with what face of hardened effrontery can we dare set up for reformers of them, whilst greater evils unredressed lie at our own door; This is the grossest hypocrisy, and such pretended zeal against sin but a greater abomination in God's sight, who trieth the heart. Before we presume to correct others, we should therefore reform the evils in ourselves, lest they should retort, Physician, heal thyself; and our admonition, though just in itself, be rejected with contempt.

3. Christ forbids not only uncharitable censures and magisterial rebukes, but imprudent and unseasonable reproofs. *Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine.* Where men discover their profaneness and impiety, professedly infidel, or avowed enemies to the truths of God, who despise instruction, and are but more exasperated by admonition, there it would be folly, and abuse of things sacred, to persist in rebuking them, and we can only expect insult and harm to ourselves, without any profit to them or glory to God: but, whilst prudence is enjoined, we must take care not to make our caution an excuse for our cowardice; nor to think men swine till we have found them so; nor be afraid of any consequences, when duty calls us, even in the face of persecutors, to bear a faithful testimony to the truths of God.

f Gen 32. 26—28. Ps. 10. 17. & 34. 15. & 118. 5. & 145. 19. Prov. 15. 29. Jer. 29. 12, 13. Is. 30. 19. & 58. 9. & 65. 24. ch. 21. 22. Mark 11. 24. Luke 11. 9—13. & 18. 1—8. John 14. 13, 14. & 15. 7. & 16. 23, 24. Jam. 1. 5, 6. & 5. 16. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14. Dan. 2. 23. Prov. 8. 17. Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15.

g Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Eph. 2. 1, 2. Tit. 3. 3. ch. 15. 19. Jer. 17. 19.

h Luke 11. 13. & 18. 7, 8. Ps. 103. 13. Is. 49. 15. & 63. 7. Hos. 11. 8. Heb. 12. 10. John 3. 16. 1 John 3. 1. Rom. 8. 32—39. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Ps. 95. 3. Jer. 3. 4, 19. & 29. 12, 13. Ezek xx, xxxvi.

7. ¶ [f] Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 9. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10. Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11. If ye then, being [g] evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, [h] how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Verses 7—11. Prayer is the means appointed of God to obtain of him the supply of every want, spiritual and temporal; and therefore,

1. The command given is, *Ask, seek, knock;* implying the fervour, diligence, constancy, and importunity which must be used, if we would obtain the relief of our necessities; and a deep and humbling sense of our wants, and faith in God's promises, will engage us to do so; without which there can be no availing prayer.

2. A gracious promise is annexed. They who thus pray, shall surely speed: God will hear and answer them according to their various wants. Every petitioner, without respect of persons, that thus in faith draws near unto God, *receives* an answer of peace, *finds* acceptance and favour with him, hath the door of mercy *opened*, and is welcome to enter, and freely take out of God's fulness whatever blessings he needs. *Note*, They who refuse or neglect to ask, deserve to want. The prayerless soul will be left inexcusable.

3. As an engagement to pray with assurance of being heard, our Lord enforces his command by an argument drawn from the compassion of our earthly parents. Evil as we are by nature, scarce one can be found so unnatural as to be deaf to the cries of his own flesh and blood, much less, inhumanly to give his children things noxious, instead of the food they crave. If then, in such corrupted creatures as we are, such compassions and regards are found towards our offspring, much more will the Father of mercies graciously hear and grant the petitions of his dear children who wait upon him: his love, his power, are infinitely greater than ours: and therefore they shall want no manner of thing that is *good*. Their own requests perhaps may be sometimes improper, unnecessary, unreasonable; and these prayers he will best answer by kind denials; whilst all that his wisdom and goodness sees fit shall be given them, in such manner and measure as shall be most for their benefit and his own glory.

12. [i] Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. 13. ¶ [k] Enter ye in at the strait gate: for [l] wide *is* the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14. ‡ Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and [m] few there be that find it.

i Luke 6. 31. ch. 22. 39, 40. Rom. 13. 8—10. Gal. 5. 14, 22, 23. Tit. 3. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Col. 3. 8—15. Eph. 4. 25—32. Jam. 2. 8. with Gen. 4. 7. Obad. 15. Eph. 6. 8.

k Ch. 18. 3, 4. Luke 13. 24. Rev. 21. 27. John 3. 3, 5. & 10. 9. & 14. 6. Luke 13. 3, 5. Ezek. 33. 11. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Is. 55. 7.

l Prov. 7. 26. 1 John 5. 19. Rev. 13. 3, 8.

Gen. 6 12. Acts 14. 16. 22. 14. Luke. 12. 32. & 13. 24.

‡ Or *how.*

m Deut. 4. 34. Ps. 147. 19, 20. ch. 20. 16. &

Verses 12—14. We have here,

1. The conclusion and sum of the foregoing commands; the golden rule, universally applicable in all cases. To do unto our neighbours as, according to reason and religion, we might expect they should do for us, if our situations were reversed: to do them no injury; to give them every assistance in our power; to deal with them in uprightness and integrity, without taking the least advantage of their ignorance or necessities. And this doctrine both the law and the prophets inculcate; and in this one word the commands of both, respecting our duty towards our neighbour, are summed up. The rule is short, and easy to be remembered: but how wide and difficult the practice!

2. Christ urges us all to diligence in securing eternal life, and points out the only way thereto; *Strive to enter in at the strait gate.* The gate is Christ, his blood and righteousness; it is *strait*, as it admits none of the trappings of pride and self-righteousness, and calls us to part from our most beloved sins, to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Christ. And as this will require much labour, prayer, and self-denial; Christ urges the necessity of striving to enter in:

[1.] Because of the ruin and danger which attend the ways of sin, in which the multitude walk unconcerned; *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction.* There no restraint withholds the unbridled appetite; there pleasure, riches, honour, spread their lure; there all may find the gratification of their darling passion, or are engaged so to hope by that wily tempter, who welcomes all the fairest promises of joy and happiness; *and many there be which go in thereat*, naturally disposed to follow the bent of their fallen minds, and walking every one

in his own way. To swim therefore against the stream of inbred corruption, and the tide of custom too, is difficult; but let us remember that the end is destruction; that these paths lead down to hell; that, whether they be those of carelessness and neglect about the soul, open immorality, or self-righteous hypocrisy, all tend to eternal misery, and meet in the place of torment.

[2.] *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* There we must stoop low, our pride be mortified, all self-dependence be renounced; there the restraints of God's law hedge up the way, and leave us the narrow path of holiness only to walk in; there our very nature must be changed, our inveterate evil habits subdued, our corruptions mortified; there we must expect to meet with many trials, afflictions, and temptations, from inbred evil and outward enemies; there every inch must be won with perpetual war against sin, earth, and hell; and every step must be taken with watchful care, since dangers and snares are at the right hand and at the left: no marvel then *there be few that find it*, comparatively few at least: a remnant, a little flock, according to the election of grace. When therefore the difficulties are so great, the diligence should be proportionable; and since there are but few saved, we should strive to be of that number, and the issue will repay our pains: *eternal life* will infinitely more than compensate for all the struggles of the way.

15. ¶ [n] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16. [o] Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19. [p] Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

n Deut. 13. 3. Jer. 23. 16. Mic. 3. 5. Zech. 13. 4. ch. 23. 14. & 24. 4, 5, 11, 24. 2 Cor. 11. 15. 2 Tim. 3. 3. Rom. 16. 17, 18. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 1 John 4. 1. Acts 20. 29, 30. Col. 2. 8. Eph. 5. 6.

o Luke 6. 43, 44. ver. 20—23. ch. 12. 33—35. & 3. 10. 1 John 4. 1—3. 2 Pet. 1. 1, 2. Jude 1—20. 2 Tim. 3. 1—9. 2 Cor. 11. 13, 15.

p Ch. 3. 10. Luke 3. 9. Acts 5. 38. Rev. 2. 16. John 15. 2, 6. Heb. 6. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 20. Ezek. xv. Is. 33. 14. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Is. 3. 11.

Verses 15—20. False Christs and false prophets would shortly arise; and false teachers were already abundantly numerous. Against these the Lord therefore cautions his disciples, and sets down marks whereby they may be distinguished.

1. Our Lord describes them as wolves in sheep's clothing; such as the Pharisees and Scribes were, who, with exterior marks of sanctity and austerity in their manners and garb, were inwardly full of enmity against the doctrines of grace and true holiness, and in their spirit hypocritical, proud, and covetous. And probably our Lord hath respect to the false apostles, the Judaizing teachers, and all that should ever afterwards appear in his church, preaching the abominable doctrines of man's self-sufficiency, free-will to good, justification by works, and the like; *grievous wolves*, Acts xx. 29. whom gain, not godliness, Rom. xvi. 18. hath drawn into the ministry. Beware of them.

2. He lays down the rule by which we must prove all who pretend a mission from him. *Ye shall know them by their fruits*, just as easily as a tree is known. They who are evil, can no more preach the truth and live in it too, than a thorn can bear grapes. And, on the other hand, where the soul is right with God, there the fruits of truth and holiness naturally and necessarily are produced. Two ways the prophet may be known:—

[1.] By his life. Is his conduct exemplary, self-denying, humble, meek, zealous? doth the love of God, and of men's souls, appear to influence and actuate him in all his works and ways? at least in the *general* temper of his mind, and tendency of his conversation, is this manifested? these are good fruits of a good tree. But is he worldly-minded, proud, sensual, indolent, more willing to fleece than to feed the flock, rigid in exacting the wages, but unwilling to be employed in the work of the ministry, encouraging, instead of reproving sinners by his example, conforming to the ways of a wicked world, instead of being transformed in the spirit of his mind? these are evident proofs of the falsehood of such a prophet's pretensions.

[2.] By his doctrine; which seems chiefly intended here: for a false prophet may, with the veil of hypocrisy, cover his iniquities so as to appear righteous unto men. But are his doctrines according to truth, and drawn from the sacred fountain? doth he preach the dignity, or the desperate wickedness of the human nature, the freedom of man's will, or his utter impotence to every good thought, desire, or work? doth he declare the damnable nature of sin, the utter guilt of every man by nature and practice, and the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, or encourage the false hopes of sinners by smooth prophecies, and soften the harsh terms of hell and damnation, that he may not offend the ear with such inharmonious sounds? doth he exalt the divine Redeemer, his person, his offices, his blood, his righteousness, or slightly pass over these glorious subjects, for dry ethics, and lectures on morality? doth he enforce religion as an experimental thing, as the work of God's Spirit in the heart, purifying the inner man, or doth he dwell on mere external forms and duties, as silent about Divine agency, as if he knew not whether there were any Holy Ghost? doth he offend sinners by the freedom of his rebukes, and the formal and self-righteous by his scrutinizing detection of their hypocrisy, or doth he study to please men, and, like the false prophets of old secure the good word of the deluded and misguided world? by these and the like fruits shall they be known. *Try therefore the spirits, whether they be of God; for many false prophets are gone out into the world*, 1 John iv. 1.

3. He declares the terrible end of these wolves in sheep's clothing. As the barren tree is only fit fuel for the flames, so are these marked for ruin; the axe of death shall shortly be laid to their root, and eternal ruin be their portion. Beware therefore of false prophets, lest, deluded by them, you partake of their plagues.

21. ¶ Not every one that saith unto me, [q] Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22. [r] Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23. And [s] then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24. ¶ Therefore, [t] whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25. [u] And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and [x] it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened

q Rom. 2. 10. Jam. 1. 22 Jer. 7. 4. Hos. 8. 2. Luke 6. 46—49. & 13. 25. ch. 5. 19. John 13. 17. & 15. 14. Ps. xv. & 24. 3, 4.

r Ch. 12 27. & 25. 119. Luke 13. 25, 26. Num. 24. 4. John 11. 51. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

s Luke 13. 27. ch. 25. 12, 41. Ps. 6. 8. & 1. 6. & 11. 115. & 5. 5. Hab. 1. 13. with Gal. 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 19.

t Ps. xv. & 24. 3—6. Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 22. John 13. 17. & 15 14. ch. 12. 50. Luke 11. 28. 1 John 3. 7. Rev. 22. 14.

u Acts 14. 22. John 16. 33. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim 3. 12.

x Ps. 34. 19. & 125. 1. 2. ch. 16. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 19 1 Pet. 1. 5, 23 Jude 1. 1 Cor. 3. 11.

unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27. [y] And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. 28. [z] And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: 29. For he taught them [a] as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

[y] Ch. 13. 18—22. & 11. 20—24. Job 8. 13. Luke 22. 47, 48. Heb. 10. 26—31. & 6. 4—8. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. ch. 12. 43—45. & 21. 33—44.

[z] Ch. 13. 54. & 21. 23. Mark 1. 22. & 11. 28. Luke 4. 32 & 7. 16. & 20. 2. John 7. 46. Is. 48. 17. & 50. 4. Ps. 45. 2.

[a] Is. 50. 4. Deut. 15. 18. ch. 28. 18. John 7. 46. Eccl. 8. 4.

Verses 21—29. We have here the conclusion of this awakening discourse, and the deep impression it made on the hearers.

1. Our Lord shows that no profession of religion, destitute of the power of godliness, will stand a man in any stead at a judgment-day.

(1.) It is not saying, but doing, must prove our calling and election of God. *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord,* in boasting profession and noisy devotion, *shall enter into the kingdom of heaven,* be enrolled as living members of his church, or be admitted as inheritors of his glory; *but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven,* who truly believes on him whom God hath sent, takes him for his Lord and Master, not merely in word and tongue, but in deed and truth: obedient to his commands, following him in righteousness and true holiness, desirous to do his will on earth, as he hopes shortly to do his will in heaven. Reader is this character thine?

(2.) Many in the day of Christ will appear to have deluded themselves with false hopes, whose pleas will then be fearfully silenced. *Many will say to me in that great day* of judgment, *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? Many* of those who may have filled the highest stations of the church on earth, have been, to appearance, the most zealous preachers or public professors in it, yet proved no better than Balaam or Caiaphas: yea, *and in thy name have cast out devils,* as Judas and many others no doubt; *and in thy name done many wonderful works?* even working the most astonishing miracles: and yet Christ declares, *Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you,* never called or owned you for my servants; *depart from me all ye that work iniquity.* Notwithstanding all your pleas, your hearts have been false and faithless, and your professions utterly unsound: and therefore your portion must be to depart accursed with the devil and his angels. Learn hence these awful truths! (1.) That a man may be a professor, a minister, yea distinguished with gifts, and successful in his labours, and yet be finally cast away: may be the instrument of saving others and perish himself; may cast out devils from the hearts of others, and harbour them in his own. (2.) Names may impose upon men, but God searcheth the heart. There are secret sins to be found in many under the cloak of most glaring profession; and they shall receive greater damnation. (3.) In the day of judgment, terrible will be the disappointment of those who all their lives long were working, as they thought, for life, were esteemed as patterns of piety, and cried up as the excellent of the earth, and yet will be found not only to have deceived others, but to have deluded themselves, falling from the height of self-righteous hopes into the depths of endless despair, and from the gates of heaven, driven into the belly of hell. Let every man prove well his own work, and judge himself, that he may be found sincere and without offence at the day of Christ.

2. He enforces the truths he had delivered by an apposite parable of a wise and foolish builder, describing the different foundations they laid, and the different issue of their labours.

(1.) The wise builder, his labours and success are described. 1. His character is given: *He heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them.* Herein is seen the mind that hath wisdom. He receives the truth in the love of it, obeys the precepts, is influenced by the gospel as a living principle of action, and seeks conformity in heart and life to his divine Lord and Master. 2. *He builds upon a rock,* on Jesus Christ, the only sure and safe foundation, depending on his blood and righteousness alone, for pardon and acceptance; and under the teachings of his word and Spirit, and the supports of his grace, the glorious superstructure rises of righteousness and true holiness. As he builds for eternity, he is zealous in labouring to make his calling and election sure, and in every good word and work seeks to approve himself to the great Master. 3. His work stands against every storm. He may expect, and will meet with many a severe blast: the *rain* of temptation, the *floods* of corruption within, the overflowings of ungodliness without, the *wind* of persecution, all may unite their fury against him, to move him from his steadfastness, to shake his confidence in Christ, to discourage or seduce him from the good ways of the Lord; but in vain: the gates of hell can never prevail against the weakest believer. He shall be made to stand in the day of evil; in the hour of death he shall be supported; his work shall stand the fiery trial; and, in the day of judgment, he shall be approved and rewarded by the Lord of life and glory.

(2.) The foolish builder and his sad end are set forth for our warning. 1. His character is, that *He heareth these sayings of Christ, and doeth them not.* He makes profession of religion, and attends upon the ordinances, but goes no farther; the doctrines of the gospel have no deep effect upon his heart, nor a universal and abiding influence on his conduct. 2. He builds *upon the sand,* leaving Christ, to rest upon something in himself, and looking for acceptance, in whole or in part, on account of some external things wherein he differs from others, whether moral duties, alms, honesty, and the like; or on the form of godliness, baptism, prayers, frequenting the house and table of the Lord, &c. or if he hath a speculative knowledge of the truth, and knows the vanity of these things, he rests on that knowledge without any experimental possession of the blessings of the gospel, and then it profiteth him nothing; or, if his notions are yet more spiritualized, he makes his inward feelings, or supposed gifts and graces, his confidence, depending on what he calls the *Christ within,* which is but a more refined self-righteousness, and a more subtle delusion: and therefore, when the time of trial comes, his house will fall, and crush him under its ruins. If persecution arises for the word's sake, such are quickly offended; in times of affliction and trouble, their hopes cannot support and comfort them, and in death they utterly fail; at least, if the hypocrite's hopes stand out to the last, they die with him; destruction and despair from that moment seize him, and too late he discovers the fatal mistake, when it is irremediable, and his eternal state is determined.

3. Great was the impression made by this discourse of our Lord on his audience: they were as men thunderstruck; astonished with the uncommon power, weight, and energy which attended his preaching. They admired the dignity with which he spoke, addressing them in his own name, as one invested with authority: and his sentiments were new as well as weighty; utterly unlike the flat and spiritless comments of the Scribes, who servilely adhered to the traditions and decisions of their rabbins. And yet, alas! the impressions soon wore off from many, from the most of them. So easy, so common is it to hear with admiration, the eloquent or powerful preachers of his gospel; to feel a transient glow, and, notwithstanding, to continue in ignorance and unbelief, under the power of sin, and to perish everlastingly.

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's cleansing of a leper,* ver. 1—4. 2. *His curing a palsy and fever,* ver. 5—18. 3. *His commun-*

ing with two that had a mind to follow him, ver. 19—22. 4. *His controlling of the tempest*, ver. 23—27. 5. *His casting out devils*, ver. 28—34.

1. WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. 2. [a] And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, [b] if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3. [c] And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4. And Jesus saith unto him, [d] See thou tell no man; but go thy way, [e] shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, [f] for a testimony unto them.

a Mark 1. 40. Luke 5. 12. Lev. 13. 46. Num. 5. 2, 3. 2 Kin. 5. 27.
b Mark 9. 24. ch. 6 30. & 14. 31.
c Mark 1. 41, 42. Luke 5. 13. Exod. 15. 26. ch. 11. 4, 5.
d Ch. 9. 30. & 12. 16. & 16. 20. & 17. 9. with ch. 12. 13—19. Is. 42. 2. John 5. 41. & 7. 18. & 8. 50.
e Lev. xiii, xiv. Mark 1. 43, 44. Luke 5. 14.
f 2 Kin. 5. 7, 8. ch. 5. 17. Mark 6. 11. John 10. 37.

Verses 1—4. Struck with the power of his word, the multitude who had heard Christ preach, followed him when he came down from the mount; and, lo! a fresh occasion offers to raise their admiration, and confirm their faith in him as a teacher sent from God: for they who follow on to know the Lord, shall see fresh manifestations of his power, grace, and glory, every step they advance. We have,

1. A miserable leper's address to our Lord. The leprosy was esteemed by the Jews a disease immediately sent from God, incurable by human art, 2 Kings v. 7. so defiling, as to exclude the unhappy object not only from the sanctuary, but, for the most part, from human converse and society; a lively figure of the fallen sinner, covered with guilt, full of corruption, excluded from God's presence, cut off from the communion of the saints, incurable by any human means, himself unclean, and communicating defilement to all around him. Yet, deplorable as the case appears, blessed be God, it is not desperate; there is balm in Gilead, and a Physician there. *Behold, there came a leper*, who had himself perhaps heard our Lord preach, or drawn by the fame of his wondrous works, *and worshipped him*; either with deepest respect as a prophet, or endued with the knowledge of his divine character, and paying him due adoration; *saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* He doubted not his power and all-sufficiency, and therefore cast himself on his mercy for a cure. And herein is the emblem of the awakened sinner, brought to a sight of his native misery. (1.) He casts himself down at the feet of Jesus in prayer, laying his guilty and polluted soul before him. (2.) He looks up to him as able to save to the uttermost; nor dares distrust, that his blood and righteousness can justify the most guilty, and his grace renew the vilest heart: but often he hesitates on the view of his own unworthiness, and fears whether the Lord will have respect to one so utterly unworthy. (3.) However, as he sees no hope any where else, he presents his desperate case, assured he must perish unless the Lord hath respect to him. But none ever yet perished at the feet of Jesus: for,

2. *Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean; and immediately his leprosy was cleansed.* Such power accompanied his word and touch, as instantly effected the cure. And with like words of grace doth Jesus speak to every poor sinner who applies to him. His answer is ever, *I will*; as ready as able to pardon and save the miserable and the desperate, who come to him; *be thou clean*; thy guilt is cancelled, thy soul is delivered from the bondage of corruption; my blood, my grace, are sufficient for thee, and freely extended to thee: and, by faith, his word is realized to the soul; the scales drop off, guilt no more terrifies the conscience, nor hath corruption any longer dominion over the heart.

3. Our Lord charges him not to divulge the means of his cure; but to go immediately to the priests, obtain their acknowledgment of his being healed, and offer the sacrifices prescribed. And this he did for the man's sake, lest, out of envy, the priests should refuse to pronounce him clean; and that his offering might be a testimony of the fact to all, when it should be more publicly known how the cure was wrought; as well as to cut off occasion from those who desired to represent our Lord as a breaker of Moses' laws, and thereby to prejudice the people against him. *Note*, Every soul cleansed by grace, will not fail to offer the grateful sacrifice not only of his lips, but of his heart, to God; and will seek to approve himself, to his Redeemer's glory, a living testimony of his power and grace.

5. ¶ [g] And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a [h] centurion, beseeching him, 6. And saying, Lord, [i] my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. 7. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. 8. The centurion answered and said, Lord, [k] I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: [l] but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. 9. For * I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. 10. When Jesus heard *it*, [m] he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. 11. And I say unto you, [n] That many shall come from the east and west, and shall † sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: 12. [o] But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 13. And Jesus said unto the centurion, [p] Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

g Luke 7. 1—10. Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 60. 3, 8.
h A captain of a hundred soldiers. Ch. 27. 54. Acts x. He sent to Christ first by the Jews, and then by his friends. Luke vii.
i Job 31. 13. Rom. 12. 15, 16. Col. 4. 1.
k Gen. 32. 10. Luke 15. 19, 21. ch. 15. 27.
l Ps. 107. 20. John 6. 63. Ps. 33. 9. Eccl. 8. 4.
* If I, a servant, have such power over men, what power must God-man have over diseases.
m Ch. 9. 2. & 15. 28. with John 3. 4, 10. ch. 11. 24.
n Gen. 22. 17. & 49. 10. & 28. 14. Is. 2. 2, 3. & 11. 10. & 42. 6. & 43. 6. & 49. 6, 12. & 25. 6. & liv, lx. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 22, 23. Mal. 1. 11. ch. 24. 31. Luke 13. 29. Acts x—xix. Eph. 3. 6, 8.
† A metaphor taken from banquets; for they that sit down together are fellows in the banquet.—*Beza*
o Ch. 3. 10, 11. & 13. 42, 50. & 21. 43. & 22. 7, 13. & 24. 51. & 25. 30. & 23. 38, 39. Rom. 11. 12, 15. Luke 13. 28—30.
p Mark 9. 26. John 4. 50. ch. 15. 28.

Verses 5—13. Capernaum was the place where the Lord had fixed his abode, and whither he returned after his journey through Galilee; and there we are told,

1. The application made to him by a Roman centurion, the captain of a troop consisting of a hundred men. *A soldier*, from whom religion is least expected; but there are some faithful in all professions; *a man of rank*; few of whom were numbered among the followers of Jesus: *not many* such *are called*; blessed be God, it is not said *not any*: *a Gentile* too, and for a Gentile; for Christ came a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of his people Israel. After sending messengers to beg the help of Jesus, Luke vii. 2. he came himself, an humble supplicant on the behalf of his sick servant, afflicted *with the palsy, and grievously tormented*, commending his miserable case to the compassion of Jesus. And herein he showed, (1.) His high respect for the Lord Jesus, and his dependence upon him. (2.)

His great humanity towards his sick servant: not turning him out of doors because unable to work, but tenderly taking care of him, and seeking every means for his relief; a noble example! and which should also be an encouragement to servants to discharge their station with fidelity and honesty, as this will naturally endear them to their masters, see Luke vii. 2.

2. The answer Christ gave to his request: *I will come and heal him.* Though a poor servant, diseased, a Gentile also, Jesus is no respecter of persons; and his ministers herein must resemble him, ready on the first application to visit the meanest of their flock.

3. The deep humility and distinguished faith expressed by the centurion. *Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof;* so lowly were the thoughts he entertained of himself, so high his estimation of the dignity of the Redeemer! A gracious soul ever acknowledges himself thus less than the least of all God's mercies. Nor does he think Christ's presence necessary; so full was his confidence in the power of Jesus, that he is assured a single word will be sufficient to effect the cure; the most inveterate disease being entirely under the command of Jesus, and coming and going at his bidding! for if he, who was but an inferior officer, met with such ready obedience from his soldiers and servants, much more would a word from him, who had no superior, be obeyed. Learn hence, (1.) The character of a good servant; he obeys his master without answering again or hesitating. (2.) The nature of diseases: they are Christ's servants; they come and go only as he orders, and execute that commission he gives them. (3.) The duty of every Christian; to be obedient in all things, to do what Jesus pleases to command, and cheerfully to suffer what he ordains.

4. The high approbation of the centurion expressed by our Lord on this occasion. *When Jesus heard it he marvelled;* not that he was surprised as with an unexpected thing, since this faith was his own gift; but he expressed himself as admiring what was so excellent and uncommon, that it might be more remarked by others, saying to his followers, *Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel;* none of that generation had given such proofs of faith as this Gentile. *Note,* The attainments of those who have enjoyed less means than others, will condemn the unprofitableness, and rise up in judgment against the slothfulness and carelessness of such as, blessed with every advantage for their souls, have abused or neglected them.

5. Christ takes occasion, from hence to foretell the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews for their unbelief. Though the Jews, prejudiced to their nation, could not bear the thoughts that the heathen should share in the common salvation, our Lord assures them, that from all lands, multitudes should be gathered unto him, and admitted to the same privileges, and have a place in the same kingdom as the most distinguished patriarchs; whilst, to their great astonishment, they who boasted themselves as, exclusive of all others, the children of the kingdom; will, so far from having any part or lot in it, *be cast into outer darkness,* as guests excluded from the bridal feast and thrust out; *where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,* the expressive signs of most poignant anguish, which will especially be the case with damned souls in the place of torment. *Note,* (1.) We shall see many in the kingdom of heaven whom we least expected to find there, and multitudes cast out of whom we had the most confident expectations. (2.) It will profit a man nothing at the day of judgment, to have been a professed member of Christ's kingdom and a nominal child of God, if he is not possessed of the Spirit of adoption, and hath not approved his fidelity as a loyal subject. (3.) The torments of hell should be often remembered, to quicken us with greater diligence in fleeing from the wrath to come.

6. The servant is cured. *Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.* With a double grace the favour is conferred; his faith approved, whilst his request is granted: for instantly the cure was wrought: *His servant was healed in the self-same hour.* He that said, Let there be light, and there was light, *need* but say, and *it is done* in every other case. What confidence then should we repose in this almighty Saviour, and never, in our deepest afflictions, distrust his power and love!

14. ¶ [q] And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. 15. And [r] he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and [s] she arose, and ministered unto them. 16. ¶ [t] When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick: 17. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, [u] Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

[q] Mark 1. 29. Luke 4. 38. 1 Cor. 9. 5.
[r] Exod. 15. 26. Ps. 107. 20.
[s] Ch. 9. 6. John 5. 8, 9. Acts 3. 7, 8.
[t] Mark 1. 25, 32—34. Luke 4. 40, 41. Ps. 107. 20. Acts 10. 38. ch. 4. 23, 24. & 11. 5. Gen. 3. 15. Exod. 15. 26.
[u] Is. 53. 4. 1 Pet. 2. 24. John 1. 29.

Verses 14—17. The great Physician is continually manifesting his healing power. We have,

1. Another cure wrought by him on Peter's wife's mother, who lay ill of a fever in Peter's house. He was married we find, in opposition to the Popish celibacy. His care of his aged relations bespoke his gracious spirit. Jesus, who will never fail to repay the entertainment given him in our houses, or in our hearts, by a touch rebuked the disorder, and instantly every symptom vanished, and her strength was perfectly restored, so that she was able to wait upon him and the guests, as an evidence of her cure, and a testimony of her gratitude. *Note,* They whom Christ heals, are bound to employ the strength and health he gives in his blessed service.

2. At even, it being a sabbath-day, see Mark ii. 11. and their days being reckoned from one sunsetting to the other, the people thronged the door with their sick, and those possessed of devils, Satan being at that time permitted to exercise uncommon dominion over men's bodies, that the power of Jesus might more eminently appear. But whatever the diseases were, or however strong the possession of these unclean spirits, one word of Jesus effectually drove them out, and healed every disease.

3. The fulfilment of the Scripture herein is observed; for the prophecy, Isa. liii. 4. not only includes Christ's suffering the punishment due to our sins, 1 Pet. ii. 24. but also his sympathizing tenderness towards us under the diseases that are the fruits of sin, and his gracious power exerted to deliver us from them.

18. ¶ Now, when Jesus saw [x] great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. 19. [y] And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 20. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; [z] but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. 21. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, [a] suffer me first to go and bury my father. 22. But Jesus said unto him, [b] Follow me; and let the [c] dead bury their dead.

[x] Mark 1. 33, 38. Is. 42. 2. John 5. 41. & 7. 18. & 8. 50. ch. 14. 2. & 15. 39. Gen. 49. 10.
[y] Luke 9. 57—61. ch. 13. 20—22. John 6. 26. 1 Tim. 6. 5.
[z] Ps. 22. 6. & 40. 17. & 69. 29. & 109. 22.
[a] Luke 9. 59. Hag. 1. 2. Lev. 21. 11, 12. Num. 5. 6, 7. with 1 Kin. 19. 20. ch. 4. 22. & 19. 29.
[b] Luke 9. 60. 2 Tim. 4. 2. 1 Cor. 15. 10.
[c] Luke 15. 32. Eph. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Lev. 21. 10—12. Num. 6. 6, 7.

Verses 18—22. Great multitudes being some time after, see Mark iv. 35. collected together, more from curiosity or secular views, it is probable, than desirous of his divine instructions, our Lord commanded his disciples to remove to the other side of the lake, to avoid the crowd, to enjoy some needful retirement, to prove their obedience, or to spread the gospel in other places, whither those who were hearty in his cause would follow him, and the rest give it up. Hereupon we are informed of a conversation which passed with two persons who seemed desirous to join him.

1. One of them was a scribe, who seemed to express great forwardness, zeal, and resolution to follow Christ wherever he went; but his warmth soon cooled, when he understood that he must expect none of those worldly advantages with which he flattered himself, from being an apostle of Jesus; since, instead of earthly grandeur and the conveniences of life, the Messiah, the Son of man, was more destitute even than the birds or foxes, and had not a place of his own to repose his weary head, or refresh himself with the sleep he now wanted after his toils. *Note*, (1.) Sudden starts of zeal, and hasty resolutions, are far from being the best evidences of faithful adherence to Christ. (2.) Many are willing to follow Christ if they get by him, who quickly cool in their ardour, when their worldly interest, character, or ease must be denied for his sake. (3.) The poverty of the Lord Jesus, and his wants, should teach us in every state therewith to be content.

2. Another man who had professed himself a disciple, and might be perhaps an appointed evangelist, wanted at this time to be excused from attending his Master. His plea was plausible: his father was either aged and sick, and he desired to stay with him till he should have discharged the last offices to him; or rather he was now dead, and wished to wait upon him to his grave before he went with Jesus; but Christ will not admit the excuse; he must leave all, and come; there were enough dead in trespasses and sins, who might take care of the corpse and the funeral, whilst a more urgent and noble employment called for his service, even to follow Jesus and preach the gospel. *Note*, (1.) Worldly engagements, even about necessary things in our families, are apt to prove a great hinderance to our following Christ. (2.) They who want an excuse for declining duty, will easily find it. (3.) There are times when God's service may demand our attendance, and engage us to leave father, mother, house, and all; and he is not worthy of Christ who can set any thing in competition with him.

23. ¶ [d] And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. 24. [e] And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was [f] asleep. 25. And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, [g] Lord, save us: we perish. 26. And he saith unto them, [h] Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and [i] rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. 27. But the men marvelled, saying, [k] What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

d Mark 4. 36—41. Luke 8. 22—25.
e Mark 4. 37. Luke 8. 22, 23. Is. 54 11.
f 1 Sam. 23. 26. John 21. 14. 15. Ps. 44. 22, 23.
g 2 Chr. 14. 11. & 20. 12. Ps. 6. 3, 4. & 69. 1, 2, 13, 14.
h Ch. 6. 30. & 14. 3. Mark 5. 36. Is. 41. 10—16. & 43. 1, 2. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
i Is. 50. 2. Ps. 104. 7. & 65. 7. & 102. 13—19. Nah. 1. 4. see ver. 27.
k Luke 8. 25. Ps. 89. 9. & 65. 7. & 107. 29.

Verses 23—27. Christ having issued his orders to cross the lake, his chosen disciples immediately obeyed and launched forth; for no dangers or difficulties will deter those from following Jesus, who know the blessedness of his service. Since their master was with them, they counted, no doubt, they were perfectly safe; but, for the trial of their faith, and the manifestation of his glory, we find them plunged into the greatest danger and distress.

1. No sooner were they got to sea, than a violent hurricane overtook them. The waves, like mountains rolled, broke over them with dreadful roar; and their boat filled almost with water, was ready instantly to founder in the deep; whilst Jesus, as if unconcerned and unacquainted with the danger, wearied with his labours, sweetly slept. *Note*, (1.) They who follow Christ will meet with many a storm. (2.) Christ often seems to disregard his people when their dangers seem most imminent. (3.) The temptations permitted to overtake the faithful, are designed not to harm them, but to exercise, strengthen, and brighten their graces.

2. With deep distress the affrighted disciples ran to their Lord, and with their cries awoke him, saying, *Lord, save us, we perish;* their case was desperate if he did not immediately interpose. *Note*, (1.) Awakened consciences feel their perilous condition, and see their inevitable destruction without divine grace and help. (2.) Prayer will be then fervent and importunate, when the deep sensibility of danger raises the cry. (3.) They who come to Jesus must exercise faith in his sufficiency to save, though utterly despairing of help in themselves. (4.) Even doubts and fears will sometimes mingle with the prayer of faith.

3. Jesus with calmness and majestic dignity arose, rebukes their fears, then bids the storm be still, and suddenly the foaming billows subside, the winds are hushed, the troubled waters now are smooth, and not a breath of air dimples the polished surface. *Note*, (1.) In the stormy seasons of temptation, many a fear distresses the faithful heart. (2.) Those may have true faith who have but *little faith*. (3.) The weakness of our faith, and the prevalence of our fears deserve rebuke, as they reflect dishonour upon the faithfulness, power, and grace of Jesus; *wherefore are ye fearful?* (4.) Though the storm of temptation be never so violent, no sinner that cleaves to Jesus shall ever perish. (5.) Where the distresses of the soul have been peculiarly deep, and the trials uncommonly severe, there usually the strongest consolations, and the most delightful sensations follow, of joy and peace in believing.

4. The effect produced by the miracle was, the astonishment of the mariners or disciples who were in the ship, or of both. Never was such an amazing change known before: and this naturally leads them to express their admiration of this wonderful person, whom even winds and waves obeyed. *Note*, They who have experienced the power of a Saviour's grace, in circumstances where every prospect seemed covered with darkness and despair, cannot but wonder and adore.

28. ¶ [l] And when he was come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him [m] two possessed with devils, coming out of the * tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. 29. And, behold, they cried out, saying, [n] What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? 30. And there was a good way off from them [o] an herd of many swine feeding. 31. [p] So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. 32. And he said unto them, [q] Go. And when they were come out,

l Mark 5. 1—20. Luke 8. 26—40. ch. 18. 11—13. Acts 10. 38. Is. 63. 1.
m One of them especially. Mark v. Luke 8. 27.
* The tombs were often caves dug out of the rocks; and robbers often lurked in them. — *Macknight.*
n Luke 8. 28. Mark 5. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 6. 14. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6. Mark 1. 24, 25. Acts 16. 17, 18.
o Mark 5. 11. Lev. 11. 7. Deut. 14. 8. Is. 65. 4. & 66. 3.
p Rev. 12. 12. & 20. 1, 2. Job 1. 11. & 2. 5. Phil. 2. 10.
q 1 Kin. 22. 22. Job 1. 12. & 2. 6. Rev. 20. 7.

they went into the herd * of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. 33. [r] And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. 34. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they [s] besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.

* Christ could not have encouraged the notion of real possessions more than by his conduct on this occasion; and it is highly probable that this extraordinary occurrence was permitted chiefly to prove the reality of these possessions.—*Doddridge.*

r Mark 5. 14—16. Luke 8. 34—36.

s Luke 8. 37. Mark 5. 17. 1 Kin. 17. 18. Deut. 5. 25. Luke 5 8. Gen. 25. 34. Acts 16. 39. with ver. 29.

Verses 28—34. Continued miracles of mercy mark every step of the divine Redeemer.

The country of the Gergesenes here mentioned, bordered on the side of the lake which they had crossed; and they were no sooner arrived, than a fresh occasion offers to display the power and grace of Jesus.

1. Two miserable objects met him, *possessed of devils, coming out of the tombs*, the place where they took up their residence: driven thither by the wicked spirits who actuated them, to make their abode the more dreary and dismal, or to confirm the notion of spirits haunting these melancholy places, or by solitude to increase their ferocity, and render them more mischievous, for they were *exceeding fierce, so that no man durst pass that way* for fear of them. *Note*, When anger, malice, and revenge dwell in the bosom, there Satan's power reigns, and men then turn worse than savages to their kind.

2. The devils address the Lord as trembling at his presence, and fearful of being dispossessed. *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?* They well knew his power and Godhead, and their hopeless state: he never came to be a Saviour unto them, but to be their destroyer; and all their desire is, that he would let them alone, at least in the heathen world, if he drove them from Judea, and not come thither *to torment them before the time.* Torment eternal they expected: they were persuaded he would be their terrible Judge, and they ask only a momentary respite before the last and dreadful day, when their misery will be complete. *Note*, (1.) The devils know and tremble. (2.) They who say to Jesus and his servants, What have we to do with thee? depart from us; and reject the counsel of God against their own souls, must perish with the fiends of darkness.

3. Being unable to keep possession of the bodies of men, they desire to enter into a herd of swine that fed there; for even over these they could have no power without divine permission; and this they besought even from their innate pleasure in mischief, or rather from a crafty design to make Christ an unwelcome guest in that country; and Jesus, from whom none of their wiles could be hid, permitted it; perhaps, because these swine belonged to the Jews, who kept them for food, in defiance of God's laws, or, for covetousness, to make merchandise of them; and he would thus punish their owners; or he designed thereby to manifest his own divine power, to prove the reality of the miracle, and confound the Sadducean doctrine, which denied the existence of spirits good or evil. No sooner had these fiends obtained their request, than they flew, as to their prey, and all the herd of swine madly rushed down a precipice into the sea, and were choked; to the great terror of those that kept them, who fled, and filled the city and country with the report. And so grieved were they at their loss, and affrighted with the apprehensions of greater judgments, that, instead of adoring him for the miracle he had wrought on the two possessed persons, or welcoming him to their country, they besought him to depart, like many other worldlings, who love their swine better than their souls. We may observe here, (1.) The restraint laid upon these spirits of wickedness: they cannot touch a swine without permission; and however malignant and fierce the devil is, Jesus holds his chain, and in all his temptations saith, Hitherto mayest thou go, and no farther. (2.) Where Satan rules in the children of disobedience, he fails not to drive them into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which necessarily drown both body and soul in perdition. (3.) By nothing doth the god of this world hold firmer possession of men's hearts against Christ, than by suggesting the losses and crosses to which his service may expose them, and bewitching them with the love of gain in preference to the love of God.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

We have in this chapter remarkable instances of the power and pity of the Lord Jesus, sufficient to convince us that he is both able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, and as willing as he is able. His power and pity appear here in the good offices he did, 1. *To the bodies of people: in curing the palsy,* ver. 2—8. *Raising to life the ruler's daughter, and healing the bloody issue,* ver. 18—26. *Giving sight to two blind men,* ver. 27—31. *Casting the devil out of one possessed,* ver. 32—34. *and healing all manner of sickness,* ver. 35. 2. *To the souls of people: in forgiving sins,* ver. 2. *Calling Matthew, and conversing freely with publicans and sinners,* ver. 9—13. *Considering the frame of his disciples with reference to the duty of fasting,* ver. 14—17. *Preaching the gospel, and in compassion to the multitude, providing preachers for them,* ver. 35—38.

1. AND he entered into a ship, and [a] passed over, and came into his [b] own city. 2. [c] And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, [d] be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. 3. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, [e] This *man* blasphemeth. 4. And Jesus, [f] knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? 5. For whether is easier to say, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee: or to say, Arise, and walk? 6. But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power [g] on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) [h] Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. 7. And he arose, and departed to his house. 8. [i] But when the multitude saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

a Ch. 7. 6. Ps. 81. 11, 12. Rev. 22. H. Ezek. 3. 27. Dan. 12. 10.

b Ch. 2. 23. Luke 2. 39, 51. & 4. 16—29. or rather ch. 4. 13.

c Mark 2. 1—12. Luke 5. 18—26.

d Ps 32. 1, 2. Is. 40. 1, 2. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. Rom. 5. 11. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Luke 7. 48. Lam. 3. 39.

e Luke 5. 21. Mark 2. 7. Job 14. 4. Is. 43. 25. & 44. 22. Mic. 7. 18.

f Ps. 139 2. ch. 12. 15. 25. & 16. 7. 8. Mark 8. 16, 17. Luke 6. 8. & 9. 47. & 11. 17. John 2. 24, 25. & 6. 61, 64. & 13. 11. & 16. 19, 30. & 18. 4. & 21. 17. Heb. 4. 12, 13. Rev. 2. 23.

g Luke 7. 48. with John 17. 2. Acts 5, 31. & 7. 60.

h Mark 2. 11, 12. Luke5. 24, 25. & 13. 11—13. John 5. 8—10.

i Luke 5. 26 Mark 2. 12. Luke 7. 16. Acts 3. 11, 12. Ps. 103. 1—4.

Verses 1—8. Jesus will not abide where he is an unwelcome guest; but wo to those who bid him depart, for nothing but wrath and misery are left behind him. Leaving the country of the Gergesenes, he returned to Capernaum, the usual place of his residence, where we find him curing a poor paralytic: for his work was ever to be doing good.

1. His friends brought him to Jesus, being unable himself to stand or walk: they had compassion for their brother, and counted no pains too great to obtain his cure, and they were persuaded the Lord both could and would relieve him from his

misery. *Note*, Those of our dear friends and relatives, who are themselves benumbed in spirit as with the palsy, and cannot come to Christ, we must carry in the arms of prayer and love, and spread their case before him; perhaps in so doing we may save a soul from death.

2. Christ kindly received them: *seeing their faith*, either of those who brought him, or of the sick man also, and to revive the heart of the poor afflicted patient, more distressed probably by his sins than his sufferings, Jesus saith, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. Note*, (1.) Sin is the bitterest of all our burdens; the sting of sickness and death itself, is taken out when our iniquity is pardoned. (2.) They who come to Christ are called upon to be of good cheer: no poor beggar ever went from his door with a denial. (3.) God sometimes severely afflicts his dearest children; they must not question their adoption because of their sufferings, but should rather conclude, that God then dealeth with them as sons, Heb. xii. 5.

3. The scribes, who were the doctors of the law, and expounded it to the people, highly offended with what Jesus had said, though they did not speak their sentiments, yet in their hearts regarded him as a blasphemer, for presuming by his own authority to forgive sins, which is the prerogative of God alone; and contains a strong argument for his divinity, in which light these men evidently regarded his declaration. *Note*, Many among us are like these scribes; though they will not say it is blasphemy in Jesus to pardon our sins, they are ready to brand those as blasphemers, who say they have the pardon Jesus pronounces.

4. To give them a proof of his divinity, and confute their vain imaginations, Jesus lets them know he perceived their thoughts. *Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?* censuring him as a blasphemer; *for whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?* He that by his own power could effect the one, evidently proved he had a right to pronounce the other. *Note*, Our hearts are naked and open before the Lord; and he observes and is displeased at every evil thought which rises or lodges there.

5. He demonstrates the power he had to forgive sin, by removing that disease which was the punishment of it, and bids the paralytic *arise* before them all; and, as a proof of his health and strength being perfectly restored, to *take up* that *bed* on which as a cripple he lay, and *go unto his house*. And, lo! to the astonishment of the multitude, who glorified God for so great a miracle, and, to the confusion of these murmurers, the man instantly arose, took up his bed, and departed, cured of every infirmity. *Note*, (1.) Though we have no strength of ourselves to help ourselves, when Jesus speaks to the paralytic soul, power accompanies his word, and enables us for that which he commands. (2.) The mercies shown to others demand our praises; and for every good gift bestowed on the sons of men, God is to be glorified.

9. ¶ [k] And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, [l] sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, [m] Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. 10. ¶ And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many [n] publicans and [o] sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. 11. And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disciples, [p] Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? 12. But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, [q] They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. 13. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, [r] I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to [s] call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

k Mark 2. 14—28. Luke 5. 27—39.
l 1 Cor. 6. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 13. ch. 4. 18—22.
m Gal. 1. 16. 1 Kin. 19. 19—21.
n See ch. 5. 46, 47.
o Notorious sinners. Gen 13. 13. Num. 16. 38. John 9. 31. 1 Tim. 1. 9, 13, 15, 16.
p Luke 15. 1, 2. & 19. 7. ch. 11. 19. & 23. 23. Gen. 43. 32. Ps. 101. 5. Dan. 1. 8. John 4. 9. Acts. 10. 28. 1 Cor. 5. 11. 2 John 10. Is. 65. 5.
q Luke 5. 31, 32. Mark 2 17. Luke 18. 11—13 ch. 18. 12 Luke xv. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16. Is. 1 18. & 55. 7. Rom 7. 9—24.
r Hos. 6. 6. ch. 12. 7. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Prov. 21. 3, 27. Eccl. 5. 1. Is. 1. 11—15. Mic. 6. 6—8.
s 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15, 16. Luke 19. 10. ch. 18. 11—13. Luke xv. Eph. 2. 1—8. Is. 1. 18. & 55. 7. & 45. 22. Rom. 5. 6—21. 1 Cor. 6. 11.

Verses 9—13. The publicans were those who farmed or collected the customs imposed by the Romans, and were not only therefore odious to the Jews, who abhorred this mark of servitude, but were also, for the most part, men of infamous conduct; who enriched themselves by exaction, being sure of having the government on their side. Hence publicans and sinners are so often used to include the most guilty and abandoned characters: yet such as these Jesus came to save, and out of them was pleased to choose one of his most eminent disciples, an apostle and evangelist, the penman of this gospel. We have,

1. His call. His name is Matthew, *the gift of God*, which some suppose was given him by our Lord on this occasion, when before he was known by that of Levi, as the other evangelists call him, though it was common for the same person to have two names. He was sitting at the receipt of custom, in the office where it was to be paid, and, perhaps, little thought of following Christ: but the Lord is often strangely found of them who seek him not, and prevents us with the blessings of his grace, that, to his glory, it may be for ever acknowledged he hath chosen us, not we him. One word effectually wrought upon the publican's heart: he said, *Follow me; and* immediately *he arose and followed him.* Power accompanies the word of Jesus, when he calls a soul unto himself, which bears down all objections; and out of the most ensnaring engagements of this world, some are made monuments of grace, for nothing is too hard for God.

2. Having tasted the grace of Jesus himself, he is solicitous his brethren, by profession, should be acquainted with him also; and for this purpose made a feast for Jesus and his disciples, to which many publicans and sinners were invited: nor did the Lord disdain their company, but gladly sat down with them. *Note*, (1.) They who have truly experienced the Redeemer's grace from that moment begin to labour, that all who are near and dear to them may partake of their blessing. (2.) Where the heart is open to Christ, there all who are his disciples will be welcome for his sake.

3. The Pharisees with malignant eye marked the condescensions of Jesus, and wanted to cast a reflection upon his character, and prejudice his disciples against him. *Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?* These proud and self-righteous creatures thought it infamous to be seen in such company, and would insinuate, that our Lord was like the men with whom he had sat down to meat. *Note*, (1.) The self-righteous formalists are ever the most rigid censurers of others' conduct. (2.) The noblest acts of charity are liable to the basest misrepresentations.

4. Christ vindicates himself from their insinuations. He overheard their whispers: or his disciples, weak themselves, carried the question to him, that they might be furnished with an answer; for to him in all our difficulties we must have recourse; and he gives them an abundant vindication of his conduct. *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.* He came into the world as the great Physician of sin-sick souls; sinners are his unhappy patients, who groan under their spiritual maladies, incurable but for his healing grace: and they who feel their miseries and fly to him, he is ever ready to relieve; but the wilfully ignorant, and the self-righteous, who know nothing of their deep corruption, guilt, and sinfulness, and conceit themselves whole: these, as they experience no want of him, and will not come to him that they may have life, are left to perish in

their blindness and their pride. *But go ye*, saith he, *and learn what that meaneth*, Hos. vi. 6. *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*; that is, in a comparative sense, acts of kindness and charity to men's bodies or souls are much more acceptable to God, than all the formalities of ritual devotion; and therefore Christ intimates, that his conversing with sinners for their good was, according to the word of truth, far more pleasing to God than their scrupulous adherence to the traditions of the elders. *For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*; this being the very end of his mission, he was fully justified in receiving them into his company, that he might acquaint them with his salvation. Had man been righteous, he never had needed a Redeemer; and they who fancy they are such, have nothing to do with him who came only to seek and save that which is lost. The Saviour's errand is to sinners, the vilest of sinners, to invite them to return to God, with promises of pardon purchased by his blood, and to call them, in virtue thereof, to repent and turn from all their abominations. And to this a sense of his love engages them, and for this his grace enables them; whilst they who vainly conceit that they are righteous, and need no repentance, are left to perish in their own deceivings.

14. ¶ Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, [t] Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? 15. And Jesus said unto them, Can [u] the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come when the bridegroom [x] shall be taken from them, and then shall they [y] fast. 16. [z] No man putteth a piece of * new cloth unto an old garment: for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. 17. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

t Mark 2. 18—22. Luke 5. 33—39. & 18. 12. ch. 6. 16. & 11. 19. Prov. 20. 6.

u John 3. 29. 2 Cor. 11. 2 Rev. 21. 2. & 19. 7—9.

x Ch. xvi—xxviii. Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51. John 14. 19. & 16. 5, 7, 28. Acts 1. 9, 10. & 3. 21.

y Acts 1. 14. & 10. 30. & 13. 1—3. & 14. 23. 1 Cor. 7. 5. Zech. 12. 10—14.

z Mark 2. 21, 22. Luke 5. 36—39. with ch. 6. 30. & 8. 26. & 14. 31. & 16. 8. Luke 24. 49. Gen. 33. 14. Isa. 40. 11. John 16. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 2. Heb. 5. 13. Ps. 103. 13, 14.

* *Raw*, which was never put to the fuller.—*Beza.*

Verses 14—17. Our Lord was ever beset by insidious foes; yet his wisdom enabled him to confute and confound all their malicious designs. We have here,

1. The question addressed to Jesus by some of John's disciples. *Why do we and the disciples of the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?* and herein they would insinuate, that they were not so strict and holy in their religious profession as they ought to be: It appears from Luke v. 33. that they were set on by the Pharisees, who joined them; for designing and wicked men study how to set good men at variance, and are happy if they can suggest any cause of discord between them. They seem to take a pride in proclaiming the frequency of their own fasts, and to look down upon the disciples of Jesus as far their inferiors in this respect; and this leaven of self-complacence effectually destroyed what otherwise might be laudable in their practice. *Note*, (1.) In the externals of devotion and mortification, formal professors often go farther than true converts: being under a spirit of bondage, they rest upon their austerities, which in fact are *not of any value* in the sight of God, *but are to the satisfying of the flesh*, Col. ii. 23. (2.) They who boast of their own good works, evidently show their religion is vain.

2. Christ vindicates his disciples by an appeal to themselves. *Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?* On such occasions of festivity fasting would be unseasonable. Christ was this heavenly Bridegroom, as John had called him, John iii. 29. he came now openly to espouse his church, whom he had loved from eternity. His disciples were the children of the bride-chamber, who, whilst their Lord was with them, could not but rejoice; but the time would come, when *the bridegroom* should be *taken from them, and then shall they fast:* besides, at present they were but young disciples, and therefore to be inured by degrees to harder services. As improper would it be to lay upon them at present these austerities, as to put a piece of new cloth on an old garment, which would soon make a worse hole than that which it covered; or new wine, which ferments most, into old bottles, which, being made of leather or skins, would by long use grow weak, and be liable to burst; *but new wine must be put into new bottles*, and then *both are preserved.* There must be a proper consideration had of the persons, and their measure of grace: children and babes in Christ must not be set upon the services which require peculiar intenseness of mind, or the severest acts of self-denial, but gently led, as Jacob's cattle, Gen. xxxiii. 13. lest by being over-driven they should be destroyed.

18. ¶ While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, * and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: [a] but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. 19. And [b] Jesus arose, and followed him, and *so did* his disciples. 20. ¶ And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an [c] issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and [d] touched the hem of his garment: 21. For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. 22. But Jesus turned him about; and when he saw her, he said, [e] Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour. 23. ¶ And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw [f] the minstrels and the people making a noise, 24. He said unto them, [g] Give place; for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. 25. But when the people [h] were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand; and the maid arose. 26. And † the [i] fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

* Viz. Jairus, who was ruler of the synagogue at Nazareth. See Mark 5. 22—43. Luke 8. 41—56. & 13. 14. Acts 13. 15.

a Ch. 8. 15. John 4. 47, 49. Mark 6. 5, 6. John 11. 21, 25. & 5. 25.

b With John 4. 50. & 11. 6, 7. ch. 8. 13. & 15. 28.

c Lev. 15. 19—33. & 18. 19. & 20. 13. Num. 5. 2.

d Mark 5. 27—34. Luke 8. 43—48. Exod. 15. 26. Ps. 147. 3. Mal. 4. 2. 2 Kin. 13. 21. ch. 14. 36. John 14. 12. Acts 5. 15. & 19. 12. Rom. 4. 19, 20.

e Ver. 2. Is. 40. 1, 2. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Acts 14. 9. ver. 29. ch. 8. 13. Mark 9. 23. & 10. 52. Luke 7. 47—50. & 17. 19. & 18. 42. & 8. 48.

f 2 Chr. 35. 25. Jer. 9. 17. Acts 9. 39.

g Acts 20. 10. John 11. 4. Her death is but like a short sleep.

h Ch. 7. 6. 1 Kin. 17. 19. 2 Kin. 4. 33. Acts 9. 40.

† Or *this fame.*

i Ch. 4. 24. Is. 52. 13. Mark 1. 45. John 3. 30.

Verses 18—26. While Jesus was vindicating the conduct of his disciples from the cavils of those who found fault with them, an agreeable avocation calls him from this unpleasing work of disputation.

1. A ruler of the synagogue, a man of rank and importance, applies to Jesus on the behalf of his daughter, who was either now in the very agony of death, as the other evangelists say, or by this time, as he concludes, actually dead. He therefore, with deepest humility, begs him to come to his house, and lay his hand upon her, persuaded that Jesus could easily restore her, desperate as the case appeared. Though few, very few in his station respected Christ, he was one of those singularly favoured, to whom it was given to believe on his name. *Note*, (1.) Christ has disciples of every rank; and though, in general, to the poor

the gospel is preached, yet some, though not many, mighty and noble are called. (2.) The breaches in our families should drive us to the Lord, if not to restore the dead to life, at least to sanctify the providence as a means of quickening our own souls.

2. Christ immediately complies with his request; for he is more willing to give than we to ask, and none seek him in vain: and his disciples followed him, desirous to behold a fresh instance of the divine power of their Lord.

3. In the way, he heals a poor woman afflicted with a disease of long standing, that weakened her in body, rendered her ceremonially unclean, and impoverished her in seeking a cure, without obtaining any relief from the physicians. As her disorder was of such a nature that she might be ashamed to mention it, and by the law should have kept her from mingling in society with others, she came behind our Lord and touched the hem of his garment, persuaded that there was such a plenitude of healing virtue in Jesus, that if she but touched his garment she should certainly be cured. Nor was she disappointed of her hope: she immediately felt herself perfectly well, but must not steal off unnoticed. Though others observed her not, Jesus, who had brought her thither, knew what was done, and, for his own glory and her comfort, addresses her with kind encouragement, saying, *Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole. Note,* (1.) The poor sinner who comes to Christ ashamed, confounded, and distressed, shall be sent from him rejoicing. (2.) They who honour Christ by believing in his name, he will honour, approving and rewarding the faith which he bestows.

4. He is pleased to raise from the dead the ruler's daughter. At his arrival he found the house filled with mourners and minstrels, as was usual on those occasions, with melancholy notes of wo, exciting greater grief and wailing; but he bade them cease their lamentations, and leave the room, since they would find the damsel not as they supposed, dead, and past hope, but as one asleep, whom he would soon awake; though they assured him she was dead, and, supposing the case desperate, treated what he said with utter contempt. But he quickly convinced them of their folly and wickedness herein; for, having ordered them to be put out of the house, or room, as unworthy to be spectators of his miracles who thus derided him, in the presence of the father and mother and three of his disciples, he went in, took her by the hand, and, at his word, she instantly arose, alive and well, as if she had indeed awaked from a refreshing sleep. *Note,* (1.) Death is but a longer night, and sleep its lesser mysteries. They who die in the Lord, are said to sleep in Jesus; for though dead to us, they live to him, and only wait for the resurrection morn to wake up to eternal life and day, when sleep and death shall be no more. (2.) When our dear relatives go before us to their bed of dust, though nature cannot but feel the pangs of parting, we sorrow not as those who have no hope. If they fell asleep in Christ, we shall wake up together shortly, never to part again. (3.) Many scoff at Christ's words, and, because they cannot comprehend them, brand them as foolishness, though they will be found the true sayings of God. (4.) He that by a touch, a word, raised the dead body, doth thus by his word and Spirit raise our souls from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness. We are wholly passive, nor can perform the least act of spiritual life till he hath first quickened us.

5. The fame of this amazing miracle soon spread throughout that land, the certainty of the fact being put beyond doubt by the multitude of those who had been fully convinced of the damsel's death.

27. ¶ And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, [l] crying, and saying, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on us. 28. And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, [m] Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. 29. Then touched he their eyes, saying, [n] According to your faith be it unto you. 31. [o] And their eyes were opened; and Jesus [p] straitly charged them, saying, See *that* no man know *it.* 31. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country. 32. ¶ [q] As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil. 33. And when the devil was cast * out the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, [r] It was never so seen in Israel. 34. But the Pharisees said, [s] He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

[l] Ch. 7. 11. Rom. 8. 1 1. 15, 26. Jam. 5. 16. ch. 12. 23. & 1. 1. John 7. 31. Rom. 1. 3. & 9. 5. Rev. 22. 16.

[m] Ch. 13. 58. ver. 22, 29. John 11. 26. Mark 9. 23, 24. & 11. 23. ch. 17. 20. & 21. 22. Acts 11. 9.

[n] Ch. 8. 13. ver. 22. ch. 15. 28. Luke 7. 50.

[o] Ps. 146. 8. Is. 35. 5. & 42. 7, 18. ch. 20. 34. John 9. 7, 26.

[p] Ch. 8. 4. & 12. 16. & 17. 9. Luke 5. 14. Mark 7. 36. & 5. 43. & 1. 44.

[q] Luke 11. 14, 15. ch. 12. 22, 23.

* An example of the power which Christ has over the devil.—*Beza.*

[r] Exod. 4. 11. Is. 35. 6. with ch. 8. 27. & 15. 30, 31.

[s] Ch. 12. 24. Mark 3. 22. Luke 11. 15. Eccl. 4. 4.

Verses 27—34. Miracle upon miracle confirmed our Lord's divine mission, and left those inexcusable who, in the face of such evidence, rejected him.

1. We find him, immediately after raising Jairus' daughter, giving sight to two blind men.

(1.) They followed him with importunate cries, hearing of his fame, and hoping for a cure. He who gave life to the dead could surely give sight to the blind. Their address showed their persuasion that Jesus was the true Messiah, the promised Son of David, and all their prayers centred in one point, *have mercy on us.* All the sinner needs is comprehended in this one word, and all he can hope for or ask is free unmerited grace. Being in the same distress, they joined their mutual supplications; fellow-sufferers should be joint petitioners: and though their request was not, as usual, immediately granted, they did not desist; but with persevering earnestness followed him through the street; and then into the house. If the Lord Jesus for a while seem to disregard our prayers, it must not be interpreted a denial of our request, but as designed to quicken our importunity, and to make the mercy sought more valued by us. We shall assuredly succeed if we faint not.

(2.) In answer to the question of our Lord, they make a noble confession of their faith. Jesus asked them, *Believe ye that I am able to do this?* to open your eyes, and by my own divine power to cure your blindness? *They said unto him, Yea, Lord,* we are fully persuaded of it. *Note,* (1.) They who have true faith, never desist till they have obtained the blessing. (2.) In all our trials, the full and fixed persuasion of Christ's power to save us out of them, must be as an anchor to our souls amidst the storm. (3.) Christ requires open profession of our faith, that we may give him the glory due unto his name.

(3.) Hereupon he grants their request. *He touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened.* He knew their sincerity, and he designed to express his approbation of their faith in conferring the cure. Whoever still comes to him with their wants, will find the same language from Jesus: *according to our faith* the blessings of the gospel become possessed by us. Whatever we want, faith may ever draw it out of his fulness; and whenever we fail of strength or comfort, we may be assured it is owing to our unbelief.

(4.) He strictly charges them to conceal the miracle he had wrought for them. Either he shunned all appearance of seeking popular applause, or he knew the more his fame spread, the more his enemies would be exasperated; or perhaps he did it to prevent the Jews or his own disciples, too much disposed to expect

in their Messiah a temporal Prince, from crowding around him, or attempting by insurrections to set him on the throne of Israel.

(5.) They, notwithstanding, *spread abroad his fame;* so full of gratitude they could not conceal the favour; and though their disobedience was not commendable, their motive no doubt pleaded their excuse. Well meant zeal, though sometimes imprudently exerted, should not meet a harsh censure.

2. He cures a dumb man possessed of a devil. His friends brought him to Jesus as a truly pitiable object, just as the blind men who were healed went out; for Christ's door was open to all the miserable, and he was never weary in doing good. The favour is no sooner asked than granted; the devil is dispossessed, and the dumb man speaks freely as ever. *Note,* They who live in the neglect of prayer and praise and godly conversation, are under the possession of this spirit of dumbness; but when the grace of Jesus touches the heart, the tongue of the dumb will instantly sing, speaking his praises, and telling what great things God hath done for his soul.

3. These miracles had a very different effect on the spectators. *The multitudes marvelled,* and owned, to the glory of Jesus, that never had such miracles been seen before in Israel; so many, so immediate, and performed with such divine authority. But the malignant Pharisees, determined to find fault, though unable to deny the facts, imputed these miracles to a diabolical agency, as if Christ was in league with the devil. They who are bent against conviction will always have something to object; and the more they are pressed with the evidence of the truth, the more enraged, inveterate, and blasphemous is their abuse.

35. [t] And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. 36. ¶ [u] But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they [x] fainted, and were scattered abroad, [y] as sheep having no shepherd. 37. Then saith he unto his disciples, [z] The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few: 38. [a] Pray ye therefore the [b] Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

t Mark 6. 6. Luke 13. 22. & 4. 43, 44. ch. 4. 23, 24. & 11. 5.
u Mark 6. 34. Luke 10. 33.
x Or *were tired, and lay down.* John 6. 27.
y Num. 27. 17. 1 Kin. 22. 17. Jer. 50. 6. Ezek. 34. 6. Amos 8. 12. Mark 6. 34. ch. 10. 6. Zech. 10. 2. & 11. 4.
z Luke 10. 2. John 4. 35. Zech. 10. 2. & 11. 4, 7, 11. Acts 16. 9, 10. & 18. 10.
a Luke 6. 12, 13. Acts 20. 28 & 13. 2. & 10. 6, 7. & ii—xix. Jer. 3. 15. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
b Ch. 10. 1. Eph. 4. 11. or Acts 13. 2. & 20. 28.

Verses 35—38. Christ did not long fix his abode at one place. We have an account,

1. Of his journeys, preaching, and cures, through all the cities and villages of Galilee. He taught publicly in the synagogues the doctrines of the gospel, and the nature, blessings, and privileges of that kingdom he came to erect; and, in confirmation of his mission, in every place performed the most miraculous cures on the bodies of all the diseased who applied to him, as his word was designed to heal the greater maladies of their souls.

2. Of the compassion he expressed towards the multitudes who followed him. It grieved him to see the darkness, ignorance, and carelessness which every where appeared; *they fainted,* perishing through lack of knowledge; instead of the bread of life and truth, fed with the miserable husks of Pharisaical traditions, and misled in the most essential truths of God's word, through the adulterations with which their scribes had corrupted it: *and they were scattered abroad as sheep without a shepherd,* exposed to the great destroyer of souls, and destitute of every faithful guide to bring them to the fold of God: they who should have directed them aright contributed to increase their errors, or by total negligence abandoned them to ruin. Our Lord therefore stirs up his disciples to pray, that since the harvest is so plenteous, and multitudes of immortal souls willing to hear the good word of God, and so few to labour for their conversion, to gather them into God's church; the great Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers qualified for their work, and bless them with success. *Note,* (1.) They who know the value of their own souls cannot but feel, with Jesus, the tenderest compassion for those who live in ignorance, error, and sin, and pity them the more because they appear so insensible, and to have no pity on themselves. (2.) The neglect of ministers is an awful judgment upon the people, and must be attended with aggravated guilt and ruin on their own souls. (3.) When multitudes appear attentive and willing to hear the gospel, it is a grief to see them deprived of the means, and a double obligation is laid on the few faithful to exert themselves. (4.) The grievous neglect of men's souls we see, should excite our fervent prayers to God, that he would revive his work in the midst of the years, and send forth faithful shepherds to feed and guide his flock. (5.) Christ must appoint his own servants; he is the Lord of the harvest: none can call or qualify for the office but himself, and whom he sends he will support and bless; their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. They who see no gracious fruits of their ministry, may justly conclude the Lord of the harvest never sent them. (6.) All Christ's servants are *labourers;* these are no loiterers who are of his appointing. Diligence, fidelity, and zeal, mark their administrations.

CHAP. X.—anno domini, 31.

In answer to the prayers enjoined in the former chapter for faithful labourers, we have, 1. *The general commission that was given them,* ver. 1. 2. *The names of the persons to whom this commission was given,* ver. 2—4. 3. *The instructions that were given them, which are very full and particular.* (1.) *Concerning the services they were to do,* ver. 5—15. (2.) *Concerning the sufferings they were to undergo, with the counsel given, and support promised to them,* ver. 16—42. *And these things, though primarily intended for direction to the apostles then, are of use to all Christ's ministers, with whom he is, and will be always to the end of the world.*

1. And [a] when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power* *against* unclean spirits, to [b] cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. 2. Now [c] the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3. [d] Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; [e] James *the son* of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was [f] Thaddeus; 4. Simon [g] the Canaanite, and [h] Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

a Mark 3. 13—19. & 6. 7. Luke 6. 13—16. & 9. 1. Rev. 21. 12. with Exod. 1. 2—4. ch. 19. 28.
* Or *over.*
b Acts 16. 18. & 10. 38.
c Prov. 10. 7. 1 Cor. 12. 28. John 1. 40—42. ch. 4. 18—22. & 17. 1. & 26. 37. Mark 13. 3. & 10. 35. Acts 1. 13. & ii—xii. 1st and 2d Pet. 1st, 2d, and 3d John. John i—xxi. Rev. i—xxii.
d John 1. 43—51. & 6. 5—7. & 14. 5—9. & 20. 24—29. & 21. 2. ch. 9. 9, 10. & i—xxviii.
e Acts 1. 13. & 15. 13—22. & 21. 28. Gal. 1. 19. & 2. 9.
f Or Judas. Acts 1. 13. John 14. 22. Jude. Luke 6. 16. Lotes. Acts 1. 13 Luke 6. 15.
g Or Zelotes. Acts 1. 13 Luke 6. 15.
h Ch. 26. 14—16, 25, 47—50. & 27. 3—5. John 13. 26—29. Acts 1. 16—19. John 6. 71.

Verses 1—4. Those whom our Lord intended to be his ministers and ambassadors, he had before called to be his attendants, that they might learn from his divine instructions the truths they must preach to others, and imitate his bright example, which they beheld. None can possibly be fit for the ministry, or be called of God to take that office upon them, who have not first

been taught of Christ, by communion with him, and acquaintance with his word, the blessed truths they are to declare to others, and been furnished with gifts, as well as graces, for that arduous employment. It is the scandal of any church, and must be the ruin of the people's souls, when such are sent forth as ministers, who are themselves ignorant, careless, and unacquainted with the glorious truths of God, and merely take up the ministry as a maintenance; and they who send them shall share their guilt.

1. Christ *called them unto him* in private, from the rest of the disciples, and with their commission to preach his gospel, invested them with authority over the unclean spirits, and diseases of every kind, that by their miracles they might confirm their mission. *Note,* (1.) A particular call is needful for the ministry, besides the general one to be Christ's disciple: and we must see this clear before we presume to run. (2.) The great design of the gospel ministry is, to oppose and destroy Satan's power over the hearts of men. Though bodily possessions may be less frequent, his empire over men's souls is still mighty, and nothing but the power of the gospel can effectually cast out the unclean spirit from the fallen heart. (3.) In the grace of Jesus, there is a cure for every sickness; none of our spiritual maladies are so inveterate, but there is in his word medicine that can heal the sickness.

2. The number and names of the apostles are recorded. They were twelve in number, according to the tribes of Israel, to whom they were sent. They are mentioned in pairs, being sent forth by two and two, as mutual helps to each other, and some of them were brethren in blood as well as apostleship; and happy it is where relations are thus, by grace, doubly united. Peter is placed first, not as invested with superior power over his fellow-labourers, but as among those who were first called, and appeared ever most zealous in the cause. Matthew, the writer of this gospel, humbly sets Thomas before himself, though the other evangelists place him after Matthew: and he adds his former occupation, *the publican*, as a foil to set off the distinguished grace of Jesus to him, and to keep him lowly in his own eyes, remembering from whence he was taken. Simon, another of the same name with Peter, is distinguished from him by being called the *Canaanite*, either from his city, Cana of Galilee, or, as the name signifies, he was of the *zealots*, Luke vi. 15. a sect among the Jews, who, in imitation of Phinehas, out of pretended zeal for God's glory, executed vengeance on offenders, without any process before the magistrates. Judas the traitor is the last. The purest societies will have some such among them; he is called *Iscariot;* concerning which there are many conjectures; the most probable seems to be, that it was given him from the place of his nativity and to distinguish him from the other Judas, or Jude, the brother of James.

5. ¶ These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, [i] Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6. [k] But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7. And as ye go, [l] preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. 8. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. 9. [m] Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; 10. Nor scrip for *your* journey; neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: [n] for the workman is worthy of his meat. 11. And [o] into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and * there abide till ye go thence. 12. And when ye come into an house, [p] salute it. 13. [q] And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14. [r] And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. 15. Verily I say unto you, [s] It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city.

i Acts 16. 6, 7. 2 Kin. 17. 24—41. Ezra iv, v. John 4. 20. Acts viii.

k Ch. 15. 24. & 9. 36. Acts 3. 26. & 13. 46. Rom. 9. 4, 5. Is. 53. 6. Jer. 50. 16, 17. Ezek. 34. 6, 16. 1 Pet. 2. 25. Ps. 119. 176.

l Ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17. & 11. 5. Luke 9. 2. & 10. 9. Acts 3. 6. & 8. 18, 20. & 20. 33—35.

m Mark 6. 8. Luke 9. 3, 4. & 22. 35. Trust God for your maintenance.

n Luke 10. 7. 1 Tim. 5. 18. Lev. 19. 13. Deut. 24. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 9. 4—14. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. Gal. 6. 6.

o Luke 10. 8. 1 Cor. 14. 33, 40. Eph. 5. 15. Lodge with persons of credit.

* That the family may have the full benefit of your instruction.—*Boothroyd.*

p Luke 10. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 8.

q Acts 13. 46. Ps. 35. 13. Is. 55. 11. 2 Cor. 2. 16. Pray for and preach the gospel to them.

r Luke 9. 5. & 10. 10, 11. Acts 13. 51. & 18. 6. & 20. 26. Mark 6. 11. Neh. 5. 13.

s Ezek. 16. 48, 51. Mark 6. 11. Luke 10. 12—15. ch. 11. 20—24. John 15. 22—24. Heb. 6. 4—8, 10, 26—31.

Verses 5—15. Christ having given the apostles their commission, directs them how to discharge it aright.

1. Their ministry must be confined to the lost sheep of the house of Israel alone, and therefore they are forbidden to visit any city of the Gentiles or Samaritans. The covenant of peculiarity was not yet dissolved, and for the fathers' sake the Jews were beloved. It was needful therefore that to them the gospel should first be preached, that the elect of God among them might be gathered in, and the rest left inexcusable in their infidelity.

2. The subject of their preaching must be the same that John at first, and Jesus himself had inculcated, *that the kingdom of heaven was at hand*, and therefore urging all men to repent and turn to God, as became the true members of the Messiah's kingdom. *Note,* (1.) Truth is uniform. Novel doctrines carry their own confutation along with them. (2.) The nearness of Christ's coming in his kingdom should quicken our diligence to prepare to meet him.

3. They are directed to work miracles in confirmation of their mission, and to engage the readier attention to their doctrine; in the name of Jesus they shall be enabled to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise even the dead, and cast out devils from the possessed: evidences these of divine power, which none who were not wilfully obstinate could withstand; and for these acts of benevolence to men's bodies or souls, they must neither desire nor receive the least reward, showing their disinterested zeal and charity, and giving as freely as they had received. *Note,* Nothing more evidently characterizes the faithful ministers of Christ, than their disinterested labours, not seeking gain for themselves, but the good of mankind.

4. They need not be at all solicitous about a provision in their journey; nor should they take either money in their purse, or meat in their scrip, or change of garments, or any other than the clothes they had on, the sandals on their feet, and the staff in their hands: he who employed them in their work, will take care they shall not want. Though they may not desire to enrich themselves by their labours, they justly deserved their maintenance. *Note,* Though ministers must not seek filthy lucre, they have a right to a subsistence; and they who preach the gospel shall live by the gospel.

5. As they were going into places where they were utterly unknown, their first inquiry must be who *was worthy* in the place, not of the gospel or of the grace of God, but who was most noted for hospitality, and the entertainment of strangers, and abide in their house during their stay, if they found a welcome. In which case, entering with kindest wishes of every temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessing, they should salute the master and his household; and if they received a courteous and hearty entertainment, then all the blessings they wished for:

should descend upon that house; but if their salute was returned with coldness or incivility, then their good wishes should not be lost; but, instead of descending upon that family, should return with blessings on their own souls. But wo to that house or city that should by their unkind behaviour compel them to depart! They are commanded to shake off the dust of their feet against them; either as testifying their abhorrence of their wickedness in thrusting the gospel from them, or as a testimony against them in the day of judgment; at which awful season, even Sodom and Gomorrah would not meet with so heavy a doom, as those who rejected the counsel of God against their own souls. *Note*, (1.) Though in the sight of God all are upon a level, and can plead no desert before him, yet respecting men, some have more worthy characters, and are of a more generous spirit than others. (2.) Religion is never a plea for rudeness or morosity: to be courteous is a gospel duty. (3.) No good wishes are ever lost; the prayers offered for the evil and unthankful will bring a blessing to us, if they procure none for them. (4.) Nothing is lost by being employed in God's service, and the support of the gospel: no money laid out in any way will bring richer returns than this. (5.) They who reject God's ministers, reject him whose ambassadors they are; so he will interpret it, and avenge their quarrel. (6.) When any place or people slight the gospel, justly doth God take it from them. (7.) There is a day of judgment at hand, when among the various degrees of punishment which will be inflicted on sinners, none will endure so heavy vengeance as those against whom the dust of a slighted and rejected gospel shall rise up for a testimony.

16. ¶ [t] Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and * harmless as doves. 17. [u] But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; 18. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. 19. [x] But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: 20. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. 21. [y] And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death. 22. [z] And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: [a] but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. 23. [b] But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not † have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man [c] be come. 24. [d] The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord. 25. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord: [e] if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household? 26. [f] Fear them not therefore: [g] for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. 27. What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the house-tops. 28. [h] And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. 29. [i] Are not two sparrows sold for a * farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30. [k] But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31. [l] Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. 32. [m] Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33. [n] But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. 34. [o] Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35. [p] For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36. And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household. 37. [q] He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38. [r] And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. 39. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. 40. ¶ [s] He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 41. [t] He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42. [u] And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these † little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

t Luke 10. 3. ver. 23. Luke 12. 4—12. & 21. 16—19. Rom. 16 19. Col. 4. 5. Eph. 5. 15, 16. Ezek. 2. 6. Jer. 1. 18. Phil. 2. 15. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Acts 20. 28, 29. ch. 23. 34. & 24. 9.

* Or *simple*.

u John 2. 24. Acts 2. 40. ch. 24. 9. Mark 13. 9—11. Luke 12. 11. & 21. 12, 13. Acts iv—viii, xii, xvi—xxvi. & 25. 23. 1 Tim. 4. 16, 17. Ps. 2. 1—6. Phil. 1. 28.

x Mark 13. 11. Luke 12. 11, 12, & 21. 14, 15. Acts iv, v, vii, xvi, xxii—xxvi. Ps. 45. 1—5. Exod. 4. 12, 15. 2 Sam. 23. 2. Jer. 1. 7. 2 Tim. 4. 17.

y Ver. 34, 35. Luke 21. 16. & 12. 51. Mic. 7. 5, 6. with Deut. 13. 6—10. Zech. 13. 3.

z Luke 21. 17. John 15. 18. Rom. 8. 7, 8. Jer. 17. 9.

a Mark 13. 13. ch. 24. 13. Dan 12. 12, 13. Gal. 6. 9. Rev. 2. 7, 10, 17. & 3. 21.

Ch. 2. 13. & 4. 12. & 12. 15. Luke 4. 30. Acts 8. 1. & 9. 25. & 14. 6 & 17. 1, 10.

† Or *end*, or *finish*.

c Ch. 16. 28. Acts ii. & 3. 26. In the powerful descent of the Holy Ghost.

d Luke 6. 40. John 13. 16. & 15. 20. 2 Sam. 11. 11.

e Ch. 9. 34. & 12. 24. Mark 3. 22. Luke 11. 15. John 7. 20. & 8. 48, 52. & 10. 20. & 15. 20.

f Prov. 29. 25. Jer. 1. 8, 17. Dan. 3. 16, Acts 4. 19. 1 Pet. 3. 14.

g Mark 4. 22. Luke 8. 17. & 12. 2. Mark 16. 15. ch. 28. 19, 20. & 24. 14. & 26. 13. Acts 1. 8. & ii—xix. Rom. 10. 18. & 16. 26. Col. 1. 6. 23—28. Eph. 3. 8. with Job 12. 22. Is. 52. 15.

h Luke 12. 4. Is. 8. 12, 13. & 51. 7, 8, 12. Jer. 1. 8, 17. Ezek. 3. 9. Ps. 2. 11. Prov. 28. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 14.

i Ch. 6. 26. Heb. 1. 3. Ps. 14, 7, 9

* Or *three farthings*.

k 1 Sam. 14. 45. 2 Sam. 14. 11. 1 Kin. 1. 52. Acts 27. 34. Luke 21. 18. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Phil. 4. 6.

l Ch. 6. 26. 1 Cor. 9. 9. Ps. 8. 5. Is. 43. 1—3. & 41. 10—16.

m Luke. 12. 8. Rom. 10. 9, 10. Ps. 119. 46. Acts 4. 19. Rev. 3. 5. 1 Sam. 2. 30.

n Mark 3. 38. Luke 9. 26. & 12. 9. 1 John 2. 23. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

o Luke 12. 49—53. John 7. 40, 41. Acts 13. 44, 45. & 23. 24.

p See ver. 21. Mic. 7. 5, 6. Jer. 9. 4. Luke 12. 53. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13, 15. John 13. 18. & 16. 33. & 15. 18—25. Acts. 14. 22. & 20. 23. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

q Luke 14. 26. John 21. 15. ch. 19. 29. Ps. 73. 25. Phil. 3. 7—9. Deut. 33. 9.

r Ch. 16. 24, 25. Mark 8. 34, 35. Luke 9. 23, 24. & 17. 33. John 12. 25. Mark 10. 29, 30. Luke 18. 29. 30. ch. 19. 29. Acts 20, 23, 24. & 21. 13.

s Ch. 18. 5. Luke 10. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 20. John 13. 20. & 5. 23. & 12. 49. & 14. 21. 24, 1 Thes. 5. 13.

t Gen. 20. 7. 1 Kin. 17. 15, 23. & 18. 4. 2 Kin. 4. 8, 16, 17, 37. Jam. 5. 16.

u Mark 9. 41. 2 Cor. 9. 6. ch. 18. 5, 6. & 25. 34—40. Heb. 6. 10. Is. 21. 14.

† Not small in stature, but young in the knowledge of the gospel. Such are called 'babes,' ch. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 3. 1.—*Bishop Pearce*.

Verses 16—42. As they were now beginning the work of their ministry, our Lord informs them of the troubles and perse-

cutions to which they will be hereafter exposed in the exercise of their office, that when they came, they might not think some strange thing had happened unto them, as they might otherwise do if their heads were filled with the hopes of a temporal kingdom. And, that they may not be at a loss in these seasons of trial, they have here gracious encouragements to support them, and directions for their conduct in such emergencies.

1. They must expect to meet with many difficulties and much suffering. They were harmless and defenceless as sheep, and were going forth into a world where they would be worried by wicked men, fierce and savage as wolves: for Christ's name sake, and for their fidelity to him, they would be *hated;* the natural heart being full of enmity against God and his image, and this being at the root of all persecution, with whatever specious pretences the wicked seek to cloak their animosity, they would be *arrested* as criminals, and brought to the bar; the arm of justice, which should be stretched forth to protect the innocent, having in all ages, through false misrepresentations, and partial judges, been made the instrument of the most cruel oppressions of God's people. They would be exposed *to suffer in their persons, even unto death,* so far will the inveterate malice of their enemies go; not content with scourging them, and putting them to shame, ver. 17. they will persecute some even unto blood, and, with all the ignominy of a public execution, take away their lives. To give a pretext for such cruelties, they will be *branded with every opprobrious name,* ver. 25. and *their characters be blackened,* as if they were the very fiends of hell. This being the art of persecutors in every age, to misrepresent the people of God, and dress them up in the most odious colours, the more easily to destroy them. So far, therefore, from that outward peace and prosperity which the Jews fancied would attend the Messiah's kingdom, they must look for the sword of persecution, and a state of constant variance and warfare with the world which lieth in wickedness, ver. 34, 35. The gospel of peace which in itself breathes such charity and good-will to men, through the perverseness of the natural heart would give occasion to the most implacable feuds; difference of religion being the ground of the most cruel persecutions. Now these things they are warned of, that they may count the cost, and, knowing the consequences, their choice may be deliberate and fixed. These trials also would be the more severe, considering the persons from whom they would come, from *men,* ver. 17. even those of their own nation; from the very persons to whom they preached, and for whose souls they laboured. From *all men,* men of all ranks and degrees, and from the world in general which lieth in wickedness; few of whom would receive their testimony, and the rest would be not only hardened, but exasperated against them. *From the great men,* the kings and governors of the earth, who would employ their power in oppressing and opposing them, for the gospel seldom meets with friends among the great. Yea, from those *who made a show of religion,* even in the synagogues they would find the most inveterate foes, ver 17. who would even count God honoured in the punishment they inflicted on them, and place the bitterest malice to the score of zeal for his glory; and such persecutors on principle are the worst of persecutors. And finally, what would be of all others the most irksome to be borne, *from their nearest and dearest relations* the most unnatural enmity may be expected. The nearest ties of blood shall be dissolved; even brothers shall lose all fraternal affection; yea, parents turn unnatural to their own offspring, and children forget all duty and regard, ver. 21. even daughters shall rise up against their mothers, and the daughter-in-law, who before lived peaceably with her mother-in-law, will now entertain the deadliest animosity; inflamed with blind zeal and bigotry, as if from the moment their dearest relatives embraced the gospel of Jesus, no affection or respect was henceforward due to them, no measure to be kept with them, but that with implacable enmity they must be persecuted, accused, or murdered: *so that a man's bitterest foes shall be those of his own household,* and this has been grievously verified by the experience of past ages; and more or less, as our good conversation in Christ exhibits the stronger contrast to the ways of a world which lieth in wickedness, will be the case to the end of time.

2. Christ gives them counsel and encouragement how to bear up under these heavy trials. His counsel is,

(1.) *Be wise as serpents.* When we have crafty enemies to deal with, we are bound to use every prudential means for our own preservation, and as far as may be to counteract their mischievous designs, nor unnecessarily expose ourselves to danger.

(2.) *Be harmless as doves;* give no needless provocation; show no rancour or ill will in return for any injuries; manifest that genuine simplicity and harmlessness of conduct which may cut off occasion from those who desire occasion; and then the subtlety of the serpent is laudable, when thus joined with the innocence of the dove.

(3.) *Beware of men.* Be cautious whom you trust, and with whom you are connected. In this false and wicked world we must not hastily believe every word, or be open to every plausible professor: prudent reserve often keeps us from fruitless repentance.

(4.) *When they persecute you in one city flee into another.* In cases where life is in danger, or virulent opposition prevents all opportunity of exercising our ministry, then to flee is duty, provided no unlawful means are used to escape; and that we follow the leadings of providence, not deserting our post through fear, but maintaining our zeal and integrity unshaken.

(5.) *Fear not them who can kill the body but are not able to kill the soul,* this mortal life is the utmost to which their rage can extend; *but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* The soul is the valuable part of man, the body is but dust; and however great the terrors of persecutors may be, the terrors of the Lord are greater: the everlasting burnings of hell, the wrath of the eternal God, and the sufferings both of soul and body in torment, without measure and without end, must be remembered as an antidote against the fear of man, when he comes armed with every instrument of torture, racks, gibbets, fire, or sword. How much better is it bravely to endure a momentary pang, and in an instant be gone beyond all the malice of persecutors, than by base compliance provoke God, from whose hands none can deliver us, and whose wrath will be for ever wrath to come!

(6.) *What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light.* Let nothing intimidate you from a bold and open profession and ministration of the gospel; *and what ye hear in the ear,* of my secrets communicated to you as your Friend or Master, this being the custom of the Jewish doctors to whisper in their disciples' ears, *that preach ye upon the house tops,* which being low and flat roofed a person might be heard in the streets from them distinctly; and this intimates, that in the most public places of concourse they must deliver their message without fear or shame. Christ's gospel seeks no covert, nor must his ministers conceal any thing from their hearers of the whole counsel of God.

The encouragement proposed to them boldly to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, is great as the dangers they had to grapple with were intimidating.

1. *Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over,* or *finished the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.* Before they could have finished their testimony they would see the kingdom of heaven, which they preached, come with power; when, after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, and the effusions of the Holy Ghost upon them, they should be endued with greater powers, and see the most wonderful effects of their ministry, the prospect of which should quicken them in their present labours.

2. They need not be under any concern about *what they should say* when brought before their superiors, and accused by their enemies, *for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall*

speak; being under a divine guidance, they should never be at a loss, but should be enabled to vindicate the truth with the most powerful arguments, and to deliver themselves with the greatest propriety, to the astonishment of their adversaries; endued with wisdom and power more than human, which the most subtle of their foes shall not be able either to gainsay or resist, *for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father, which speaketh in* or *by you;* and when on emergencies we are suddenly called forth to speak of Christ, if his glory be our single aim, we shall still find the same teaching and strength, and may comfortably trust him for assistance.

3. Their very sufferings should tend to propagate the gospel they preached, and be *for a testimony against Jews and Gentiles,* before whose tribunal, when brought as criminals, they would have a more public opportunity of bearing witness to the glorious truths of God; and if they sealed them with their blood as martyrs, this would be a stronger confirmation of the truth of their mission, and leave those who rejected their testimony inexcusable.

4. *He that endureth to the end shall be saved.* These light afflictions are but for a moment, their end is near, death at the worst shall put a period to them, a little patience and perseverance will make them more than conquerors, and *the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* will infinitely overpay all the sufferings of this present time.

5. They could never be treated worse than their Master had been before them. Whatever persecution or reproach they might endure, he who was so greatly their superior, had suffered the same. They had called him *Beelzebub,* a devil, the prince of the devils, and treated him with every imaginable ignominy; and this contradiction of sinners he patiently endured. Having therefore so glorious an example before them, they might well be content to bear his reproach, and count it their honour to be made like their Lord and Master. Who of us should start at shame, insult, or suffering, when we look to Jesus and see what he endured?

6. *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hid that shall not be known.* However their enemies might seek to suppress the word of truth, it should blaze forth in spite of all opposition; and their characters, though blackened by the most malignant calumnies, should quickly be vindicated, their innocence proved, their integrity vindicated either in this world, or, at farthest, at that great day when every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is, and they be declared faithful, and exalted to glory in the sight of men and angels. Little need we then regard the revilings of men, when our judgment is with our God, and he shall soon bring forth *our righteousness as the light.*

7. They shall be under the peculiar care of Providence, and therefore might comfortably and confidently trust, and not be afraid. If a sparrow falls not to the ground, poor and worthless as it is, without the cognizance, and only according to the will of the eternal God, whose providence extends to the very least and lowest creatures he hath made, and who hath left nothing to chance or contingency, but hath enrolled in his eternal decrees every event, the most minute as well as the most important, which cannot but come to pass according to the counsel of his will: nay, if the very hairs of their head are numbered, and not one of them can fall unknown or unnoticed, how little need they fear death or danger; their enemies, however inveterate, can have no power over them except it be given them from above; and they may be assured the least evil cannot reach them without the divine permission. They are of *more value than many sparrows,* and therefore not only as men, but as disciples dear to Jesus, may expect his peculiar care and protection. *Note,* True faith in God's providence will silence all our fears, and show them as fruitless as they are sinful, *since the counsel of the Lord that shall stand.*

8. According as they are faithful they will be owned or rejected by Jesus at the great day of his appearing and glory. *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven.* Whatever reproach or danger a bold and open profession of Jesus may expose us to, it will redound to our distinguished honour in the day of Christ, when the great Judge and Lord of all shall testify his approbation of our conduct before men and angels, and present us before the throne of God, as proved and found faithful, and who shall therefore be advanced to glory, honour, and immortality. *But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven;* whoever, through coward fear, or shame, starts back in the day of trial, and hides or denies his profession before men, he shall be disowned by me in the great day, rejected with abhorrence, and exposed to everlasting shame and contempt for such base apostasy. Every motive therefore, of fear or hope, urges us to be faithful.

Whatever their losses may be for Christ, they shall be abundantly gainers in the end. It is true they may be called upon to part with every thing near and dear to them, and must love the Lord Jesus and his service above all besides, ready to sacrifice every thing for him when it stands in competition with his glory. Neither father, mother, son, nor daughter must rival him in our hearts; nay, our very lives must not be dear unto us, when for his sake called to lay them down. Whatever cross the Lord Jesus calls us to endure, whatever commands he is pleased to lay upon us, we are not *worthy* of a name among his disciples unless we cheerfully take it up and obediently follow him; and indeed in so doing we most effectually consult our own advantage and safety. *For he that findeth his life,* preserving it at the expense of some base compliance, or unfaithful conduct, *shall lose it,* all the comforts of it shall be embittered to him here, and he shall perish eternally; so that in the issue he shall see his folly great as his sin: whilst *he that loseth his life for my sake,* ready to lay it down when called for, rather than take one step out of the path of duty, *he shall find it* at the resurrection of the just, with most ample compensation for all his losses, in the eternal blessedness of body and soul with God in glory.

Lastly, though they would find many enemies, they would meet also with faithful friends, whom, for their kindness to his disciples, he would abundantly reward. He would regard every instance of respect and affection shown to them as done to himself, and God the father will assuredly repay it. Whoever therefore received their word, or the word of those who should succeed them, and showed kindness to their persons as the ministers and prophets of the Lord, he *shall receive a prophet's reward,* blessed by his labours, and sharing with him in the promise of eternal happiness. And in like manner, *he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man,* loving and kind to him, not for any worldly, personal, or private considerations, but purely on account of him whose image he bears, *he shall receive a righteous man's reward,* partaking with him that life and glory which is the gift of God in Jesus Christ, the reward not of debt but of grace. Nay, the very least, and most inconsiderable favours shown to the very meanest disciple, if but *a cup of cold water,* shall be remembered and recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Considerations these admirably suited to comfort them under all their trials and afflictions, and embolden them with fidelity to persevere. And we are alike interested in these things, and should be comforted and encouraged under all our troubles for the gospel's sake with the same reviving expectations.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The unwearied diligence of our Lord in preaching the gospel,* ver. 1. 2. *His discourse with the disciples of John concerning his being the Messiah,* ver. 2—6. 3. *The honourable testimony that Christ bore to John Baptist,* ver.

7—15. 4. *The sad account he gives of that generation in general, and especially of some particular places; with reference to the success both of John's ministry and of his own,* ver. 16—24. 5. *His thanksgiving to his Father for the wise and gracious methods he had taken in revealing the great mysteries of the gospel,* ver. 25, 26. 6. *His gracious call and invitation to poor sinners to come to him, and to be ruled and taught, and saved by him,* ver. 27—30.

1. AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, [a] he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. 2. ¶ [b] Now, when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, 3. And said unto him, Art [c] thou he that should come, or do we look for another? 4. Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again [d] those things which ye do hear and see: 5. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6. [e] And blessed is *he,* whosoever shall not be offended in me.

a Is. 63. 1, 7. John 8. 29. Acts 10. 38. Is. 48. 17. & 54. 13. & 61. 1—3. & 42. 1—4.
b Luke 7. 18—30. & 3. 19. ch. 14. 3. & 4. 12. John 3. 23—36. & 1. 26—36.
c Gen. 3. 15. & 22. 17. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15—18. Is. 35. 4. Dan. 9. 24—26. Mal. 3. 1—3.
d Is. 35. 5, 6. & 29. 18. & 42. 7. & 61. 1—3. Ps. 146. 8. with ch. 10. 8. John 2. 23. & 5. 36. & 10. 25, 37, 38. & 14. 11. Is. 66. 2. Zeph. 3. 12. Zech. 11. 7. Jam. 2. 5.
e Is. 8. 14, 15. Rom. 9. 32, 33. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 1. 23. & 2. 14. Luke 2. 34. John 6. 60, 66. ch. 13. 57. & 21. 44. & 24. 10. & 26. 31.

Verses 1—6. Having finished his instructions to his disciples whom he sent forth, he did not devolve the work to them and sit down idle himself, but *departed thence to teach and preach in their cities;* and in this blessed work the disciples sent from John found him employed. We are told,

1. Where John was; *in prison* for his fidelity in reproving Herod the king. Such reward may the zealous ministers of God sometimes expect to meet. But the fame of Jesus reached him even there: and now, no doubt, with joy he heard of his labours and success. If we are disabled, it is still a most reviving cordial to hear that the work of God prospers.

2. The question he put to Jesus, by the disciples whom he sent; *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* art thou the promised Messiah, or not? Some have supposed John was himself in doubt, and either discouraged by his long confinement, or like the rest of his countrymen, prepossessed with the notions of a temporal Messiah; though it seems much more reasonable, from the testimony John had borne to him, to suppose, that not for his own sake he sent this message, but for the sake of his disciples, who though they had cleaved to John hitherto, yet, he being shortly to leave them and to be cut off, he introduces them to Jesus, that they might receive from him the fullest conviction of his character, and henceforward commence his disciples. *Note,* (1.) God will not leave his people destitute: if one able minister is removed, another is raised up. (2.) It is the duty of faithful ministers to lead their hearers off from all attachment to men, even themselves, and to direct them simply to Jesus. (3.) Where the matters of our eternal salvation are concerned, it becomes us to be inquisitive, and to see that our faith be built on sure grounds.

3. The answer Christ returned to their inquiries. He refers them to the facts which they beheld, as the most satisfactory proof of his being that Messiah who should come into the world: *The blind receive their sight, the lame walk,* &c. full evidences these of a divine mission, and a clear fulfilment of the prophecies which went before concerning him, Isa. xxxv. 6. lxi. 1. *and the poor have the gospel preached unto them;* those whom the Scribes and Pharisees despised, he received kindly, and acquainted them with the glad tidings of his grace, which many of them willingly received: or *the poor preach the gospel;* mean and illiterate men are endued with great gifts and abilities to propagate the doctrines of the gospel: *and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me;* not prejudiced against him because of his poverty, the meanness of his station, and the despicable followers which attended him; but, looking above all these things, beholds in his works and words his divine character, and gives him the glory due unto his name. *Note,* (1.) Many treat the poor with contempt; but Christ hath taught us a different lesson; of such his church is chiefly composed, and this adds abundant honour to them. (2.) There are many things in Christ's character and gospel which minister occasion of offence to the proud and self-righteous; but faith admires the condescensions of Jesus, and adores him for that at which others stumble and fall.

7. ¶ And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye [f] out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the * wind? 8. But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses. 9. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. 10. For this is *he,* of whom it is written, [g] Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 11. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a [h] greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is [i] greater than he. 12. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven [k] suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. 13. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14. And if ye will receive *it,* this is [l] Elias, which was for to come. 15. [m] He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

f Luke 3. 7. & 7. 24—26. ch. 3. 5. & 14. 5. & 21. 26. Luke 1. 76. John 5. 35. with Eph. 4. 14.
* *A reed shaken with the wind:* which was usually to be seen in the wilderness.—*Grotius.*
g Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5. Is. 40. 3. ch. 3. 3. Mark 1. 2. Luke 7. 27.
h Ch. 3. 11. & 13. 17. Luke 1. 15. & 3. 16. John 1. 15, 27. & 5. 35.
i Eph. 3. 8. & 1. 9. Col. 1. 26, 27. Rom. 16. 25, 26. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 12. Heb. 11. 40.
k Or *is gotten by force, and they that thrust men.* Ch. 3. 3, 5. Luke 1. 16, 17, 76. & 7. 29. & 16. 16. Mal. 4. 4, 5.
l Mal. 4. 5. Luke 1. 17. John 1. 23. ch. 17. 10—13.
m Ch. 13. 9, 43. Mark 4. 9, 23. & 7. 16. Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29. & 3. 6, 13, 22.

Verses 7—15. When John's disciples were gone, Jesus took this opportunity of paying a high encomium on his character and ministry. He would not say it in their hearing, lest it should seem flattery; nor would have it reported to John, for he well knew how ill the best can bear even deserved praise.

1. He addresses a question to the multitude around him, many of whom had been John's hearers: *What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?* Was it mere curiosity; or did you suppose him a man unsteady and wavering? It was John's honour, that he was uniform and steady in his preaching and labours: and an intimation is contained in this question, that they who had gone so far to hear him should well consider what he had said, and inquire what profit they had got by their attendance. *Note,* Many go a great way to hear ministers from curiosity, who soon forget all they hear, as a dream. *But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment?* No. His garb bespoke his deadness to the world. He neither spoke nor dressed like a courtier. His reproofs were plain and rough as his appearance: the case of those to whom

he addressed himself required it. *Behold, they that wear soft clothing, and live delicately, are in kings' houses;* and he was utterly unlike those: his manners austere, his conduct steady. *Note,* (1.) In the work of the ministry, unshaken resolution is needful, which is alike unmoved by frowns or smiles. (2.) They who have heard and seen God's ministers, should often inquire what they have gained thereby, or what end they purposed by their attendance. (3.) Our dress should be according to our station. It is no evil in those who are in kings' courts to put on soft clothing; though it would be sinful in others to imitate them in expensive finery which they can neither afford, and which is unbecoming their situation or character in life.

2. He tells them plainly the distinguished honour of this eminent teacher. *But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.* In general all held John for a prophet; and yet they understood not that peculiar distinction he enjoyed above all who went before him.

(1.) He was the person foretold, Mal. iii. 1. as the forerunner of the Messiah, who should more immediately prepare his way, and usher him into the world. The other prophets saw him at a distance, and only spoke of him as to appear in the fulness of time. John beheld him face to face, and pointed him out as present: *Behold the Lamb of God!*

(2.) *Among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.* Not only his miraculous birth, his being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, his exemplary life, rendered him singular: but, above all, the clear revelation he had of the Messiah, his baptizing him in Jordan, seeing the heavens opened and the Holy Ghost descending upon him, and the testimony he bore to him on that occasion; these made John far superior to all his predecessors. *Nevertheless, he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he;* the least of the ministers and apostles of Christ, or the meanest believer on him, would, in clearness of gospel light, and knowledge of Jesus, be able to see farther and to speak more distinctly of his obedience, righteousness, sufferings, death, of his grace and glory, of the spiritual nature of his kingdom, than even the most eminent saints and prophets of old. *Note,* (1.) True greatness is not to be measured by outward splendour, but by the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, and the manifestations which Jesus makes of himself to the soul. (2.) If we enjoy greater advantages than others, our condemnation will be the greater if we do not profit under them.

(3.) By John the gospel of the kingdom began to be preached, and God owned his ministry with eminent success; for *from the days of John the Baptist until now,* a space of little more than two years, *the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force;* the publicans and harlots, who by the Scribes and Pharisees would be reckoned intruders, convinced now of their guilt, and turned to the Lord, eagerly pressed for a place in the Messiah's kingdom: and multitudes of others, awakened to a discovery of their sin and danger, eagerly embraced the declarations of grace, and with a holy violence strove to enter in at the strait gate. *Note,* (1.) Wherever divine grace hath quickened the soul, there salvation will be made the great concern, and eager diligence used to make our calling and election sure. (2.) It is a distinguished honour conferred on any minister of the gospel, when God is pleased to make him eminently instrumental in calling sinners to flee from the wrath to come. (3.) Sluggish and negligent triflers in religion may never hope for admission into the kingdom of God.

(4.) In the ministry of John, the Old Testament dispensation closed and the New began. *For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John;* in types and predictions they pointed to the future Messiah; all the ritual service of the temple being designed to direct the worshippers to him; and viewed in this light, it appears truly glorious; but now he was come, in whom all these were to be fulfilled. *And if ye will receive it,* and can credit my assertion, *this is Elias which was for to come;* not Elijah personally; but he who was spoken of, Mal. iv. 5. and who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, like him in dress and manners, and imitating his zeal. *He that hath ears to hear let him hear;* which intimates that these were things that deserved attentively to be weighed, and, though dark and difficult to be believed, were truths of great importance. *Note,* (1.) The word of God must be examined with serious concern: it is not a slight and cursory perusal which will be sufficient to let us into the meaning; deep meditation, fervent prayer, and comparing spiritual things with spiritual, being necessary to a right understanding of the mysteries of grace. (2.) It is not hearing, but *receiving* the truth in the light and love of it, which can make us wise unto salvation.

16. ¶ [n] But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, 17. And saying, We have piped * unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. 18. [o] For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. 19. [p] The son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. [q] But wisdom is justified of her children. 20. ¶ [r] Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: 21. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! [s] for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, [t] they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22. But I say unto you, [u] It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. 23. And thou, Capernaum, [x] which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in [y] Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24. But I say unto you, [z] That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.

[n] Luke 7. 30—35. Rev. 3. 15—17. Is. 28. 9—13. Jer. 5. 1—5. 1 Cor. 12. 6, 7.

* *We have piped—We have mourned:* The Jews had their pipes for two uses, for joy and for lamentation: to this double use of pipes, which children imitated, our Lord refers in this expression. —*Dr Whitby.*

[o] Ch. 3. 4. Luke 1. 15. 1 Cor. 9. 27. 1 Pet. 5. 2. with John 10. 20. ch. 10. 25.

[p] Ch. 9. 11. Luke 7. 36. & 15. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 9. 19. Rom. 15. 2.

[q] Phil. 2. 15, 16. & 3. 7—14. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Rom. 1. 26. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24.

[r] Luke 10. 13—15. Is. 1. 2. Ps 81. 11. Hos. 11. 2, 7. Ezek. 3. 17.

[s] Ezek. 3. 6, 7. with Is. xxiii. Ezek. xxvi—xxviii. Jon. 3. 7, 8.

[t] 1 Kin. 21. 29. Jon. 3. 10.

[u] Luke 12. 47, 48. & 10. 12—14. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. ch. 10. 15. ver. 24. Lam. 4. 6.

[x] Gen. 11. 4. Deut. 1. 28. Is. 14. 13. Jer. 51. 53. Ezek. 16. 20. & 32. 18, 23. Lam. 4. 6. Luke 10. 15

[y] Gen. 13. 13. & xix. Exek. 16. 46, 47.

[z] See ver. 22.

Verses 16—24. Having spoken of the excellence of John's ministry, he cannot but reflect upon the inexcusable perverseness and stubbornness of that generation, which had for the most part continued in their impenitence, notwithstanding John's preaching, and in opposition to all the miracles and means of grace which they had enjoyed under his own ministry and that of his apostles. For which an awful reckoning remained.

1. He is at a loss for a similitude, whereunto he shall liken the men of that generation, they acted so contradictorily and absurdly; like sullen and froward children, that, when their playfellows use every little art to engage them, mimicking a wedding or a funeral, and inviting them to dance with them, or

in mournful responses to answer them, morose and ill-natured, they will join in neither. Such was the temper of the Scribes and Pharisees, with their disciples, respecting the ministry of Christ and his forerunner. They used different means, but neither could prevail. *John* called to mourning, preaching, repentance, and humiliation, and in his own abstemious and self-denying conduct set them an example of mortification; and, so far from being affected thereby, they treated him as melancholy, and possessed of a devil. *The Son of man*, with the sweetest music of gospel-grace, sought to engage their minds, and by every kind word and deed endeavoured to insinuate himself into their affections; free and open in his manners, affable to all, joining with them in partaking the innocent refreshments of nature, and ready to converse with the chief of sinners for their good; and immediately they brand him as *a glutton, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*, an encourager and a partaker with them in their immoralities. *But wisdom is justified of her children.* They who are by grace made acquainted with the truth, will approve all the means and methods which God is pleased to use, though others reject and despise them: or *Christ*, the *wisdom* of God, will be acquitted of all these malicious accusations of wicked men, by all who truly become the children of God, and are enlightened to know his true character. They will admire and adore him for what others revile and malign him. *Note*, (1.) There is nothing so absurd or contradictory that the enemies of the gospel will not say, and do, in order to vent their malice against the ministers and truths of God. (2.) God uses every means with sinners, declaring the terrors of his law and the comforts of his gospel, sending them by turns mercies, and judgments, and all to work on their obdurate hearts, or to leave them inexcusable in their impenitence. (3.) Different ministers have different manners of address, and are more particularly suited to the dispositions and tempers of some than of others: some are struck with a Boanerges, some melted under a Barnabas, a son of consolation; some are affected with the more austere manners of a John, others engaged by the sweetness and affability of Jesus. Every one hath his gift, and all for the edification of the body of Christ. (4.) The most powerful and engaging ministrations are not always crowned with success; but, when we have discharged our souls, and men refuse to hear the voice of truth, of reason, of conscience, neither drawn by the bonds of love, nor driven to God by all the terrors of wrath to come, then their blood is on their own heads; we are free. (5.) The greatest, the best of men, yea, He that was more than man, have been reviled as mad or libertines, as preaching doctrines of despair or licentiousness. Let it not seem strange if the same things be said of us, and if what is our highest honour in God's sight, be made matter of severest reproach. He is near who will justify us. (6.) Though the gospel and the ministers of it in general, be slighted and reviled of men, to some their word will be a savour of life, and they will justify God in all his ways, being themselves living instances of the efficacy of the methods he hath taken to bring poor sinners to himself.

2. As he reproached the obstinacy of that generation in general, he particularly upbraids the cities *wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not;* for to lead them thereunto was the great end of all his miracles and preaching; but it had been in vain: and how shall they escape who neglect so great salvation? they must needs perish who reject the only remedy that can cure them: and such wilful obstinacy must bring down greater damnation. *Note*, God is pleased to dispense the means of grace, as well as the gifts of providence, *sovereignly*. Why one place should enjoy them whilst another less guilty is abandoned to darkness and ignorance, can only be resolved into the divine pleasure: *Even so, Father, for it seemed good in thy sight.*

Two instances are particularly brought of cities which had enjoyed the greatest means and mercies, and yet were more hardened than even the vilest of the heathen.

1. *Wo unto thee, Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida*, places in Galilee peculiarly favoured with Christ's miracles and teaching, and yet the generality of the inhabitants persisted in their impenitence; though had the like mighty works been done, even in *Tyre and Sidon*, abandoned to wickedness as they were, it is to human appearance highly probable that, like Nineveh of old, they would *have repented in sackcloth and ashes*, and humbled themselves to prevent the impending ruin. Therefore, at the judgment day their doom shall be more tolerable than that of those cities, which, by rejecting the gospel, fall under the most aggravated guilt. *Note*, An awful day is near, when the eternal state of all must be determined; when all the means of grace and mercies we have enjoyed must be accounted for; and none will receive so great damnation as those who have abused them, and, in opposition to the clearest light of the gospel, have persisted in the darkness of error and sin.

2. Capernaum with peculiar emphasis is threatened; *Thou*, most dignified by the residence of Jesus, and distinguished with singular advantages above all other cities, *which art exalted to heaven*, in outward privileges, *shalt be brought down to hell;* falling the deeper into eternal misery from the heights of abused mercy. Even Sodom's doom will be more tolerable than hers; for if the like miracles, and long continued ministry of Jesus had been vouchsafed to that city, it seems highly probable, ten righteous at least, would have been found, and the threatened ruin averted; but if Sodom was not spared, with less guilt, Capernaum, with greater, must needs sink under more aggravated ruin. *Note*, Many of this day seldom think of the inestimable talent committed to them in the oracles of God and the gospel of his Son; but for these things a solemn account must soon be given, and wo to the sinner whose profiting at that day shall not appear.

25. ¶ [a] At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. 26. Even so, Father: [b] for so it seemed good in thy sight. 27. [c] All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father: [d] neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*. 28. ¶ [e] Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29. [f] Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; [g] for I am meek and lowly in heart: [h] and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30. [i] For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

a Luke 10. 21. Ps. 8. 2, 4. Deut. 10. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 21, 26, 27. John 9. 40, 41. ch. 16. 17. & 13. 11. Ps. 25. 8, 9. Is. 29. 14, 18 & 44. 18. & 32. 4. & 54. 13. & 61. 1. Jam. 2. 5. 2 Cor. 2. 16. & 4. 3—6.

b Eph. 1. 4, 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Rom. 5. 21.

c Ch. 28. 18. Ps. 8. 7. John 3. 35. & 13. 3. & 17. 2. 1 Cor. 15. 25, 27. Eph. 1. 21, 23. Heb. 1. 4. & 2. 8. Phil. 2. 9. Is. 52. 13. & 53. 12.

d John 1. 18. & 6. 44, 46. & 10. 15. & 14. 9, 10.

e Is. 28. 12. & 40. 29. & 55. 1—7. Jer. 3. 11, 22. & 6. 16. John 6. 35, 37. Luke 15. 17. & 18. 13. Rom. 7. 24. Jer. 31. 18—20.

f Col. 2. 6. Gal. 6. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 21. Eph. 5. 2.

g Rom. 8. 29. ch. 12. 19. & 21. 5. Luke 9. 54—56. John 8. 29, 49. 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23. Heb. 5. 7, 8. Zech. 9. 9. Phil. 2. 7, 8.

h Jer. 6. 16. Heb. 4. 3. 1 Prov. 3. 17. Acts 15. 10. Gal. 5. 1. 1 John 5. 3.

Verses 25—30. Though in general the perverseness of the many afforded the most melancholy prospect of their destruction, yet did not the gospel word return in vain. There was still a remnant, according to the election of grace, who heard and believed.

1. Our blessed Lord here offers up his thanks to God the Father for the children he had given him, though few, and in

the eyes of men despicable, poor, and illiterate, yet precious to Jesus and the travail of his soul.

[1.] He addresses God as his *Father*, in whose love he had the most assured interest, and as *the Lord of heaven and earth*, the Sovereign Disposer of all things, able to do whatever he pleased, according to the counsels of his own will. *Note*, Prayer is then a pleasing service when we can call God, Father; approach him with confidence, and, persuaded of his all-sufficiency to supply our wants, can quietly cast our care upon him.

[2.] He adores his sovereignty in being pleased to hide the glorious truths of gospel grace from the wise and prudent, and revealing them to such as, comparatively speaking, respecting natural abilities, learning, and human accomplishments, were vastly their inferiors; but if God is pleased to choose these babes, Jesus acquiesces in his Father's holy will, approves of, and delights in it. *Note*, (1.) It is a mortifying truth, and of hardest digestion to the proud heart of man, that those whom the world admires as great, learned, and wise, the deepest scholars, the most profound statesmen, the most reverend doctors, and acute metaphysicians, are not merely on a level with the meanest clown, respecting the knowledge that maketh wise unto salvation, but for the most part farther removed from it; and, according to God's all-wise decrees, externally excluded, given up to learned ignorance, and left to the spiritual blindness of their fallen hearts. (2.) Those whom God chooses for his people are usually such as man despises, poor in every sense, in station, abilities, human literature, and all that a foolish world admires. Some few indeed are found of the wise, mighty, and noble, but not *many*; enough to show what God could do if he pleased; while we are humbly to acquiesce in what he hath done. Yet this will ever be, as it was from the beginning, a stone of stumbling and rock of offence. *Have any of the rulers and Pharisees believed?* (3.) Whatever difference is made between one and another, is purely owing to God's sovereign will and pleasure, and not to any thing foreseen in them, or done, or to be done by them; and therefore, in all God's dispensations of providence or grace, if a curious inquirer, or disputer of this world, inquires into the reasons why and wherefore God thus acts, we have but one to give, *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* They who are dissatisfied with this reason, must close their Bibles, and expatiate in the boundless regions of scepticism and infidelity in search of a better.

2. Christ invites those babes, whom the Father hath given him, to come unto him, with kindest assurances both of his power and willingness to help and save them.

(1.) He declares the plenitude of power with which he is invested for the comfort of all who should apply to him for refuge. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father.* As Mediator he hath received a delegated authority, distinct from that which he essentially possesses as God over all, blessed for ever. The work of reconciliation, and all the blessings of grace and glory, are lodged in his hands. *And no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* It is not the effort of man's skill and labour, but a divine revelation, which alone can make known to us the true character of God, his triune existence and perfections, together with the designs of his grace, according to the tenor of the everlasting covenant. And as there is a mutual consciousness between the Divine Persons in the undivided Godhead, He, who from eternity lay in the bosom of the Father, is alone able to make him known, and to communicate his eternal counsels to us, being invested with his mediatorial character for this very purpose. *Note*, (1.) There is no true knowledge of God, or intercourse to be maintained with him, but in and by Jesus Christ. (2.) To those whom Christ takes for his disciples he *manifests himself as he doth not unto the world*, John xiv. 22.

(2.) He declares his readiness to receive every poor sinner who comes to him weary and heavy laden, and invites them to lay down their burdens of sin and sorrow at his feet, that they may find rest unto their souls. The persons invited are *all that labour and are heavy laden*; those who are convinced of their guilt and danger, feel the insupportable burden of sin, and are weary, not merely of the burdensome rites of the ceremonial law, but of the bondage of corruption. And *all* without distinction of nation, or difference in the measure of their guilt and sinfulness, are invited. Jesus rejects none because of the depth of their miseries, who do not themselves reject his mercies.

(3.) The invitation is, *Come to me*, willing to receive and able to relieve, all the wants of the miserable and the desperate, who by faith cast their care upon me, renouncing every other hope and dependence, placing their trust on me alone as their Saviour to the uttermost, and taking me henceforward for their Lord and Master. (1.) The promise made to such is, *I will give you rest*, pardon and peace of conscience to silence the accusations of guilt, power against sin to deliver you from the wearisome bondage of corruption, setting the soul at liberty from all terrifying fears, and enabling you, on sure foundations, to expect a part in the eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God. (2.) The dutiful returns for such mercies are here prescribed: *Take my yoke upon you.* We must receive Christ in all his offices; as the King to rule in and over us, as well as the Prophet to teach, and the Priest to atone for us. Obedience to his gospel must follow faith in his promises; and he asks nothing from us but that we should copy his example and be like him, that we may be meet for the enjoyment of him: *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart*; tempers which must ever characterize the disciples of Jesus, in opposition to that pride, perverseness, passion, and self-will, which are natural to the fallen mind. He was *meek* under every provocation, patient towards the dulness of his scholars; *lowly in heart*, condescending to the meanest, and submitting for our sakes to every abasement; and when we learn to be like him, we *shall find rest to our souls*; such divine dispositions will bring a present heaven to the soul, and enable us to enter into rest here below, happy in communion with Jesus, and stamped with his image. Nor may we think his *yoke* implies any thing grievous. No: *His yoke is easy, and his burden light*: his service is perfect freedom. Even the afflictions, temptations, and difficulties we may meet, are to be counted all joy; since so powerful will be the assistance of his grace, so abundant his consolations, and so blessed the issue, that we have reason continually to go on our way rejoicing, and to own, to his eternal praise, and for the encouragement of others, *that his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace.*

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's clearing of the law of the fourth commandment, concerning the sabbath-day, and vindicating it from some superstitious notions advanced by the Jewish teachers; showing that works of necessity and mercy are to be done in that day,* ver. 1—13. 2. *The prudence, humility, and self-denial of our Lord Jesus in working his miracles,* ver. 14—22. 3. *Christ's answer to the blasphemous cavils and calumnies of the Scribes and Pharisees, who imputed his casting out devils to a compact with the devil,* ver. 22—37. 4. *Christ's reply to a tempting demand of the Scribes and Pharisees, challenging him to show them a sign from heaven,* ver. 38—45. 5. *Christ's judgment about his kindred and relations,* ver. 46. ad finem.

1. AT that time Jesus went on the sabbath-day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungered, and * began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. 2. But when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said

* According to the permission of the law. Deut. 23. 25. Mark 2. 23—28. Luke 6. 1—5.

unto him, [a] Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath-day. 3. But he said unto them, Have ye not read [b] what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him; 4. How he entered into the house * of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, [c] but only for the priests? 5. Or have ye not read in the law, [d] how that on the sabbath-days the priests in the temple † profane the sabbath, and are blameless? 6. But I say unto you, That [e] in this place is *one* greater than the temple. 7. But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, [f] I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. 8. For the [g] Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath-day. 9. ¶ [h] And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: 10. And, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, [i] Is it lawful to ‡ heal on the sabbath-days? that they might accuse him. 11. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it [k] fall into a pit on the sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out? 12. How much then is ‖ a man better than a sheep; wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. 13. Then saith he to the man, [l] Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

a Ver. 10. Luke 13. 14. John 5. 10, 16. with Exod. 20. 9. & 23. 12. & 31. 15. & 35. 2. Num. 15. 32—36.

b 1 Sam. 21. 3—6. Mark 2. 25, 26. Luke 6 3, 4.

* Viz. the tabernacle; the temple not having been then built.—*Dr Campbell.*

c Exod. 25. 30. & 29. 32, 33. Lev. 8. 31. & 24. 6, 9.

d Num. 28. 9, 10.

† In killing, flaying, washing, and burning the sacrifices, &c. as well as on another day.

e Mal. 3. 1. Hag. 2. 7. 2 Chr. 6. 18. ch. 23. 18.

f Hos. 6. 6. ch. 9. 13. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Eccl. 5. 1. Is. 1. 11—15. Mic. 6. 6—8.

g Dan. 7. 13. ch. 16. 13. Mark 2. 27.

h Mark 3. 1—5. Luke 6. 6—10.

‡ The Pharisaical tradition forbade the use of artificial and natural physic upon the sabbath, unless in cases of extreme necessity; and not content with this, they would apply the same to miraculous cures—*Diodati.*

i Luke 13. 14. & 14. 3. John 5. 10—16. & 9. 16. ch. 22. 17.

k Exod. 23. 4, 5. Deut. 22. 4.

‖ The man might have to work for his own and family's subsistence.

l 1 Kin. 13. 6. Luke 13. 13. Acts 3. 6, 7. Mark 3. 5.

Verses 1—13. Those who are most corrupt in their morals, sometimes think to atone for the defect by their rigid zeal for the rituals of religion; as was the case of the Pharisees, who, whilst they lowered the other commands to mere letter, stretched the strict observation of the sabbatical rest to an extreme that was never designed. Which false explication our Lord confutes, and shows that works of mercy and charity may be practised, consistent with the most religious observance of the sabbath-day.

1. The occasion given for this discourse arose from the invidious reflections of the Pharisees on the disciples of Jesus, for rubbing the ears of corn in their hands on the sabbath-day, as they passed through the fields, and eating them, being hungry. This the Pharisees observed, and mentioned to Jesus as a thing unlawful to be done on the sabbath-day. The law had allowed the gathering of such ears of corn, Deut. xxiii. 25. but they regarded the bodily labour of rubbing them in their hands as a transgression of the rest enjoined, according to the traditions of the elders. *Note,* (1.) Christ's disciples were inured to want and coarse fare: we must not count it hard, if God in his providence at any time brings us into the like straits, and causes us to know what it is to be hungry. (2.) The most innocent actions are liable to the most perverse interpretations from those who wait for an opportunity to find fault.

2. Christ vindicates the practice of his disciples, by allowed precedents or unanswerable arguments.

[1.] By allowed precedents.

(1.) In the case of David and his men; who, being pressed with hunger, was, with the high priest's consent, permitted to eat the shew-bread, which none ordinarily might do but the priests alone. And if it was adjudged lawful to dispense with a positive institution of God to satisfy David's hunger, it surely could not be thought sinful, in like circumstances, to dispense merely with the traditions of the elders. *Note,* Where life itself is in danger through hunger, necessity, if it does not justify, should at least be admitted as the excuse for deviating from the ordinary rule of justice. See Prov. vi. 30.

(2.) In the case of the priests, who were obliged to do much servile work on the sabbath-day, such as slaying, skinning, and cutting up the beasts for sacrifice, and yet none could conceive that a transgression of the commandment; and how much less the merely rubbing out a few ears of corn in their hands for necessary food. But it might be objected they were not priests, and that the temple service had a particular dispensation; therefore,

[2.] He adds arguments to the examples he produced.

(1.) *I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple.* And if the priests were blameless in their service, much more were the disciples of Jesus allowed to satisfy their hunger when attending on their Master, who was the Lord of the temple, in dignity and holiness infinitely greater, having all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and from him alone that fabric derived all the sanctity it possessed.

(2.) *If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice,* Hos. vi. 6. *ye would not have condemned the guiltless.* They were ignorant of those Scriptures they pretended to urge; for if they had understood them, they would have observed, that the great commandment of charity was vastly superior to mere ritual observances, and therefore would never have condemned the disciples for thus satisfying the cravings of hunger on the sabbath-day. *Note,* Ignorance of God's word is generally the cause of rash censures on our brethren, and this is especially culpable in those who pretend to teach others.

(3.) *The Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath-day.* He who enjoined the rest, and prescribed the rule on *Mount Sinai,* must needs know what obedience himself required, and best interpret his own mind, and be fully authorized to make any alteration he should think fit. Thus now, though the commandment of observing a seventh day still is in force, he hath transferred it from the last day to the first day of the week, called from him *the Lord's day.*

3. By the cure of a paralytic man in the synagogue on a sabbath-day, some time after, he took occasion farther to vindicate works of mercy and charity as most lawful and acceptable to God on that day.

[1.] The person on whom the cure was wrought had a *withered arm,* so that he was disabled from labour; yet, though unable to work, whilst he could walk he failed not to be at the place of worship. And in the way of duty we may hope for a blessing.

[2.] The Pharisees, ever on the watch, suspecting Jesus would cure him, questioned him concerning his thoughts of the lawfulness of healing on the sabbath-day, which their doctors, except in cases of extremity, had forbidden; and their design herein was *to accuse him,* either to the Sanhedrim, if he acted contrary to their determinations, as a sabbath-breaker, or to the people, if he declared it unlawful, and contradicted his own vindication of his disciples.

[3.] Christ answers them by an appeal to their own conduct: if one of their sheep fell into a pit, none scrupled to draw it out

on the sabbath-day: how much then was a man better than a sheep, and his distresses rather to be relieved! No doubt there fore could be made but that it was lawful to do good on the sabbath-day.

[4.] Without delay, and for ought that appears, without waiting for a request from the poor patient, who might, seeing the temper of these men, be discouraged from making application, *Jesus bids him stretch out his hand*, and power accompanied the command: *he stretched it forth, and*, to the astonishment of the beholders, *it was restored whole as the other*. *Note*, Like this withered arm are our souls, impotent of themselves to every thing that is good, and yet the calls to believe and obey, notwithstanding our inability for both, are neither absurd nor unreasonable, since Christ hath promised to accompany his word with the efficacy of his Spirit, and enabled his chosen for that which he commands.

14. ¶ Then the Pharisees went out, and [n] held a counsel against him, how they might destroy him. 15. But when [o] Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and [p] great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; 16. [q] And charged them that they should not make him known: 17. That [r] it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 18. [s] Behold my servant whom I have chosen; my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: [t] I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall [u] shew judgment to the Gentiles. 19. [x] He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 20. [y] A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. 21. [z] And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

n Or *took counsel*. Mark 3. 6, 7. Luke 6. 11. John 10. 39. & 11. 53. with ch. 10. 23.
o John 2. 25. Ps. 139. 2. Heb. 4. 13.
p Ch. 4. 24, 25. & 19. 2. Is. 35. 3—6.
q Ch. 8. 3. & 9. 30. & 17. 9. Mark 7. 36. & 5. 43. Luke 5. 14.
r Is. 44. 46. Num. 23. 19. Tit. 1. 2. Acts 10. 43.
s Is. 42. 1—4. ch. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Col. 1. 13. John 1. 18.
t Is. 61. 1. John 3. 34.
u Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 54. 3. & 49. 6.
x Ch. 11. 29. Zech. 9. 9.
y Is. 40. 11. & 61. 1. Ps. 147. 3. Job 36. 7, 10. Lam. 3. 31—33. Ezek. 34. 16. Amos 8. 7.
z Is. 11. 10. Ps. 9. 10. Rom. 15. 9—12. ver. 18.

Verses 14—21. Exasperated, instead of convinced by his preaching and miracles, we are told here,

1. The malicious designs of the Pharisees. They met in consultation, determined some way or other to put an end to his obnoxious discourses and his life together; for which this last pretended breach of the sabbath might afford them a handle; cloaking with zeal for religion the blackest crimes of hell.

2. Christ hereupon chose to retire, and avoid the danger he foresaw, his hour not being yet come: but still he was attended, even in his retirement, by multitudes, to whom he continued his accustomed mercies, healing all their infirmities; but *charged them that they should not make him known*; not desiring fame from his miracles, and now particularly willing to be concealed from the malice of his persecutors. *Note*, God's approbation, not man's applause, is what we should covet.

3. The fulfilment of the Scripture herein is observed, Isa. xlii. 1—4. *Behold*, with wonder and astonishment, *my servant*: so low he humbled himself, who counted it not robbery to be equal with God: *whom I have chosen*; designed for the office of Mediator, and now qualified for the work of redemption; *my beloved, in whom I am well pleased*; from eternity the object of his complacence; and in his person, office, and character as the Messiah, God the Father delighted, and by repeated declarations from heaven, expressed his approbation of his Son. *I will put my Spirit upon him*, anointing him with the oil of gladness above his fellows, bestowing such a plenitude of gifts and graces upon him as may enable him gloriously to discharge and accomplish his arduous undertaking: *and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles*, preaching to them that gospel wherein God's righteousness is revealed, and his eternal determinations concerning sinful men is made known; *he shall not strive*, with noise and ostentation setting up his kingdom; *neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets*, contentious or clamorous against his opposers; *a bruised reed shall he not break*; the broken-hearted, weak, and trembling sinner he will bind up and strengthen; *and smoking flax shall he not quench*; those who have but the beginnings of spiritual life, in whom the graces are feeble, and much darkness and infirmity remains, he will quicken, and blow the smoking flax into a flame; *till he sends forth judgment unto victory*; by the power of his gospel dispelling the darkness of error, delivering the soul from the bondage of corruption, and causing his grace to reign through righteousness unto eternal life, perfecting in the hearts of his people the salvation he hath begun. *And in his name shall the Gentiles trust*; the heathen nations shall become obedient to the faith, be incorporated with his chosen people, and place all their hopes of salvation on the blood and righteousness alone of this divine Redeemer.

22. ¶ [a] Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and he [b] healed him, insomuch that the [c] blind and dumb both spake and saw. 23. And all the people were amazed, and said, [d] Is not this the son of David? 24. ¶ [e] But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. 25. And [f] Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, [g] Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: 26. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? 27. And if I [h] by Beelzebub cast out devils, [i] by whom do your children cast *them* out? [k] therefore they shall be your judges. 28. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then [l] the kingdom of God is come unto you. 29. [m] Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. 30. [n] He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. 31. Wherefore I say unto you, [o] All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. 32. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, [p] it shall not be forgiven him,

a Luke 11. 14. ch. 9. 32.
b Mark 7. 35—37. & 9. 17—26.
c Ps. 51. 15. Isa. 29. 18. & 32. 3, 4. & 35. 5, 6. Acts 26. 18.
d Ch. 9. 33. John 3. 3. & 7. 31. ch. 1. 1. & 15. 22. Luke 1. 32. Rom. 1. 3. & 9. 5.
e Ch. 9. 34. Mark 3. 22—30. Luke 11. 15—23. ch. 10. 25.
f Ver. 15. ch. 9. 4. John 2. 25. & 21. 17. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23.
g Gal. 5. 15. Is. 9. 21. & 19. 2, 3. Mark 3. 23—26. Luke 11. 17, 18. Rev. 16. 19. & 17. 16, 17.
h Or *Beelzebul*. And so ver. 24.
i Mark 9. 38, 39. Luke 9. 49, 50. Acts 19. 13.
k Luke 19. 22. 1 John 3. 20. to condemn you.
l Luke 9. 60. Mark 1. 14, 15. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Luke 1. 33. Heb. 12. 28. Is. 9. 6, 7. the gospel-dispensation.
m Is. 49. 24, 25. John 16. 11. Luke 11. 21, 22. Mark 3. 27.
n Luke 11. 23. & 9. 50. Mark 9. 40.
o Mark 3. 28. Luke 12. 10. Heb. 6. 6. & 10. 26—29. 1 John 5. 16. with 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15, 16. Heb. 7. 25. 1 John 1. 9. & 2. 1, 2. Ezek. 33. 11. Is. 1. 18. & 55. 7. & 44. 22.
p Mark 3. 29. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 1 Sam. 2. 25. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Is. 22. 14.

neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come. 33. [o] Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit [*] corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit. 34. O [p] generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35. A [q] good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. 36. But I say unto you, [r] That every [†] idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

[o] Ch. 7. 17. Luke 6. 43—45. John 15. 5.

[*] Grotius understands this as if our Lord had said "As a tree is to be judged by its fruit, so is a man by his actions: but now you allow my miracles to be good, and yet attribute them to the devil!"

[p] Ch. 3. 7. & 23. 33. Luke 6. 45. Job 32. 18—20.

[q] Ch. 13. 52. Prov. 10. 20, 21. 1 Sam. 24. 13. Is. 32. 6. Jer. 6. 7. Luke 6. 45.

[r] Jude 15. Eccl. 12. 14. Rom. 14. 12. Exod. 20. 7. Lev. 19. 12. Eph. 5. 4. 6. Prov. 18. 1.

[†] Discourse tending to innocent mirth, to exhilarate the spirits is not *idle discourse*; as the time spent in necessary recreations is not *idle time*.—*Doddridge*.

Verses 22—37. Christ had before shown his power over Satan's kingdom dispossessing him from the bodies as well as souls of many. We have here,

1. Another instance of his curing one possessed by a devil; a man *blind and dumb* through the power of this wicked spirit. The emblem of the sinner, whose eyes the god of this world hath blinded, and whose lips are sealed up from prayer and praise, and all conversation to the use of edifying. One word of Jesus restored his lost senses; his sight and speech were perfectly recovered.

2. The people admired the astonishing efficacy of the word of Jesus, and reasonably concluded, *Is not this the son of David?* the promised Messiah? but the Pharisees, when they heard it, stung with envy, and obstinately hardened against conviction, with blasphemous cavil and abusive insult replied, *This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.* The fact they could not deny; but imputed the miracle to a compact with the devil. To such miserable shifts are they driven who, determined in infidelity, refuse to submit to the evidence of truth.

3. Christ refutes so base an accusation. He knew their malicious designs, and heard their words of blasphemy, and therefore he at large vindicates himself. Their assertion was absurd, and self-contradictory. It is an allowed maxim, that every kingdom, city, or family, divided against itself, must hasten its own dissolution: impossible therefore would it be for Satan to think of supporting his dominion by those means which naturally must subvert it; the miracles of Christ being wrought in confirmation of those doctrines of truth and holiness, which directly tend to destroy the works of the devil, ver. 25, 26. Add to this, that among themselves they admitted some exorcists did cast out devils by the power of God, Acts xix. 13. Mark ix. 38. Why then should they not by parity of reason admit that his miracles evidenced a divine power? Therefore these men should rise up in judgment and condemn them for this partiality and blasphemy. It being then incontestably apparent that Christ's miracles were effected by the Spirit of God, he urges this as a proof that *the kingdom of God*, of the Messiah promised to bruise the serpents head, was actually now *come unto* them: for if this had not been the case, how could it be possible that he should thus dispossess the devil from the bodies and souls of men? This wicked spirit, as a strong man armed, will keep fast hold of his prey, and guard his house. Nothing but a superior power can bind his arms, and rescue his prisoners from him; which Jesus had done, and therefore proved that he received no assistance from him, but was his superior and conqueror. Besides, the very nature of their kingdoms being directly opposite, there can be no fellowship; yea, there is implacable enmity between them; and all who league with the one are regarded as rebels against the other; so that they who gather not to Christ as their Shepherd, and list under his banners as their King, are *scattered* exposed to his wrath, and devoted to destruction. So far, therefore, from a confederacy between Christ and Satan, there is open war between them, and not even a neutrality permitted. *Note*, (1.) Divisions are the surest way to destruction in church and state. (2.) The devil hath a potent kingdom erected in the world, and he will do his utmost to support it: but Christ is come to destroy his dominion, and will finally prevail. (3.) They who are under the influence of prejudice, will blame that very conduct in those they dislike which they approve in those they love. (4.) The destruction of Satan's power in the soul, is the work of the Spirit of God; and whenever that is evidently seen, there the kingdom of God is assuredly come. (5.) Coldness and indifference in the cause of Christ, will be regarded as enmity against him: we must be hearty in his service, or we shall be dealt with as traitors.

4. From what hath been observed, he takes occasion to caution his hearers against that unpardonable crime, *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.* All other sins, however deep, multiplied, or aggravated, may be forgiven, Christ's blood being a sufficient atonement for them; and whosoever pleads it in faith, will find pardon, even those who reviled or crucified him; *but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.* And this *blasphemy* is not any denial of his divine Person, or opposition to his work through ignorance, nor any resistance against the ministry of his word, nor wilful sin committed against his light and warnings: but "a wilful and despiteful rejection of the Spirit of grace; the "imputing his miraculous operations and illuminations to diabo-"lical agency; the contradicting and denying the doctrines he "reveals; and this through obstinate malice, in opposition to a "man's own light and conscience." This is a direct sin against our remedy, and must needs be attended with inevitable perdition.

5. Christ addresses the Pharisees, convicting them of the wickedness of their hearts by the malice which appeared in their lips. It was as absurd for them, who committed such blasphemies, to pretend to sanctity, as to expect good fruit from an evil tree. For as a man's heart is to be discerned by his words and actions, it plainly appeared by what they spoke *out of the abundance of their hearts*, that they were a *generation of vipers* thrusting out their envenomed tongues against Christ and blaspheming him, the natural effect of the *evil* which dwelt within them. *A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart* replenished with divine grace, *bringing forth good things*, such as are for the use of edifying and for the glory of God. *But an evil man*, whose spirit is unrenewed, *out of the evil treasure* of corruption, which is natural to him, *bringeth forth evil*, in the corrupt communication which proceeds out of his mouth, and the polluted streams in his life and conversation, which break forth from the inexhausted source within. And if not an idle word passes without the divine notice, but we must answer for it in a judgment-day, how much more terrible must be the blasphemer's guilt? With what circumspection then should we keep the door of our lips, when our eternal state is to be determined thereby, and our words must all be produced at the bar of God as evidences of our justification or condemnation, and sentence proceed accordingly! We may learn hence, (1.) That unless the heart be renewed by the power of God's Spirit, nothing but evil, and that continually, can proceed out of it. (2.) Our words are the index of our minds, and by our general course of communication, our state God-ward may be easily discovered. (3.) The solemn account that we must one day make for every word that is in our tongue, should be ever

on our mind, to restrain all idle, vain, impertinent discourse, as well as what is more immediately noxious. How much hath every man to lament on this behalf!

38. ¶ [s] Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39. But he answered and said unto them, [t] An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40. [u] For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41. [x] The men of Nineve shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a [y] greater than Jonas *is* here. 42. [z] The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here. 43. [a] When the unclean spirit is gone out of [b] a man, he [c] walketh through * dry places, seeking rest and findeth none. 44. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth *it* [d] empty, swept, and garnished. 45. [e] Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

[s] Ch. 16. 1—4. Luke 11. 16, 29—32. 1 Cor. 1. 22. Mark 8. 12, 13.

[t] Ch. 16. 4. & 23. 33. Is. 57. 3. Mark 8. 38. John 4. 48. & 2. 18. James 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15.

[u] Jon. 1. 17. & 2. 2. ch. 16. 21. & 20. 19. John 2. 19.

[x] Jon. 3. 5—10. Luke 11. 32. Jer. 3. 11. Ezek. 16. 51. Rom. 2. 27.

[y] Is. 9. 6. John 1. 14. & 10. 30. & 3. 31. Rom. 9. 5. Tit. 2. 13. Phil. 2. 6, 7.

[z] 1 Kin. 10. 1. 2 Chr. 9. 1. Luke 11. 31.

[a] Ch. 3. 17. & 17. 5. ch. 12. 5. Col. 2. 3, 9. John 1. 18.

[b] Luke 11. 24. Acts 8. 13.

[c] Job 1. 7. & 2. 2. 1 Pet. 5. 8. ch. 8. 29.

* *Dry places:* receptacles of evil spirits, who are driven out of heaven, and are not yet shut up in the infernal abyss, see Is. 13. 21. & 34. 19. Rev. 18. 2; and wandering in this lower part of the world, to tempt, seduce, and hurt; taking no delight nor rest, but in doing evil. 1 Pet. 5. 8.—*Diodati.*

[d] Ps. 81. 11, 12. Gal. 5. 19—21. Tit. 3. 3.

[e] Ps. 81. 12. Is. 66. 3, 4. Heb. 6. 4—8 & 10. 26. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. ch. 21. 36—41. & 15. 13. & 23. 34—38. John 15. 22, 24. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16.

Verses 38—45. Though what our Lord had said was sufficient to convince every impartial hearer, certain Scribes and Pharisees pretended they were not yet satisfied of his divine mission; and though they address him with respect, calling him *Master*, it seems to be done hypocritically; for they demand *a sign from heaven;* perhaps such as appeared of old on mount Sinai; intimating that notwithstanding his other miracles, without this they should not acknowledge him as the Messiah: a demand unreasonable and insolent, and which our Lord justly denies. They who are dissatisfied with the evidences of truth he hath been pleased to give, notwithstanding what they may pretend, would never be convinced by any other.

1. He brands them as *an evil and adulterous generation*, degenerate from the piety of their forefathers, and chargeable with the most criminal apostasy from God, literally and spiritually committing adultery against him.

2. He rejects their demand. No sign shall be given them, such as they required *from heaven;* but one should be given them *from the earth*, in his resurrection, which had been prefigured by Jonas the prophet, who, after being *three days and three nights in the whale's belly*, was cast alive on thy land; *so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth;* that is, part of three natural days, as the Jews computed their time; for so long he lay in the grave, reckoning Friday, before sunsetting, as one; Saturday, two; and Sunday, after sunset, when the third day commenced, as three; our Lord then arising from the dead; and if this did not convince them, nothing would. *Note*, The resurrection of Jesus is the great hinge on which our everlasting salvation turns, and the grand sign, confirming all the rest; and they who refuse the evidence with which this is attested, and ask for more, we may be fully sure desire no sign to confirm their faith, but a plea for their infidelity.

3. He warns them of the consequences which would attend the wilfulness and wickedness of the men of that generation. The men of Nineveh shall rise up as witnesses to condemn them; for they, though heathens, repented at the preaching of Jonas for one day only: but Christ had wrought manifold miracles, had long and earnestly preached the gospel of the kingdom, and shortly was to rise from the dead; in all which he was far superior to Jonas. If therefore they rejected him, far greater would be their condemnation than that which was threatened against the men of Nineveh, and their speedy repentance shall rise up to condemn the unbelief and impenitence of the men of that generation.

In like manner shall *the queen of the south*, who came from far on the report of Solomon's wisdom, condemn these despisers of Christ and his gospel. She, though a gentile, no sooner heard the wise king than she owned the truth of the report concerning him: but, when *a greater than Solomon was there*, even Jesus, in whom dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, the men of that generation refuse to receive his word or believe in him; and therefore how aggravated will be their condemnation! They who have enjoyed and abused the greatest means and mercies, shall sink under heavier guilt, and receive greater damnation.

4. He describes their character, as willing slaves of Satan. They were like one possessed of the devil, who goeth for a while out, to return with double violence. He is called an *unclean spirit:* having lost all purity, he ceases not to tempt men to all manner of uncleanness. *He walketh in dry places*, like a melancholy person *seeking rest and findeth none*, being miserable when he is no longer in mischief: and therefore, taking seven other spirits worse than himself, he returns to his former abode, and finds the sinner's heart ready to entertain them, as a house swept and garnished to receive its guests, and there they fix their stay, so that *the last state of that man is worse than the first*, more wicked than before: *even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.* The devil, who by Christ's preaching and miracles for a while retired from Judea into the Gentile world; afterwards, when the gospel spread among the heathen, return with sevenfold power to the Jews, who readily received him, and with all malice and wickedness persecuted the ministers of Christ, which brought upon that devoted people final destruction.

46. ¶ While he yet talked to the people, [f] behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. 47. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. 48. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? 49. And he stretched forth his hand toward [g] his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 50. [h] For whosoever shall

[f] Mark 3. 31—35. & 6. 3. Luke 8. 19—21. ch. 13. 55. John 2. 11. & 7. 3. Acts 1. 14. 1 Cor. 9. 5. Gal. 1. 19.

[g] Ch. 10. 2—4. Luke 6. 13—16. Acts 1. 13. John 17. 12.

[h] Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11. ch. 7. 21. Ps. xv. & 24. 3—5. John 13. 17. & 15. 14. Rom. 2. 13. James 1. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. 2 Pet. 1. 4—10. Luke 11. 27, 28.

do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Verses 46—50. Whilst Christ continued his discourses, which bore so hard upon the Pharisees, we are told,

1. That his mother and brethren stood without: apprehensive perhaps of the danger to which he would be exposed thereby, they desired to speak to him, and warn him against giving such offensive and plain rebukes. Whether these were his brethren by the same mother Mary, or by a former wife of Joseph's, or his cousin-germans as many suppose, is not a matter at all material. Hereupon one of his auditors immediately informed him of their request. *Note*, (1.) Near relations, by their fears for us, often lay hindrances in our way. (2.) Danger must not deter us from fidelity in the way of our duty.

2. Christ replies in answer to the message, *Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?* not as contemning paternal authority, or disregarding the ties of blood; but intimating that the address was unseasonable, and, when God's glory was concerned, no natural or civil respects were to be allowed to interfere. We are bound to love them much, but to love God more: yea, and the union which divine grace makes betwixt kindred souls is in many respects stronger than the bonds of blood. *He stretched forth his hand to his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren;* so affectionately did he regard them: *for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven*, attentive to the gospel, and obedient to the faith, *the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*, so near and dear to him. *Note*, (1.) The mark of discipleship to Jesus, is obedience to the revealed word and will of God. (2.) However despised we may be, or rejected of men, it is sufficient honour to be esteemed the brethren of Jesus. (3.) They who resemble Christ in spirit, temper, and disposition, and have the blessed image of that one Father, even God, stamped upon them, will be acknowledged by the Lord of life and glory in the day of his appearing, and admitted, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, to share with him the eternal inheritance.

CHAP. XIII.—anno domini, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The parable of the sower, with its explication, and the reason why Christ chose this method of teaching*, ver. 1—23. 2. *Of the tares*, ver. 24—30. 3. *Of the grain of mustard-seed*, ver. 31, 32. 4. *Of the leaven*, ver. 33. 5. *The parable of the tares explained, with a further reason for Christ's using parables*, ver. 34—43. 6. *The parable of the hid treasure, the pearl of great price, and of the net*, ver. 44—50. 7. *The application to his disciples, under the parable of the good householder*, ver. 51, 52. 8. *The contempt put upon Christ by his countrymen*, ver. 53—58.

1. THE [a] same day went Jesus out of the house, [b] and sat by the sea-side. 2. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood * on the shore. 3. And he spake many things unto them [c] in parables, saying, Behold, [d] a sower went forth to sow: 4. And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: 5. Some fell upon [e] stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: 6. And when the sun was up, they were scorched: and because they had no [f] root, they withered away. 7. And some fell among [g] thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them. 8. But other fell into [h] good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold. 9. [i] Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. 10. ¶ And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11. He answered and said unto them, [k] Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12. [l] For whosoever * hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath † not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13. [m] Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. 14. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, [n] By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 16. [o] But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. 17. For verily I say unto you, [p] That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*. 18. ¶ Hear ye [q] therefore the parable of the sower. 19. When any one heareth [r] the word of the kingdom, and [s] understandeth *it* not, then cometh [t] the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was [u] sown in his heart. [x] This is he which received seed by the way-side. 20. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon [y] with joy receiveth it; 21. Yet hath he not [z] root in himself, but dureth for a while: [a] for when tribulation or

a Acts 10. 38. Is. 63. 1. Gal. 6. 9.
b Mark 4. 1—13. Luke 5. 3. & 8. 4—10. Gen. 49. 10. ch. 4. 25. & 8. 2. & 14. 13. & 15. 30. & 19. 2.
* In the Jewish schools and synagogues the master sat to teach, and the scholars or audience stood around.—*Dr Lightfoot.*
c Ps. 49. 3, 4. & 78. 2. Mark iv. Luke viii, xv, xvi, &c.
d Ver. 37, 18—23. Mark 4. 3—20. Luke 8. 4—15.
e Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26. Zech. 7. 12. Luke. 14. 28.
f Eph. 3. 17. Col. 2. 7. & 1. 23.
g Jer. 4. 3. Hos. 6. 4. Luke 21. 34.
h John 15. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Rom. 7. 4. with Gen. 26. 12.
i Deut. 29. 4. ch. 11. 15. Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29. & 3. 6, 13, 22.
k 1 Cor. 4. 7. ch. 11. 25. & 16. 17. Ps. 25. 8, 9, 14. Is. 29. 14. 1 Cor. 2. 7—16. Eph. 3. 9. Col. 1. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 4. 3. 1 John 2. 27
l Ch. 25. 29. Mark 4. 25. Luke 8. 18. & 19. 26. John 15. 2—5. Rev. 22. 11.
* *Hath*, that is, hath much.—*Bishop Pearce.*
† *Hath not*, that is, hath little.—*Bishop Pearce.*
m 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11. Is. 42. 19, 20. Deut. 29. 2—4. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
n Is. 6. 9, 10. & 44. 18. Jer. 5. 21. Mark 4. 12, 13. Luke 8. 10. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8. Deut. 29. 4. 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15. & 4. 3, 4. & 2. 16. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Ezek. 12. 2. Eph. 4. 18. Heb. 5. 11.
o Ch. 16. 17. Luke 10. 23. with ch. 5. 3—11. Luke 2. 30. John 1. 14. & 20. 29.
p Luke 10. 24. Heb. 11. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. Rom. 16. 26, 27. Eph. 3. 5, 6. Col. 1. 26.
q Ver. 11, 12. Is. 54. 13. ch. 11. 25. 1 John 2. 20, 27. Mark 4. 14—20. Luke 8. 11—15.
r Ch. 4. 23. Eph. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Is. 53. 1. & 52. 7.
s 2 Cor. 2. 16. & 3. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Is. 42. 19, 20.
t Joh 1. 6. & 2. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 2. 11. Is. 53. 1.
u Rom. 10. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 10.
x Ver. 4, 5.
y Is. 58. 2. Mark 4. 16, 17. & 6. 20. John 5. 35. Ezek. 33. 31, 32. Acts 8. 13.
z Ver. 6. Col. 2. 7. Eph. 3. 17. John 15. 2—5. 2 Cor. 9. 17. Gal. 6. 15. & 5. 6.
a Job 27. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 10. & 1. 15. Gal. 5. 7. & 6. 12. ch. 11. 6. Song i. 5, 6. Hos. 6. 4.

persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. 22. [b] He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the [c] deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. 23. [d] But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it;* which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.

[b] Ver. 7. ch. 19. 28. Luke. 21. 34. Prov. 23. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10, 17.

[c] Prov. 11. 28. Luke 18. 24. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10, 17. 2 Tim. 2. 4. & 4. 10.

[d] Ver. 8. Ps. 1. 2, 3. & 92. 13, 14. John 15. 4, 5. Gal. 5. 22, 23. Col. 1. 6—11. & 2. 2. Phil. 1. 11. & 2. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9.

Verses 1—23. With indefatigable diligence did the great prophet of his people labour to inculcate the doctrines of his gospel. *The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside,* his auditory being too great for a house to contain them; and here ascending a ship for his pulpit, whilst the attentive multitude crowded the shore, he spoke *many things unto them in parables,* more, probably, than are here recorded: and he chose this method for reasons, given, ver. 13, 15. *Note,* (1.) In preaching the gospel we are called to be instant in season and out of season: no time nor place is unsuitable to speak a word for Christ and for immortal souls. (2.) Where Christ is preached, there should we with delight attend: his presence and blessing on the seashore, are better than all the magnificence of Solomon's temple without him.

1. The parable with which Christ opens his discourse, is that of a sower sowing his seed, with the various soils on which it fell, and the consequences thereof. By familiar and well known objects, Christ would thus convey more pleasingly his divine instructions, and teach them to spiritualize their daily labours, and to draw from them profitable meditation. The explication of the parable Christ is pleased himself to give, and we cannot err when following an infallible interpreter. The *seed* is *the word of the kingdom,* the gospel; *the sower* is the Lord Jesus, with all his divinely appointed ministers; and he also by his Spirit quickens the seed sown, that it may bring forth fruit in the hearts of his people. *The field is the world* in general; and the several sorts of ground here mentioned, on which the seed falls, represent the different tempers of those to whom the gospel is preached, and the effects thereby produced upon them; and we may observe, but one sort in four brought forth any lasting fruit: for though the same word of truth is preached to multitudes, it becomes an incorruptible seed but to a few. An awful warning to all, to take heed how they hear: for many are called but few chosen.

(1.) Some are like the wayside; where the seed, falling on the hard ground not broken up, is exposed to the birds and devoured. This represents the case of those who are careless, negligent, and inattentive hearers, on whom the word of God makes no impression: they *understand it not,* being under the darkness of their fallen mind, and their hearts hardened. *The wicked one,* the devil, ever watchful to prevent all good from entering, no sooner observes such a one in the way of the gospel, than he seeks to divert him from it, and catches away the word from his heart as it falls, distracting his attention by some objects around him, or suggesting some idle, vain, worldly, or trifling thoughts, so that the word of God is immediately effaced from the memory, and becomes utterly unprofitable.

(2.) Others are like the stony ground, on which whatever is sown springs up quickly, the earth being shallow, but, unable to bear the scorching sun, for want of root it withers away. Such are they who attend the ministry of the word, and, struck at first greatly with what they hear, give an immediate assent to its truth, and instantly commence professors, but the root of the matter is not in them; they are not brought to a deep and humbling sense of the sinfulness of their nature; they do not see the utter impotence of their hearts to all good; they are not humbled to a universal renunciation of themselves; nor led to Christ alone, for pardon, righteousness, grace and glory: but, whilst some lively impression, or sudden flash of joy succeeds their hearing, they are ready to conclude the work is done, when it is not even yet begun; their hearts continue unhumbled and unholy; they are not partakers of the grace of God in truth, nor influenced by the divine principle of faith, which worketh by love; they have never truly counted the cost; and, therefore, when they are called to painful self-denial for Christ's sake; to endure reproach, the loss of friends or fortune, or the severer sufferings which envenomed persecutors may inflict; then they shrink from the cross, dishonour their profession, comply with the world, are offended, and walk no more with Jesus. May we never be numbered among such apostates from the truth!

(3.) Another sort of hearers are compared to the seed sown among thorns. These go farther than the former: they take up and continue a fair profession, are attendants on the word and ordinances, and in appearance Christians altogether; but insensibly the cares of the world, a too great anxiety about a provision for themselves or families, an inordinate love of money, and too eager a pursuit after it: these, under many a specious cloak of prudent care and becoming industry, seduce the affections from God; and insensibly, like the thorns, eat out the life and spirit of that godliness they once seemed to possess; the heart grows cold; eternal things lose their importance; the vanities of time appear more significant; and though the profession of religion and the form of duties may still be carried on, it is mere husk; no substantial fruit of grace is produced; the word is choked, and the soul drowned in perdition and destruction. How many thus have fallen! May we be warned of the imminent danger, and fear for ourselves, lest this evil world steal away our hearts from God!

(4.) Though others were unfruitful, one sort of hearers are mentioned who, like the good ground, repaid the husbandman's toils. Their hearts by divine grace were opened to receive the seed of the gospel, and, watered by the dews of heavenly influence, it grew, and brought forth fruit abundantly. They are described not merely as hearing the word, but *understanding* it, the eyes of their mind being enlightened; and they receive the truth not only in the light, but in the love of it; in their heart the seed takes root, and brings forth the genuine fruits of righteousness and true holiness; and this variously, according to the measure of the gift of Christ: for though the quality of the fruit be the same in all, wrought by that one and the self same Spirit, yet in some these fruits are more eminent and abundant than in others. May Jesus give us then the hearing ear and understanding heart, that our profiting may appear! and may we seek to abide and abound in every fruit of grace, which by Jesus Christ are to the praise and glory of God!

2. Christ resolves the question addressed to him by his disciples, ver. 10. why he spoke to the people by parables. In general such was the good pleasure of his will. With regard to those who were his disciples, he intended to stir up their inquiries after the explication of what they heard; and it was their peculiar mercy, that to them *it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom,* he being ready to lead them into the knowledge of all truth; but to others it was *not given.* God is sovereign in the dispensations of his grace, and is pleased to withhold from some what he bestows on others; and where none have any claim upon him, he may no doubt, do what he will with his own, ver. 11. Where he hath been pleased to give a spiritual understanding, and the influences of his Spirit, there he will continue to work, and perfect that which he begins, increasing his gifts of wisdom and grace; but where there is no spiritual knowledge of Christ, no experience of his grace, no desire to profit by his

word, there he will take away the external gifts, the means of grace, or ministry of the gospel, which such persons before enjoyed, and leave them to the blindness they have chosen, ver. 12. And this he assigns as the reason why he spoke to them in parables, without expounding them to the multitude as he did to his own disciples. He designed to leave those who wilfully had rejected the light of his miracles and doctrines to the hardness and impenitence of their own hearts. *They* did not choose to see or understand, and therefore he decrees in just judgment that they shall not, ver. 13. And herein the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. vi. ver. 9, 10. was fulfilled. The Jews were now given up to that judicial blindness he had foretold. In the midst of the glorious light of the gospel, and in the face of the astonishing miracles wherewith Jesus, as the Messiah, had confirmed his mission, they obstinately stopped their ears, and closed their eyes, as if they were afraid the force of conviction, and the strong evidence of truth should overpower them, and necessitate them to submit to the Saviour's doctrine, and yield up their hearts and ways to his government: which they being resolved not to do, his Spirit will no longer strive with them, and they are left to the ignorance and impenitence of their hearts, ver. 14, 15. But towards those whom he had chosen for disciples, God had the most gracious designs: he had given them the seeing eye and the hearing ear, and blessed them with the understanding of those mysteries of his grace which were hid from others, ver. 16. yea, they enjoyed transcendent favours beyond all the prophets and righteous men which had gone before them; for earnestly as they longed for the appearing of the Messiah, and to behold him incarnate, they saw his day but at a distance, and chiefly beheld the great things of his kingdom wrapped up in types and figures; whilst his present disciples beheld him face to face, saw his miracles, and from his own mouth more distinctly were informed of those truths, which the others saw only through a glass darkly, ver. 16. *Note*, (1.) Why God is pleased to give the knowledge of his truth to one, and withhold it from another, can only be resolved into the good pleasure of his own will. (2.) All our wisdom in divine things is the gift of God: till he opens the eyes of our minds, the wisest of men are in gross darkness. (3.) Many enjoy the means of grace whose hearts only grow more hard and insensible under them. They hate the light, and therefore are justly abandoned to the darkness they have chosen. (4.) The greatest of all blessings is the knowledge of Jesus; for him to know is everlasting life. (5.) If we are distinguished by peculiar circumstances of the divine regard, the stronger obligation is laid upon us to be thankful, and to walk in the light as children of the light.

24. ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, [e] The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed [f] good seed in his field: 25. But while men [g] slept, his [h] enemy came and sowed [i] tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the * tares also. 27. So the [k] servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28. He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, [l] Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29. But he said, Nay; lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30. Let both [m] grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. 31. ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, [n] The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of † mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; 32. Which indeed is the least of all seeds; but, when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. 33. ¶ [o] Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three ‡ measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. 34. [p] All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: 35. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, [q] I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. 36. ¶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, [r] Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37. He answered and said unto them, [s] He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38. [t] The field is the world; [u] the good seed are the children of the kingdom, [x] but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; 39. [y] The enemy that sowed them is the devil; [z] the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. 41. [a] The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all ‖ things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42. [b] And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43. [c] Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. [d] Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

e Ver. 31, 33, 45, 52. ch. 3. 2 & 4. 17. *i. e.* the gospel church.
f Ch. 4. 23. 1 Pet. 1. 23. ver. 4, 19. 2 Tim. 3. 15—17. Col. 1. 6. Phil. 1. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 7.
g Acts 20. 29. Luke 21. 34.
h Ver. 36. 1 Pet. 5. 8.
i Ver. 39. Phil. 3. 18, 19. Acts 8. 13.
* *Tares*: a hurtful plant which spoiled the corn in Palestine; it grew in branches, ver. 30. It is now unknown. —*Diodati.*
k 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11.
l Luke 9. 34. with 1 Thes. 5. 14. Heb. 1. 14.
m With ch. 3. 12. & 25. 32.
n Mark 4. 30—32. Luke 13. 18, 19. 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. Job 8. 7. Ps. 80. 8—11. Ezek. 47. 1, 12. Dan. 2. 44. Is. 2. 2—4. Mic. 4. 1—3. Zech. 8. 20—23. Prov. 4. 18. Job 17. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 18.
† The mustard seed, which with us produces only a small plant, grows in the East to such a height, and to so considerable a size, that it affords a shade.—*Beausobre.*
o Luke 13. 20. Rom. 1. 14, 16. 1 Cor. 9. 22, 23. Ps. 72. 16. & 119. 11. with 1 Cor. 5. 7. Gal. 5. 9.
‡ Sotan, or seah, held a little more than a peck.
p Mark 1. 33, 34. ver. 13.
q Ps. 49. 3, 4. & 78. 2. Rom. 16. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 3. 9. Col. 1. 25, 26. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Heb. 1. 1.
r Ver. 11. Prov. 2. 1—7. Acts 8. 30, 31. Ezek. 36. 37. James 1. 5. Mat. 7. 7.
s Is. 61. 1, 2. Heb 2. 3. & 1. 1. Acts 3. 22. Is. 48. 17.
t Ch. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15. Rom. 15. 18, 21. & 16. 26. Col. 1. 6. Luke 24. 47. Rom. 10. 18. & 11. 11, 12.
u Ps. 22. 30. Is. 53. 10—12. & 54. 13. Heb. 3. 1. 1 John 3. 8. John 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15.
x Gen. 3. 15. John 8. 44. Acts 13. 10. Tit. 1. 16. Phil. 3. 18, 19. 2 Tim. 3. 2—5. 1 John 3. 8.
y Gen. iii. 2 Cor. 11. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Rev. 20. 1, 2.
z Joel 3. 13. Rev. 14. 15.
a Ch. 24. 31. & 25. 32. & 5. 29, 30. & 18. 7, 9. 1 Cor. 11. 19. with 1 Pet. 2. 1.
‖ Or *scandals.*
b Ch. 3. 12. & 8. 12. & 22. 13. Rev. 14. 10, 11. & 20. 15. & 21. 8, 27. & 22. 15. & 19. 20.
c Dan. 12. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 41—54. ch. 25. 34. Phil. 3. 21. Rev. 7. 9—17. & xxi. Is. 60. 19, 20.
d See ver. 9. ch. 11. 15.

Verses 23—43. Our Lord further continues his discourse to the people in parables, choosing in this manner to wrap up the

doctrines he inculcated, according to the prophecy, Psal. lxxviii. 2. and whilst he thus opened the door for inquiry to his disciples, to whom he afterwards explained the meaning of the figures he used, and informed them of the secrets of wisdom couched under these parables, he left the multitude, who showed no solicitude to be informed of their meaning, to their ignorance, ver. 34, 35. Three parables are here delivered, one of which is afterwards particularly explained by our Lord in private to his disciples, who desired to be informed of its design, ver. 36. We have,

1. The parable of the tares, which is the representation of the visible church in particular, as the former related to the world in general.

(1.) The Sower of *the good seed is the Son of man*, who by himself, and the ministers he hath appointed, sows the seed of eternal life in the hearts of his people, and causes it to take root, and bring forth fruit; all that is good in man entirely proceeds from him.

(2.) *The field is the world*, through which the gospel is spread, and particularly the visible church, where the word is preached; and Christ's servants, under him the great husbandman, continually labour to break up the fallow ground, and cast in the living seed.

(3.) *The good seed are the children of the kingdom;* those who by faith embrace the doctrines of the gospel, and in all holy conversation and godliness adorn it.

(4.) *The tares are the children of the wicked one;* all hypocrites and careless professors, who, though they have a name to live in the visible church, are really dead in trespasses and sins; under the influence of the devil, resembling him in their spirit and tempers, and a trouble and vexation to the children of God among whom they associate.

(5.) *The enemy that sowed them is the devil;* that spirit of wickedness whose unwearied labours are employed to corrupt and destroy the souls of men, and who watches day and night to take advantage against the church of Christ: and whilst we are off our guard, or lulled by outward prosperity into a state of security, he insinuates his pernicious errors in doctrine and practice, seducing unstable souls: for a while the mischief is not discovered, so artful are his wiles; like the villain who sowed tares and slipped away unnoticed under the covert of the night. But though at first the secret wickedness, which lurked under the cloak of plausible profession, is not perceived, in a little while the difference between the wheat and tares becomes very visible. The exercise of grace in the one appears evident, in the spirituality of their tempers, the simplicity of their hearts, and the purity of their manners; whilst observation and experience discover the unfaithfulness of the tares, and a day of trial shows their real character. With grief and surprise the faithful ministers and servants of Jesus behold the errors and immoralities among the professors of godliness, and carry their sorrowful inquiries to their Lord, ver. 27. for they who have a zeal for him, cannot but be affected with every thing in his church which reflects dishonour upon his holy religion, ver. 27. He informs them whence these tares sprung. He marked his enemy in all his ways; but for his own more abundant glory, permitted his malicious attempts, ver. 28. He does not reflect upon his servants, as if negligence were to be charged on them; nor will he grant their request, of immediately eradicating these pernicious inmates. There would be danger if it was left to us, lest our undistinguishing eye might class among the hypocrites some who were sincere; or, too rigid or hasty in our judgments, should count those tares whom the Lord knew to be the true seed; for his all-seeing eye alone can discern the true characters of men. They are therefore permitted to grow together; the day of separation will come, when the distinction between tares and wheat will be evident. And from hence we should learn, (1.) That as long as Christ has a church, the devil will still be seeking to disturb the peace, or corrupt the purity of the professing members of it, notwithstanding the care of the most vigilant pastors, and the administration of the strictest discipline. (2.) We should be very cautious of pronouncing rash and hasty censures on the characters of others: God only knoweth the heart; and it is better that many criminals should escape, than one righteous person be condemned.

(6.) *The harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels;* they shall go forth and make the awful separation. *All that offend and do iniquity*, whose pernicious doctrines, or immoral conduct, have been a scandal to the religion they professed, shall be gathered out, and, like tares, bound in bundles for the burning. The distinction between the righteous and the wicked shall then be too evident to admit of a mistake; and the separation between them shall be perfect and everlasting. For,

(7.) *They shall cast them*, the tares, *into a furnace of fire*; the fire prepared for the devil and his angels, the place of torment appointed for all the ungodly, where they shall burn, and none shall quench them; their pangs intolerable and eternal, under the wrath of God, which is for ever wrath to come; where every expression of acutest anguish and black despair shall prove, how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God! Lord, gather not my soul with these sinners!

(8.) *The wheat* shall be gathered into God's *barn*. The righteous being proved and found faithful, shall be collected in one glorious company, and *shine forth as the sun*, arrayed in robes of spotless purity, and clothed with honour and immortality; admitted into their Father's kingdom, and sitting down on the throne of their Lord, to reign with him for ever and ever. The prospect of such a glorious state before us, should deeply engage our attention; *he*, therefore, *that hath ears to hear, let him hear*.

2. The parable *of the grain of mustard seed*, which from one of the smallest seeds grows, in the eastern countries, into the greatest of herbs; so that, like a spreading tree, the birds find shelter in its branches. And such is,

(1.) The work of God in a redeemed soul. The beginnings are often small, and scarce perceptible; but watered with divine influences, the seed of eternal life springs up, and amidst all the stormy blasts of temptation, corruption, persecution, affliction, to which it is exposed, increaseth with the increase of God.

(2.) Such also was the Messiah's kingdom at the first. Christ and his disciples seemed little, mean, and despicable; but their word took deep root; abundant converts were made; the gospel spread on every side, and filled the face of the world with fruit: and, like the enlarging circle in the water, the church of Christ shall go on increasing, till the kingdoms of the world become the kingdom of the Lord, and all the fowls of the air, both Jews and Gentiles, be converted, and flock together into it. Hasten, O Lord, this happy day!

(3.) The parable of the *leaven*. As a little of this diffuses itself gradually through the whole mass of meal with which it is mingled; so doth the gospel word when quickened by divine grace, powerfully diffuse its energy through all the faculties of the soul, and over all the members of the body; sanctifying the whole, communicating throughout a sweet savour of Christ, and working a blessed and universal change into his image and likeness; and spreading far and wide among all nations, the word of truth shall continue its mighty operations till all nations shall be brought to the obedience of the faith. *Note*, (1.) Divine grace works often imperceptibly, but irresistibly. (2.) Where the leaven of truth is hid in the heart, there its influence will infallibly appear; there will be a sweet savour of Christ in all we speak or do.

44. ¶ [e] Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth,

[e] Prov. 2. 1—4. & 3. 13—16. 1 Cor. 2. 9. Col. 2. 3. & 3. 3. John 3. 35. Phil. 3. 7—9. Is. 55. 1. Rev. 3. 18.

and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. 45. ¶ [f] Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls: 46. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. 47. ¶ Again, [g] the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: 48. [h] Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but * cast the bad away. 49. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 51. Jesus saith unto them, [i] Have ye understood all † these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. 52. Then said he unto them, [k] Therefore every scribe *which* is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

f Prov. 2. 4. & 3. 13—16. and 8. 10, 11. ch. 16. 26. see ver. 44.

g Ch. 4. 19. Luke 5. 10. Mark 16. 15. ch. 28. 19. & 22. 9, 10. Luke 14. 21, 23. Eph. 3. 8. Tit. 3. 3—7.

h Rev. 10. 7. & 1. 7. & 20. 12—15. ch. 24. 31 & 25. 32, 41—46. & xxv. 2 Thes. 1. 7—10. ver. 42.

* There are many in the church which are not of the church, and therefore at last shall be cast out; but the full and perfect separation of them is reserved for the last day. —*Beza.*

i Acts 8. 20, 31. ch. 16. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 2. 10—16. John 13. 17.

† They ought to be diligent, who have not only to be wise for themselves, but to teach the wisdom of God to others.—*Beza.*

k Neh. 8. 3. ch. 23. 34. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11—13. Song 7. 13.

Verses 44—52. Four other parables conclude our blessed Lord's discourse:

1. *The treasure hid in the field;* which is Christ himself, and the great and precious promises that are in him. The field the Scripture, wherein *He is* revealed to us, in whom are hid in the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and from whom the most inestimable riches to a sinner, of pardon, peace, righteousness, and grace are to be derived. These are *hid* from us: though we have the Scriptures before us, we cannot look farther than the surface of them, till God imparts the spiritual understanding, and enables us to dig deep in the precious mine When we have found the treasure, we must hide it in our hearts; and nothing can equal the *joy* with which a poor sinner discovers the riches of the grace revealed in Jesus Christ: for the sake o this we shall be ready to part with all besides, and count an interest in his love and favour the most invaluable treasure.

2. The parable of the pearl of great price is much of the same import with the foregoing. The *merchant* is the convinced sinner seeking after Christ and his salvation; *the pearl of great price,* an object indeed deserving our most eager pursuit. Shall merchants compass sea and land for one poor jewel, and shall we not be more assiduous in securing an interest in Jesus, and the possession of all the jewels of grace and glory? He *finds* it, as all who truly seek the Saviour assuredly will, and then with cheerfulness sells all to become possessor of it; content to quit the world, with all its riches, honours, pleasures; his sins, with all their allurements: yea, and to part with his own righteousness too, that he may be found in Christ, a partaker of his redemption: and that, stripped of all beside, Christ may be to him all and in all.

3. The parable of *the net cast into the sea,* with the explication annexed. The *net* is the gospel preached to every creature; the ministers of Christ are the fishermen, who cast it into the *sea,* the world: by it a multitude of souls are inclosed, and brought into the visible church. When it is *full,* in the latter days, and all, both Jews and Gentiles, are gathered into it, then cometh the end, when the net shall be drawn to shore in the great day of final separation, and the contents of it be examined. The *good* fish, the *just,* who in Christ Jesus are justified from all things, and found faithful, shall be gathered into the vessels of glory prepared for their reception; whilst the angels, the ministers employed in this service, shall separate the *bad, the wicked,* from among them, and cast them away, as vile and reprobate, into everlasting burnings. *Note,* (1.) Many who have had a place in the gospel church will at the last day be rejected by the great Head of the church as hypocrites and unfaithful. (2.) They who live in wickedness have nothing to expect but an eternity of wo. (3.) The consideration of the dreadful end of those who perish, should awaken our greater solicitude to make our calling and election sure.

4. The parable of the householder aptly finishes as the practical improvement of the whole. Our Lord, ver. 51. had interrogated them on their proficiency, whether they had understood the meaning of the parables he had uttered; and as they had replied in the affirmative, he directs them to the proper use of the knowledge which they possessed. They were to be evangelical *scribes,* to preach the everlasting gospel, as the scribes in their days expounded the law; and herein they were to resemble a *householder,* who, having made a liberal provision for the family under his care, brings forth out of his storehouse *things new and old,* as each is best suited to their wants. The family under our care is the church of Christ, that particular part of it to which we are ordained to minister. Our treasure is the word of truth, and Christ especially therein revealed, with an experimental knowledge of him in all his offices, of the riches of his salvation, and the obligations to love and serve him thence arising. These we must set before the people, drawn from the sacred storehouses of the Old and New Testament; inculcating anew ancient truths; adding to old experiences new observations; and providing thus a supply of spiritual food, suited to every state, condition, and circumstance of the people whom we serve. And this wisdom, this ability to minister, no attainments of science, no researches of philosophy, no force of genius can bestow: it is the gift of the great Master of the family, the Lord Jesus: and they who would savingly teach others the doctrines of the kingdom, must be themselves first taught of him.

53. ¶ And it came to pass, *that,* when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence. 54. [l] And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works? 55. [m] Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his * brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56. And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things? 57. And they were [n] offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, [o] A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. 58. [p] And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

cir. 32.

l Mark 6. 1—5. Luke 4. 16. Deut. 18. 15—19. Is. 50. 4. Ps. 22. 22. & 40. 9, 10.

m John 6. 42. Luke 4. 22. Mark 6. 3. ch. 12. 46. Is. 49. 7. & 53. 2, 3.

* St Jerome, comparing together John 19. 25. Matt. 27. 56. Mark 15. 40. infers that these were the sons of his mother's sister, the wife of Cleophas; it being consistent with the language of the Jews to call cousins by the name of brethren.—*Dr Whitby.*

n Ch. 11. 6. & 69. 31. Is. 53. 2, 3. Ps. 22. 6. & 26. 8, 19, 20.

o Mark 6. 4. Luke 4. 24. John 4. 44.

p Mark 6. 5, 6. Heb. 4. 2. & 3. 19.

Verses 53—58. When Jesus had finished this discourse, he returned to his own city, Nazareth, where he had before been

so contumeliously treated, and where he again met the like contempt.

1. Though they could not help being astonished at the wisdom and authority with which he spoke in their synagogue, and the mighty works he performed, yet the questions show the prejudices they entertained against him. They knew his parentage and education: he had not been brought up under their admired doctors; and his father was of no higher rank than a carpenter: his mother Mary, a woman of no account; and his brethren and sisters mean, low, and illiterate people: and at this they stumbled, despised his person, and slighted his ministry.

2. Christ gently rebukes their unreasonable prejudices, and punishes them for their low thoughts of him. They acted according to vulgar prepossessions, which lead us to pay little reverence and respect to those with whom we have been familiar, and, if they rise to superior excellence, and above their former station, to envy them. Therefore, since they despised and rejected him, refused to believe his doctrine, and submit to the evidence of his miracles, he *did not many mighty works there;* not for want of power, but in just judgment; leaving them to their unbelief and hardness of heart. *Note,* (1.) Prejudices entertained against ministers is a great obstruction to our profiting by their labours. (2.) We owe it to our unbelief, that we see and experience no more of the mighty works of Jesus.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

John Baptist had said concerning Christ, He must increase: but I must decrease, John iii. 30. *The morning star is here disappearing, and the Sun of Righteousness rising to his meridian lustre. Here is,* 1. *The martyrdom of John; his imprisonment for his faithfulness to Herod,* ver. 1—5. *and the beheading of him, to please Herodias,* ver. 6—12. 2. *The miracles of Christ.* (1.) *His feeding five thousand men, that came to him to be taught, with five loaves and two fishes,* ver. 13—22. (2.) *Christ's walking on the water to his disciples in a storm,* ver. 22—33. (3.) *His healing the sick with the touch of his garment,* ver. 34—36.

1. AT that time * Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, 2. And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works † do shew forth themselves in him. 3. ¶ [a] For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. 4. For John said unto him, [b] It is not lawful for thee to have her. 5. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, [c] because they counted him as a prophet. 6. But ‡ when [d] Herod's birth-day was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. 7. Whereupon [e] he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. 8. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, [f] Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. 9. And the king was [g] sorry: [h] nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*. 10. And he sent, and [i] beheaded John in the prison. 11. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought *it* to her mother. 12. [k] And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

* This was Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great, and the same to whom Pilate sent Jesus; he is called tetrarch, because he had a fourth part of the dominions of his father, viz. Galilee. Mark 6. 14—30. Luke 9. 7—9. Is. 52. 15.

† Or *are wrought by him.*

a Luke 3. 19, 20. Mark 6. 17, 18, &c. ch. 4. 12.

b Lev. 18. 6, 16. & 20. 21. 2 Sam. 12. 7. Dan. 5. 22, 23.

c Ch. 21. 26. Luke 20. 6.

‡ When John had lain about a year and a half in prison.

d Gen. 40. 20. Acts 12. 21. Esth. 1. 3. & 2. 18.

e Esth. 5. 3, 6. & 7. 3. ch. 4. 9.

f Prov. 10. 12, 13. & 1 16. & 4. 16.

g Ver. 5. Mark 6. 20. Luke 13. 32.

h Rom. 1. 32. Tit. 1. 16. Jam. 1. 14.

i 2 Chr. 36. 16. ch. 10. 21. & 21. 35, 36. & 22. 6.

k 1 Kin. 13. 29. ch. 27. 58—61. Acts 8. 19. ch. 10. 16, 17.

Verses 1—12. John, the harbinger of Jesus, had lately finished his glorious race, and won the crown of martyrdom. We have in these verses an account of that bloody scene, and the occasion of its being here introduced is intimated, ver. 2. The fame of Jesus and his miracles began to be noised; and no sooner did they reach Herod's ears, than his guilty conscience betrayed his fears, and instantly suggested that this was John whom he had beheaded, but now raised from the dead, and endued with more extraordinary powers to vindicate his injured character, and perhaps avenge himself on his persecutors. *Note,* (1.) On this side hell, the greatest torment is a guilty conscience. (2.) Persecutors will find they in vain seek to be rid of their troublers; though one be slain or removed, God will raise up fresh witnesses to the truth. (3.) Many under the horrors of conscience, like the devils, tremble, yet continue impenitent. Convictions are not conversion.

In the story of John's sufferings, we are told,

1. The occasion of them: and this was his fidelity and zeal in reproving Herod for his flagitious enormities, and especially for his adultery and incest with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had inveigled away from her own husband; and though he was alive and had children by her, yet had Herod publicly married her, and continued to cohabit with her. This atrocious crime John plainly and faithfully charged upon his conscience as utterly unlawful, and sure to bring down the wrath of God upon him. Though a king, John feared not to discharge his commission. As the greatest monarchs have no prerogative to break God's laws, his ministers must boldly vindicate his honour, and without respect of persons, declare his wrath against the mightiest transgressors.

2. For this John was imprisoned. Instigated by Herodias, who meditated revenge, as well as to gratify his own resentments, Herod had seized, bound, and cast him into prison. They who will be zealous against sin, must prepare to suffer. Faithful rebukes, however kindly meant, will be often resented as affronts, and expose us to the vengeance of an enraged persecutor; but when we have a good cause and a good conscience, we need not fear bonds or imprisonments.

3. Herod would have despatched him out of hand, and rid himself of this troubler; but his fears prevailed over his resentment, and, for a while, restrained him from the bloody deed. John's character as a prophet had procured him such general veneration, that to murder him outright might provoke some popular insurrection, and endanger his own person and government. *Note,* (1.) None are greater slaves to fear, than they who affect to tyrannize with despotic sway. (2.) The fear of man often restrains those who have cast off all fear of God.

4. At last the barbarous deed is contrived and executed; and, after a tedious confinement, the faithful martyr is by death released, and goes where the wicked cease from troubling. It appears probable that the whole plot was concerted by Herodias, whose unrelenting malice could not rest whilst John was yet alive; and that Herod was privy to the design; the circumstances being contrived merely to blind the populace. However, whether he knew it, or rashly involved himself by his oath, Herod is without excuse. The time chosen for the execution of the design was Herod's birth-day; and the instrument was Salome, the daughter of Herodias. To grace the festival, she condescended to appear before the august assembly, and danced so

exquisitely, that Herod, in a transport of delight, swore to gratify her in whatever request she should make. At her mother's instigation she demands the head of John the Baptist, who thought hereby at once to get rid of his reproofs, and glut her revenge. Struck with this bloody request, at least appearing to be so, Herod expressed great sorrow and reluctance to comply with it. The injustice, cruelty, and infamy of such an action cried aloud. Nevertheless, pretending conscience, as if a rash oath could oblige him to commit so wicked a deed, and out of respect to those around him, who being witnesses to the oath, approved the performance of it, and probably were glad to get rid of so troublesome a reprover, he gives orders for John's execution in the prison, and instantly, without form or process, sends one of his savage instruments to bring the head of the holy Baptist in a charger. The bloody dish is delivered to Salome, and she presents it to her mother, a feast for her cruel revenge, whilst with malicious delight she beholds that tongue for ever silent that had so deeply wounded her repose. *Note,* (1.) Seasons of carnal mirth and jollity are usually attended with much mischief. Feasting and dancing are pleasing to the flesh; but they are pernicious to the spirit, and often productive of fatal consequences. (2.) Rash oaths involve the conscience in dreadful dilemmas, where guilt is sure to fasten on either side; yet, when we have sworn to do evil, that oath is more safely broken than kept. Our obligation to keep God's laws cannot be superseded by any other we choose to lay ourselves under. (3.) The bosom that should be the seat of tenderness, when fired with lust and revenge, becomes the most barbarous and savage. (4.) The bad examples of parents are fatally pernicious. We quickly learn the evil to which the bias of corrupt nature leans so strongly. (5.) Many are made sorry *by* their sins, who never have godly sorrow *for* them. Though scourged by their consciences, their love of evil bears down their convictions. (6.) The triumphing of the wicked is short; God will soon require at their hands the innocent blood they have shed.

5. The disciples of John, hearing the sad catastrophe, came to pay their last kind offices to their master's corpse, and testify their affection and respect by attending it to the grave; and then went and informed Jesus of the event, on whose ministry, probably, they had attended since John's imprisonment; and if they were drawn nearer to him by their former master's removal, they were in the issue gainers by their loss. *Note,* (1.) As the dust of his saints is precious to the Lord, so should their very corpses be to us, for the sake of their spirit which dwelt in them. (2.) We must carry all our griefs to Jesus, and be confident he will alleviate the sorrows we pour into his compassionate bosom. (3.) Whatever human helps, friends, or ministers, we may be deprived of, we may not despond; our Master in heaven ever lives; and if we are driven nearer to him, he can more than compensate our losses.

13. ¶ [m] When Jesus heard *of it,* he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard *thereof,* they followed him on *foot out of the cities. 14. [n] And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. 15. [o] And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. 16. But Jesus said unto them, [p] They need not depart; give ye them to eat. 17. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. 18. He said, Bring them hither to me. 19. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he *blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 20. And they [r] did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. 21. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

m Mark 6. 32, 33. Luke 9. 10, 11. John 6. 2. ch. 12. 15. James 1. 19. ch. 10. 16, 17.

* *On foot.* Rather, "by land." The word in the original means "on foot," when contrasted with "on horseback," and "by land," when opposed to "by sea."—*Dr Campbell.*

n Mark 6. 34. ch. 9. 36. & 15. 32. Heb. 4. 15. & 5. 2. & 2. 17.

o Mark 6. 35—46. John 6. 5—21. Luke 9. 12—16.

p 2 Kin. 4. 42, 43. ch. 6. 33. Luke 9. 13. John 6. 5—10.

* *He blessed,* &c. The form of giving thanks to God, among the Jews, was by using words which began thus, 'blessed be God,' &c. Hence the whole thanksgiving was called '*the blessing,*' from the first word used. — *Boothroyd.* This was to bless the provision; for Christ never wrought his miracles by means of prayer. Ch. 15. 36. & 26. 26. 1 Sam. 9. 15. Deut. 8. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 4. 5. Luke 9. 16, 17. Mark 6. 41—44. John 6. 11—14. ch. 16. 9.

r Prov. 13. 25. & 6. 6. Ps. 145. 18. & 23. 1.

Verses 13—21. To shelter himself from the jealousy of a cruel tyrant, as well as to give some rest to his disciples, returned from their travels, and preaching, our Lord withdrew into a desert place. His hour was not yet come; nor was he called to expose himself to Herod's enmity; and therefore he took this prudential step, teaching us by his example, though always to be prepared for suffering in the way of duty, not rashly or needlessly to court persecution. Hereupon we are told,

1. That the multitude, who had heard of his departure, immediately followed him on foot; so eager were they to attend his ministry. Though there might be danger in cleaving to a Man so obnoxious, and they must go many a weary step to attend him, nothing discouraged them. They who have a relish for the gospel, will follow it in all its removes, and stick at no pains to enjoy the sincere milk of the word: nor will persecution abate their ardour, but increase it.

2. The sight of so many poor souls awakened the compassions of Jesus, and though he came thither for retirement, he gladly chose to forego his own ease to do them good. He would not suffer them to come so far in vain, and therefore *went forth,* pitying their sad case, destitute of food for their bodies, many sick and weak, and, worst of all, their souls perishing for lack of knowledge: and therefore he undertakes the relief of all their necessities; healing their sick; instructing them in the doctrines of his kingdom; and designing, ere they parted, to spread a table for them in the wilderness. With like compassion should we regard the souls and bodies of men, and then shall we readily lay out ourselves, and cheerfully spend and be spent in their service.

3. The disciples, ignorant of the intentions of their Master, and foreseeing the inconveniences which must arise from detaining so vast a multitude there, where no refreshment could be procured, desired their Lord to dismiss the congregation, the day beginning to decline. But he, who knew his own intentions, to try their faith, bids them communicate their little stock of provisions to the people. The disciples reasonably object the insufficiency of their slender store, amounting to no more than five loaves and two fishes, which though they were ready to part with, would not be tasted among such a multitude. Yet Jesus bade them bring them to him, and trust his power. *Note,* (1.) In following Christ, we may be reduced to the greatest straits; but, in the way of duty, we must trust and not be afraid. (2.) They who have Christ, have all, and abound; his presence and love can abundantly compensate every loss, and enable us to be content even to be hungry, and in need of daily food. (3.) Christ and his disciples lived on coarse and scanty fare, to teach us abstinence and the mortification of our sensual appetites. (4.) Though we have but little, we should be ready, when duty calls, to give of that little.

4. Our Lord distributes the provision. Having commanded the multitude to sit down, where the grass was their carpet, he craved a blessing on the meal; and breaking the bread, gave it to his disciples, who waited on the multitude, as they sat in ranks opposite each other, and with astonishment beheld the meat grow under their hands, and increase as it descended. *Note*, (1.) Christ himself is the living bread, which faith daily feeds upon; in him there is enough for all and to spare. (2.) We should never sit down to eat our meals without asking God's blessing. It is among the surest marks of an irreligious family, or an irreligious heart, wherever this is neglected. We, who are fed by his bounty, are surely bound at least to acknowledge the favour. (3.) When we charitably break our bread to the hungry, we shall find no diminution of our store.

5. There was enough and more than enough for all. *They did all eat, and were filled;* five thousand men, besides women and children: and, instead of suffering any loss, the disciples, on collecting the fragments, find that they far exceeded the original food, amounting to *twelve baskets full*. *Note*, (1.) The blessing of God can multiply a little into abundance; and none are paid with so good interest, as those who in charity lend unto the Lord. (2.) Though we have plenty, it must not therefore tempt us to waste. Since we cannot make one bit of bread, and multitudes of God's poor may want it, every crumb should be carefully collected. The truly liberal will be the best economists.

22. ¶ [s] And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up [t] into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary. 25. And in [u] the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, * walking on the sea. 26. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they [x] were troubled, saying, It is a † spirit; and they cried out for fear. 27. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, [y] Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28. And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, [z] bid me come unto thee on the water. 29. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. 30. But [a] when he saw the wind ‡ boisterous, he was afraid; and, beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me! 31. And [b] immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, [c] O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32. And [d] when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. 33. [e] Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

s Mark 6. 45—52. John 6. 15—21.

t John 6. 15. Mark 6. 46. & 3. 7, 13. Luke 6. 12. Acts 1. 24. & 6. 4. & 13. 3.

u Gen. 22. 14. Job 9. 8. Ps. 93. 3, 4. & 29. 10.

* *Walking on the sea.* The Egyptian hieroglyphic, to denote an impossibility, was two feet walking on water. This action was (obviously) miraculous.—*Boothroyd* and *Doddridge*.

x Job 4. 14, 15. Ps. 38. 15.

† That the Jews had then an opinion of hurtful spirits walking in the night, is evident from the LXX. who render *from the pestilence walking in darkness* (Ps. 91. 6.), *from the fear of the devils, that walk in the night.*—*Whitby*.

y Is. 41. 10. & 43. 1, 2. Ps. 46. 1—5. Rom. 8. 31. Gen. 22. 11—14. Mark 5. 36.

z Luke 5. 5. ch. 12. 20. Rom. 12. 3.

a 2 Kin. 6. 15. Rom. 4. 19. Ps. 38. 17.

‡ Or *strong*.

b Gen. 22. 14. Ps. 46. 1—5. Deut. 32. 36.

c Ch. 6. 30. & 8. 26. James 1. 6. Is. 7. 9. with Rom. 4. 19, 20.

d Ps. 107. 29, 30. ch. 8. 26, 27.

e Ch. 8. 27. & 16. 14, 16. & 27. 54. & 26. 63, 65. Ps. 2. 7. John 1. 50.

Verses 22—33. Miracle succeeds to miracle: he had just preserved the multitude from being famished, and now he saves his disciples from foundering in the storm. The Lord is ever a very present help in trouble. We are told,

1. The constraint he put upon his disciples, ordering them to embark whilst he dismissed the multitude. There appeared in the people present a deep conviction of his being the Messiah; and, according to their prejudices, they now thought of proclaiming him king, which opportunity his disciples were ready eagerly to embrace; but they mistook the nature of his kingdom, and for a while entertained the false notions of their countrymen. *Note*, The disciples of Christ are ever too apt to look for a temporal instead of a spiritual kingdom.

2. When he had sent away his disciples, though reluctant, and dismissed the people, he retired for prayer and communion with God and in that pleasing work continued till night drew on. *Note*, They who are much in public ministrations, need also be much in prayer and converse with God. They will be most fervent in their discourses who come from their knees into their pulpits.

3. His disciples, who had embarked at his command, were now in imminent danger. All was smooth when they set sail; but now when they were far from land, the storm arose, and the wind blew directly against them. Thus in the way of duty we may meet with sore temptations, and be sometimes at our wit's end. All things may seem to be against us, and the dispensations of providence and grace dark and gloomy as this tempestuous night; and yet even then are all things working together for our good. If we steadily hold on our course, and walk by faith, not by sight, we shall arrive safe at the shore of eternal rest.

4. In the time of need Jesus approaches them, at the morning watch, walking on the stormy waves: and thereby showing them his power to save them, and his attention to them in the hour of danger. But they, not knowing him, and observing something moving on the waters, concluded it an apparition, or some evil spirit; and, supposing it foreboded some mischief to them, *cried out for fear:* but Jesus immediately undeceived them, and, with his well known voice endeavours to quiet their apprehensions of danger: *Be of good cheer; be undismayed; it is I,* your Master and Lord; *be not afraid,* whilst I am so nigh, and able to save you. *Note*, (1.) Christ is nearer to us when we are in trouble than we are aware of: and when we seem abandoned by him, his right hand is under us to keep us from sinking. (2.) When the soul is in distress, we are ready to interpret even the appearances in our favour as ominous, and to start from our approaching mercies. (3.) If Christ speaks comfort to our hearts, we need not then be afraid of any danger or distress, for he through all can make us more than conquerors.

5. Their fears being somewhat quieted, Peter, impatient to be at his Master's feet, and ever the foremost to express his fidelity and zeal, begs leave, if it was the Lord indeed, his doubts not being entirely removed, that he would command him to come down, and enable him to go to him on the waters. Though eager to go, he dares not without a warrant; but if Jesus bids him, neither winds nor waves dismay him. The Lord grants his request; and, at once to convince him of his weakness, and confirm his faith, permits him to come. *Note*, (1.) They who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, will, at his bidding, go through fire or water. (2.) Though no dangers must deter us in the way of duty, we may not wilfully run into them without a divine call. (3.) Christ knows our hearts; and though he sees much infirmity mingled with our warmest professions, he knows how to pity and pardon the one, whilst he kindly accepts the other.

6. Peter no sooner receives permission, than immediately he boldly casts himself into the deep, and, by faith upheld, walks on the foaming billows. But when he felt the stormy wind, and observed the boisterous waves, his faith staggered, his fears prevailed, and he began to sink. Ready to perish, he instantly and eagerly cries, *Lord, save me;* and, in the last extremity, stretches the arms of faith and prayer towards the Almighty Saviour. *Note,* (1.) Whilst we walk by faith, not by sight, we shall stand firm amidst the storms of this tumultuous world. (2.) The strongest believers are sometimes shaken; and, to humble and beat down all self-confidence, the Saviour is pleased to withhold his grace, and then they instantly feel how weak they are. (3.) We may never expect perfect deliverance from our fears till we are perfected in love, and that is reserved for the happiness of a better world. (4.) We cannot but stagger the moment we take our eye off from Christ and his promises, to look at the difficulties and dangers before us, and our own inability to surmount them. (5.) Though Christ permits true believers sometimes to begin to sink, he will not suffer them to be drowned, but means only to magnify his power and grace towards them, and to excite their gratitude and love in the more abundant experience of his salvation. (6.) Times of danger should be times of prayer; and Jesus never yet failed the poor sinner, who, sensible of his inevitable ruin without him, thus ardently cried, *Lord, save me.*

7. The prayer is scarce sooner uttered than answered; the almighty hand of Jesus stretched out, snatched him from the jaws of death; and raising him up, he rebukes his weak and wavering faith, that, after experiencing so much of his Lord's power, could yet distrust him. *Note,* (1.) Many a time may every faithful soul remember the occasion, when he was ready to give up all for lost, and seemed sinking into eternal death, and then did Jesus snatch us, as brands from the burning. (2.) All our disquieting fears arise from our unbelief, and should drive us more to our knees, that the cause of them may be removed by the increase of our faith. (3.) Little faith, though it may leave us in a fright, will never leave us finally to fall. None can sink who have ever taken hold on Christ. (4.) When we dishonour our Lord by distrusting his power and love, we deserve to be upbraided for it.

8. On the coming of Jesus into the ship with Peter, the storm instantly ceased, the waves subsided, and struck with astonishment, all who were in the ship fell at his feet, acknowledging his divine power and Godhead in the wonders they had seen, and adoring him for the mercies they had received. *Note,* (1.) When Christ comes to visit the troubled soul, then the winds of distress and temptation are hushed, and the tempest of doubts and fears is calmed. (2.) Experience of the Redeemer's grace and power should confirm our faith, and excite our adoration; and this is the blessed end for which he permits his people to be exercised, that he may more abundantly display his own glory in their salvation.

34. ¶ [f] And when they were gone over, they came into the land of * Gennesaret. 35. And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, [g] they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; 36. And besought him that they might [h] only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

f Mark 6. 53—56.

* Viz. that part of Galilee which bordered the lake of Gennesaret on the west. This tract of country is described by Josephus, as exceedingly salubrious and fertile.—*Dr Wells.*

g John 4. 26. ch. 4. 24, 25.

h Ch. 9. 20, 21. Mark 3. 10. Luke 6. 19. Acts 19. 12.

Verses 34—36. The storm being over, and their ship arrived safe in port, they disembarked on the fruitful land of Gennesaret: and thus shall the saints of God at last, when all the tempests of life are blown over, reach that land where there is undisturbed repose and pleasures for evermore.

No sooner is it known that Jesus is there, than we are told the eagerness with which the people of that country crowded around him, spreading the glad tidings through the neighbourhood, and bringing all their diseased to Jesus, the great and general Physician. And such was their faith in his sufficiency to heal all their maladies, that they *besought him,* if but to *touch the hem of his garment,* persuaded such virtue resided in him that nothing more was needful to their cure: nor were they disappointed in their confidence or application. He granted their request, and as many as touched him immediately were made perfectly whole. *Note,* (1.) Christ's visits are precious; we should improve them with diligence. (2.) If we have found him a Saviour unto us, it becomes us to spread the glad tidings, and invite others to come an share our blessings. (3.) There is no disease of our souls but Jesus hath healing for it. If we perish, it is because we will not come to him that we may have life. (4.) They who in faith and humility approach the Saviour, are sure never to go disappointed away.

CHAP. XV.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's discourse with the Scribes and Pharisees about human traditions and injunctions,* ver. 1—9. 2. *His discourse with the multitude, and with his disciples, concerning the things that defile a man,* ver. 10—20. 3. *His casting the devil out of the woman of Canaan's daughter,* ver. 21—28. 4. *His healing of all that were brought to him,* ver. 29—31. 5. *His feeding four thousand men with seven loaves and a few littles fishes,* ver. 32—39.

1. THEN [a] came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, 2. [b] Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash * not their hands when they eat bread. 3. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? 4. For God commanded, saying, [c] Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. 5. But ye say, [d] Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is* a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, 6. And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.* [e] Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. 7. *Ye* [f] hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8. [g] This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. 9. [h] But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

a Mark 7. 1—9.

b Mark 7. 2. Gal. 1. 14. Col. 2. 8, 18—22. ch. 7. 3—5.

* The custom of washing their hands before meals was so strictly commanded among the Jews at this time, that to neglect it, was to be held guilty of a heavy and capital crime, "He that taketh meat with unwashen hands," says one of their Rabbies, "is worthy of death."—*Dr Hammond.*

c Exod. 20. 12. & 21. 17. Lev. 19. 3, 32. & 20. 9. Deut. 5. 16. & 21. 18. & 27. 16. Prov. 20. 20. & 23. 22. & 30. 17. Eph. 6. 2.

d Mark 7. 11, 12. Lev. xxvii. Prov. 11. 25. Hos. 8. 12. It is all dedicated to God. Prov. 20. 25.

e Prov. 1. 25.

f Ch. 23. 13—15, 23, 25, 27, 29. Tit. 1. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5.

g Is. 29. 13. Ez. k. 33. 31. Mark 7. 6.

h Is. 1. 13, 15. Tit. 1. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 6, 7. Col. 2. 18—22.

Verses 1—9. Since the purity of the Redeemer's conduct was such that his most inveterate enemies could not convict him of sin, the Scribes and Pharisees endeavoured, if they could not prove him guilty of a breach of God's law, to accuse him at least as a breaker of the canons of their church.

1. The accusation laid against him is for permitting his disciples "to transgress the tradition of the elders, and eat bread "with unwashen hands:" which to them appeared highly criminal, who, having lost the spirit and power of godliness, were wholly engrossed with the form, and spent their zeal in practising and enforcing the vain superstitions of their own invention as the most essential parts of religion. And similar hereunto, we still too frequently see the most rigid and superstitious observers of the forms of godliness the greatest enemies to the power of it, and the most inveterate persecutors of the spiritually minded.

2. Christ answers their accusation, vindicates his disciples, and rebukes their hypocrisy.

[1.] He vindicates his disciples, by showing the folly and wickedness of the traditions on which they grounded their charge, and recriminates by a juster accusation of their conduct, who made void the commandments of God by their traditions. In proof of which he produces the fifth commandment, where the duty of children towards their parents is enjoined; and in the honour we must pay to them, there is included the relief of their wants, in case of need: and to this law God hath annexed the most awful sanction: the transgressor who curses, or but *speaks contemptibly* of his father or mother, is doomed to death, Exod. xxi. 17. But their false casuistry had provided an evasion, to avoid ministering to the necessities of their parents; and their tradition asserted, that however urgent these might be, if they vowed to employ in sacred uses what should have been given to relieve their parent's wants: or rather, as Dr Gill interprets the passage, vowed that what they had, should be *as Corban*, as if dedicated to the sanctuary, and should not be given to their parents' use; they were then supposed to be bound by their vow, and though the things were not employed in sacred uses, they thought themselves authorized under this pretence, to withhold from their father or mother the relief they ought to have afforded them: a tradition as absurd as impious, and utterly overturning the law of God. *Note*, (1.) Many who are flaming in zeal for trifling human ceremonies, disregard and violate the most essential precepts of charity, and the most evident commands of God's law. (2.) Tradition has been ever a treacherous guide; therefore neither antiquity nor authority must weigh a rush with us against the revealed truths of God's word.

[2.] He rebukes their hypocrisy. He knew their hearts, and therefore there was no rashness nor uncharitableness in the charge laid against them: and he brings his reproof from Isaiah; for what the prophet spoke as the character of the men of his day, had also a further view to the generation then present, who exactly answered the description; and they are indeed equally applicable to the state of all hypocrites and formal professors to the end of time. They made an outward show of religion, and, so far as lip-service and external worship went, pretended to honour God; but their hearts, without which he is pleased with no services, were far estranged from him: and whilst they appeared to pay the highest respect to God, they set up their traditions and human inventions, many of them in direct opposition to God's law; and this rendered all their worship and apparent devotion vain, useless, and rejected. *Note*, (1.) Hypocrisy is among the most common and fatal sins: and though men may not discover it in us, from God it cannot be hid. (2.) God's first requirement of us is our heart; if this be alienated from him, nothing we can offer him beside will meet with any acceptance.

10. ¶ [i] And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: 11. [k] Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. 12. Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees [l] were offended, after they heard this saying? 13. But he answered and said, [m] Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. 14. [n] Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. 15. [o] Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. 16. And Jesus said, [p] Are ye also yet without understanding? 17. Do not ye yet understand, [q] that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? 18. [r] But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. 19. [s] For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: 20. These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

i Mark 7. 14 Prov. 2. 1—6. & 4. 1—7. Is. 55. 3.

k Acts 10. 14, 15. Rom. 14. 14, 17. 1 Cor. 8. 1, 4. & 10. 25. 1 Tim. 4. 4. Tit. 1. 15.

l Ch. 9. 34. & 12. 24. & 11. 6. Gal. 2. 5. James 3. 17.

m Ps. 92. 13. Isa. 60. 21. John 15. 2. 1 Cor. 3. 9. 12—15. ch. 3. 12. & 8. 12. & 13. 40, 41.

n Hos. 4. 14, 17. Luke 6. 39. ch. 23. 16. Is. 9. 16. & 42. 19. Jer. 6. 15. Hos. 4. 9. Jer. 5. 31. & 20. 6. Rev. 22. 15

o Mark 7. 17. ch. 13. 36. Acts 8. 30, 31. Prov. 2. 1—6. & 4. 1—7.

p Mark 7. 18. ch. 16. 9. Heb. 5. 12. Deut. 29. 29. Is. 28. 9, 10.

q Luke 6. 45. 1 Cor. 6. 13. Col. 2. 21, 22. James 3. 6.

r Jam. 3. 6. ch. 12. 34. 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16. Ps. 56. [illegible] Prov. 6. 12—19, 22. & 15. 2, 28. Luke 19. 22.

s Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Prov. [illegible] 11. Jer. 1. 9. & 6. 7. Mark 7. 21—23. Gal. 5. 19—21. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Tit. 3. 2, 3. Rom. 13. 13. & 3. 10—18.

Verses 10—20. Having vindicated his disciples, and rebuked the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, he endeavours to set the multitude in general right in a matter of such importance, which had been so grievously mistaken. And for this purpose he calls them unto him, as they probably had withdrawn whilst the Pharisees had talked with him, and bids them hear and understand; for it requires much attention and careful examination before we can emancipate ourselves from the fetters of long rooted error, and the prejudices of education.

1. He lays down this grand axiom, that all defilement comes from within. It was a superstitious tradition which the Pharisees inculcated, that the meat eaten with unwashen hands communicated pollution to the soul; whereas nothing can defile the soul but sin, which, taking its rise in the heart, issues forth at the mouth. And herein he levelled a tacit rebuke against these cavillers, who, whilst they contended for cleanness and purity, betrayed the venom and malignity of their own hearts. The severest censurers of others are usually thus found most culpable themselves. Whilst they pretend to pluck the mote from their brother's eye, they discover not the beam which is in their own.

2. When they were retired into a house, the disciples, aware of the great offence this declaration gave to the Pharisees, expressed their concern about it, as if the observation had been better suppressed, and might prejudice and exasperate them against him. *Note*, (1.) Truth, however offensive, must be spoken, and the wo lies not against those who give the offence, but against those who take it. (2.) We are too apt to fear for others, and to fear, lest some of the audience should be disgusted with plain dealing. But they who would convert men's souls, must often be content to offend nice ears.

3. In answer to their suggestion, Jesus vindicates what he had spoken, as proper and necessary. As these men and their traditions were not those heavenly plants which God the Father had planted, they are thus by the piercing word of truth, discovered, detected, and rooted up. If they are offended, the

disciples need not regard it; for high as their character was among the people, they were in fact no better than *blind leaders of the blind*, ignorant themselves of saving truth, and misleading those who blindly and implicitly obeyed their dictates. And the necessary consequence of this was, that they must perish together, and fall into the pit of eternal misery. *Note*, (1.) However plausible men's professions may be, and however admired their characters, if they are not the planting of God, and experimentally partakers of the quickening influences of his Spirit, their ruin is as sure as that of impenitent publicans and harlots. (2.) Pride and blindness of heart are inseparable companions; and none are so far from the light of truth as those who, filled with the conceit of their own wisdom and abilities, vainly boast how clear they see. (3.) The deceived and the deceiver will perish together; and they who choose their own delusions, have themselves only to blame for the ruin which ensues.

4. Peter, in the name of the disciples, not understanding the meaning of the parable, or still biassed by the prejudices of education, desires his Master to explain himself more distinctly on this point; and, though their backwardness to understand was culpable, their desire to be informed was commendable. It is always good to be inquisitive about the great concerns of our souls; and Christ is willing to teach those who desire to learn, whilst the wilfully ignorant, the self-sufficient, and the proud, are justly left to their darkness and ruin.

5. Christ rebukes the dulness of their capacity, yet graciously condescends to give a farther explication of what he had advanced. *Are ye also yet without understanding?* They had enjoyed many and long opportunities for profiting under him, and it was a shame, in a matter so plain, they should be yet so ignorant. Christ justly expects our means and mercies should produce a proportionate advancement in grace and knowledge. Nothing could be more evident, than that the meat, of whatever sort it was, which entered at the mouth and passed merely through the body, could communicate no moral defilement to the soul. But the heart being the source and fountain of all spiritual impurity, what flowed from thence, alone communicated in God's sight defilement to the man: and the corrupt and impure streams which flow from thence he enumerates; a dreadful catalogue, but the natural produce of every fallen spirit. (1.) *Evil thoughts;* such as lewd desires, infidel reasonings, covetous wishes, malicious purposes, fraudulent designs, which never appeared in words or actions, but were naked and open before God, and brought guilt upon the soul. (2.) *Murders;* not only the effusion of human blood, but every word of anger, every act of violence, every expression of malice, hatred, or revenge. (3.) *Adulteries, fornications*, with all the various steps and contrivances which have a tendency to lead men to these horrid deeds. (4.) *Thefts*, whether committed by force or fraud. (5.) *False witness* in perjuries, lies, deceit, and misrepresentation. (6.) *Blasphemies*, against God or man. These are the great violations of God's law, the things which involve the conscience in guilt, and make us loathsome in the eyes of divine purity; whilst to eat with unwashen hands communicates no defilement to the soul, nor in the least renders any man a sinner before God.

21. ¶ [t] Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. 22. [u] And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, [x] Have mercy on me, O LORD, [y] *thou* son of David; my daughter is [z] grievously vexed with a devil. 23. But [a] he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24. But he answered and said, [b] I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25. [c] Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26. But he answered and said, [d] It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs. 27. And she said, [e] Truth, Lord: [f] yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. 28. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, [g] great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. [h] And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

t Mark 7. 24—30. The confines of the Jews' territory. Ver. 24. ch. 10. 5, 6. Rom. 15. 8.
u Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10.
x Luke 18. 13. Tit. 3. 5.
y Is. 11. 1. ch. 1. 1. & 9. 27. & 20. 30, 31. & 22. 42—45 John 6. 14. *t. e.* O Messiah.
z Ch. 4. 24. Mark 9. 18, 20, 22, 26. ch. 17. 15.
a Ps. 22. 1, 2. Lam. 3. 8. Jer. 14. 9.
b Ch. 10. 5 6. & 9. 36. Acts 13. 46. Rom. 9. 4, 5. & 15. 8. Is. 53. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 25. Jer. 50. 6, 17. Ezek. 34. 5, 6, 14, 16, 23. Zech. 11. 7, 11. Luke 1. 54, 55. John 1. 11.
c Luke 11. 8. & 18. 1. Eph. 6. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Gen. 32. 26.
d Ch. 7. 6. & 10. 5, 6. Rom. 9. 4. with Eph. 2. 12.
e Ps. 73. 22. Prov. 30. 2. Gen. 32. 10
f Ch. 5. 45. Is. 49. 6. & 42. 6, 7. & 45. 22. & 11. 10.
g Ch. 8. 10, 13. Mark 9. 23. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Eph. 3. 20. Is. 57. 16.
h Ch. 8. 13. John 5. 50—53. Acts 19. 12.

Verses 21—28. Departing from the country of Gennesaret, our Lord visited the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. He had a peculiar object in his view, and by one act of favour to the poor Gentiles, would intimate the mercy he had in store for them. We have,

1. The application made to him by a poor woman of that country, a Canaanite; perhaps a descendant of that accursed race, but selected as a monument of mercy. Having heard the fame of Jesus, she seized the present moment to prefer her request. Her case was very afflictive, her daughter was *grievously vexed with a devil*, possessed and tormented by him, and therefore she earnestly cries, *Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David.* She professes her faith in him as the true Messiah, expresses her confidence of his power to help her, and conscious of her own unworthiness to receive any favour from him, casts herself entirely on his mercy. *Note*, (1.) To see a child under the power of disease, is deeply felt by every tender parent: but to behold them under the power of sin and Satan, is far more grievous. (2.) When we can do no more for our unhappy offspring, we must continue in prayer to present their miserable state to Jesus, if so be he may interpose to heal them. (3.) The mercies shown to our children are favours done to ourselves, and should be so acknowledged. (4.) All that a sinner hath to ask of the Saviour is mere mercy; we have no claim upon him, and can only cast ourselves at his feet, to do with us and by us according to the riches of his grace.

2. Her application appears at first to be utterly disregarded, and Jesus condescended to make no reply; not that he meant to deny her request, but to exercise her faith, and quicken her importunity. His disciples, who had never before seen their Master deaf to the entreaties of the miserable, interested themselves in her behalf: and not merely to be rid of her cries, but probably afflicted with her deep distress, wished her request granted, and that she were dismissed in peace; but his answer, ver. 24. seemed to carry a still more unfavourable aspect, as it his ministry and miracles were to be confined to Israel alone. Nay, when the poor petitioner, notwithstanding all discouragement, approaching nearer, fell down at his feet, importunately reiterating her request, she apparently meets with a still rougher reception; seems to be spurned away as a dog, and excluded from the participation of mercies which were confined to God's covenant people, as if all out of the pale of peculiarity deserved to be treated as impure animals, and rejected by the faithful. *Note*, (1.) We must not conclude our requests are refused, because they are not immediately granted: nor, that though the Saviour seems to frown, he forbids further entreaty; it is to exercise our faith, and quicken our prayers. (2.) Gracious souls are ever ready advocates and intercessors for the miserable. (3.) If the Lord write bitter things against us, it is to

humble our souls before him, and make us see how vile and unworthy we are of any favour at his hands.

3. Not dismayed by this repulse, nor driven to quit her hold, her faith cleaves to him, and her soul bows down before him. Far from being offended at being treated as a dog, or sinking into despair at Christ's reply, her answer expressed the deep humility and unshaken dependence of her heart upon him: "*Truth Lord*," she replied; "I own the charge; more vile "and worthless than I am, no dog can be: a sinner, a Gentile, "undeserving of any favour: yet, as a dog regard me," (so gracefully and powerfully doth she improve that for her plea, which seemed to convey the greatest discouragement,) "they are "permitted, under their master's table, to pick up the crumbs "that fall; I ask no more. Whilst happier Israelites enjoy the "abundance of thy miracles, let one crumb fall on me, a poor "Canaanite; no less to them than to me a mercy so unspeakable." *Note*, (1.) Nothing must ever drive us from Christ; the more we are distressed, the more should we cleave to him. If we perish, we perish; let it be at least at the feet of Jesus, and there none ever yet were finally cast away. (2.) We can never have too lowly thoughts of ourselves; the worst we can say of ourselves, or others can say of us, is nothing so bad as God sees in us. (3.) Active faith lays hold even on the hand that seems stretched out to destroy: "though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee." And this is indeed the triumph of faith.

4. As if amazed and overcome by faith so distinguished, Jesus grants her request, and dismisses her with the highest marks of his approbation. To her utmost wishes he extends the favour, and instantly her daughter was made whole. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is so pleasing and honourable to Jesus, as great faith in his power and love. (2.) There is no mercy that we can ask, believing, which Jesus will ever refuse us; whether it be pardon, grace, or glory, it shall assuredly be given us.

29. ¶ [i] And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea [k] of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. 30. [l] And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, * maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and he healed them: 31. Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and [m] they glorified the God of Israel. 32. ¶ [n] Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. 33. And his disciples say unto him, [o] Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? 34. And Jesus saith unto them, [p] How many loaves have ye? and they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. 35. And he commanded the multitude [q] to sit down on the ground. 36. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and [r] gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 37. [s] And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full. 38. And they that did eat were four thousand men, besides women and children. 39. And he sent away the [t] multitude, and took ship, * and came into the coasts of [t] Magdala.

i Mark 7. 31. ch. 5. 1.

k Or of Tiberias. John 6. 1, 23. & 21. 1.

l Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15—18. Ps. 22. 27—31. Is. 2. 2—5. & 45. 23. & 35. 5, 6. & 40. 29. & 42. 18. ch. 4. 23, 24. & 8. 16. & 9. 35. & 11. 5. & 14. 36. & 21. 14. Luke 7. 22.

* It is reasonable to suppose, that among the many 'maimed,' who were brought on these occasions, there were some whose limbs had been cut off; and I think hardly any of the miracles of our Lord were more illustrious and amazing than the recovery of such.—*Doddridge.*

m Ch. 9. 33. Mark 7. 37. Luke 17. 18. Ps. 115. 1. & xcvi—c. & cxiv—cl. Is. 24. 14—16.

n Mark 8. 1—10. ch. 9. 36. & 14. 14. Ps. 103. 13. & 145. 8, 9, 16. Heb. 2. 17. & 4. 15. John 4. 34.

o Mark 8. 4. 2 Kin. 4. 42, 43. Num. 11. 21, 22. Mark 6. 52. John 6. 7—9.

p Num. 11. 22. ch. 14. 15.

q Luke 9. 14, 15. ch. 14. 19.

r Ch. 14. 19. & 26. 26. Deut. 8. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. Rom 14. 6.

s Mark 8. 8, 9. ch. 16. 10. Prov. 13. 25.

* Some small vessel which was coasting, and in which probably he and his disciples had come thither.—*Scott.*

t A city or territory on the east of the sea of Tiberias, and near Dalmanutha. Mark 8. 10.

Verses 29—39. Having finished the work he went thither to do, Jesus returned again to the coasts of Galilee; and, seating himself on a rising ground, as the great and universal physician, appeared ready to receive and relieve every miserable patient, whatever his disease might be, without money and without price. We have an account,

1. Of the multitudes who came to him, bringing the afflicted with various maladies, and casting them down at his feet. And his compassions were so great, his power so effectual, that he healed them all. *Note*, (1.) The diseases of our bodies drive us instantly to the physician, though his art is uncertain: shall not the more dangerous diseases of our souls drive us to Jesus, whose medicines of grace are infallible? (2.) The world is full of sickness and pain, because full of sin; if the cause be once removed through the blood, the righteousness, the Spirit of Jesus, the effects will quickly for ever cease, and the inhabitant above shall never more say, *I am sick*.

2. These wonders of power and grace deeply affected the beholders. Amazed to hear the dumb speak, to see the lame walk, the blind restored to sight, and every malady removed with a word, *they glorified the God of Israel* for sending the promised Messiah, for such these words bespoke him whom they now beheld. *Note*, Every mercy demands a tribute of praise; and if the removal of bodily complaints excited such wonder and thankfulness, how much more should we admire the riches of the gift, and adore the God of our salvation, if our souls have experienced the power of his healing grace; if our once blind eyes see the light of truth; if our ears, once deaf, are open to the gospel's joyful sound: if our once lame feet are strengthened to run in the way of his commandments! For these unutterable blessings, praise the Lord, O my soul!

3. A singular miracle is wrought, wherein all partook, similar to what he had done before, chap. xiv. with this little variation, that here *four thousand, besides women and children*, were fed with *seven loaves and a few little fishes*: there, *five thousand men, besides women and children*, were fed with *five loaves*.

[1.] The circumstances of the people here assembled moved the compassion of Jesus. So eager were they to attend on his ministry, and to behold his miracles, that for three days successively they continued with him; and if they brought any little provision with them, it was ere this consumed, so that they had now nothing to eat; and as many of them came from afar, and could not soon get a supply of food, to send them away thus fasting might expose them to faint by the way through weakness, and to perish with hunger. Calling his disciples, therefore, he acquainted them with his gracious design of feeding them there; but they, forgetting what they had so lately seen, chap. xiv. 21. objected to the possibility of providing meat for such a multitude in that wilderness; and especially when by his question he seemed to intend supplying the table out of their scanty store, which appeared so insufficient, being no more than seven loaves and a few small fishes. *Note*, (1.) They who know the sweetness of the gospel word, will undergo weariness and hunger rather than be deprived of it. (2.) It is through our forgetfulness of the past interpositions we have experienced, that under new difficulties we fall into fresh perplexity.

[2.] Having commanded them to sit down, he took the loaves and fishes as before; and thanking God for the provision, he divided the bread and fishes among the disciples, that they should distribute them to the multitude; and, far from any lack, when all had eaten and were filled, seven baskets full of fragments still remained. The provision indeed was somewhat more, the company fewer, and the fragments less than in the former instance; but the miracle was the same in one case as the other; and the wondrous enlargement of the food, evidenced the same divine creative power. *Note*, We stand astonished at this relation; but is not every corn that is cast into the earth as marvellously increased at the harvest? yet who thinks of the wonder-working hand of him, by whose daily bread we are constantly fed!

[3.] Having liberally satisfied his guests, he dismisses them to their own homes. Thither duty called them; we cannot always be in attendance on the sanctuary; it is not proper we should be. As for himself and his disciples, they took ship and came into the coasts of Magdala. His work was to be going about doing good, and in every place he left behind him abundant marks of his transcendent power, grace, and love.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

None of Christ's miracles are recorded in this chapter; but four of his discourses. Here is, 1. *A conference with the Pharisees, who challenged him to show them a sign from heaven,* ver. 1—4. 2. *Another with his disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees,* ver. 5—12. 3. *Another with them concerning himself, as the Christ, and concerning his church, built upon him,* ver. 13—20. 4. *Another concerning his sufferings for them, and theirs for him,* ver. 21—28. *And all these are written for our learning.*

1. THE [a] Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and [b] tempting, desired him that he would shew them a * sign from heaven. 2. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather; for the sky is red. 3. And in the morning, *it will be* foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowring. O *ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the [c] signs of the times? 4. [d] A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. [e] And he left them, and departed.

a Ch. 22. 23, 34. Acts 5. 17, 34. & 23. 6—8. John 7. 48.

b Mark 8. 11—21. Luke 12. 54—57. & 11. 16, 53, 54. ch. 12. 38. & 19. 3. & 22. 18. John 4. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 22. Exod. xix, xx. Deut. 4. 5.

* As at the giving of the law.

c The evidences that the Messiah is come. Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15. Is. 7. 14. & xi, xxxv, liii. Mic. v. Dan. 9. 24, 25. Hag 2. 7. Mal. iii, iv. with ch. 11. 5. & 4. 23.

d Ch. 12. 39, 40. Jon. 1. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 4.

e Ps. 81. 12. Hos. 4. 17. Gen. 6. 7. & 15. 16.

Verses 1—4. However opposite in their tenets the Pharisees and Sadducees were, in their enmity against Christ and his gospel they perfectly agreed.

1. They came in concert, with a view to tempt and entangle him, and pretending dissatisfaction with the miracles he wrought, desired a proof of the divine mission he assumed, by some sign from heaven, such as appeared when the law was given on Sinai. Not indeed that they wished to be convinced; but merely sought some refuge for their infidelity. *Note*, They who, after all the miracles Jesus hath wrought, desire further evidence of his character, evidently show they determine not to receive him; and if never so many signs or wonders were granted them, yet would they not believe in him.

2. Christ justly refuses to gratify their vain curiosity, and unreasonable request. There was evidence sufficient before them if they chose to see; and they did not want natural sagacity to judge of it. From observing the appearances of the sky, they determined what weather would follow. If the sky was red at evening, they presumed, by observation and experience, the following day would be fair; but if in the morning the sky appeared red and lowering, then it would be wet or windy: and from great probability drew these conclusions. But how glaringly did they play the hypocrite when, pretending the highest veneration for Moses and the prophets, though they could judge of the weather by the appearances of the sky, they could not discern *the signs of the times*, so clearly and distinctly revealed in the sacred writings: could neither see the present exact fulfilment of all the prophecies concerning the Messiah, nor the ruin coming upon themselves for rejecting him: and therefore, since they were a wicked and adulterous generation, wilfully blind to the evidence of truth, no other sign shall be given them than the miracles they had already rejected, except his resurrection from the dead after three days, prefigured by the abode of the prophet Jonas in the whale's belly. And with this he left them, as incorrigible sinners, with whom it was in vain to remonstrate, and crossed the lake to another part of the country. *Note*, (1.) Many are wise enough in human concerns, yea deeply skilled in the mysteries of science, who yet are stark blind with regard to their souls. (2.) They who by their obstinacy and infidelity provoke Christ to depart from them, are justly given up to perdition.

5. ¶ And [f] when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. 6. Then Jesus said unto them, [g] Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. 7. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, [h] *It is* because we have taken no bread. 8. *Which* when Jesus [i] perceived, he said unto them, [k] O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? 9. [l] Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? 10. [m] Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? 11. [n] How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? 12. Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the [o] doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

f Ch. 15. 39. Mark 8. 14.

g Mark 8. 15—21. Luke 12. 1. 1 Cor. 5. 7. Gal. 5. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17.

h Ps. 94. 8, 11. Luke 24. 25. ch. 15. 16—18. Acts 10. 14.

i Ch. 9. 4. & 12. 15, 25. Mark 8. 16, 17. Jer. 17. 10. John 2. 24, 25. Heb. 4. 12, 13. Rev. 2. 23.

k Ch. 6. 30. & 8. 26. & 17. 17. & 14. 31. Jam. 1. 6. Am not I as able and ready to supply you as ever?

l Ch. 14. 17—21. Mark 6. 34—44. Luke 9. 12—17. John 6. 2—13.

m Ch. 15. 34—38. Mark 6. 1—9, 17—21.

n Heb. 5. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 2. Ps. 94. 8. Luke 24. 25. Mark 4. 40. & 8. 21. John 8. 43.

o 1 Cor. 5. 6, 7. Gal. 5. 9. with ch. 15. 6, 9. & xxiii. & 22. 23. Acts 23. 8.

Verses 5—12. Departing in haste, the disciples had forgotten to take with them provisions as usual: and thereupon, from temporal things, he takes occasion to introduce spiritual instructions.

1. He cautions them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees; of their principles and doctrines, which would spread their pernicious influences through the whole man.

2. They mistook his meaning, and, taking his words literally, they concluded privately among themselves, that it was intended as a rebuke for their carelessness, or a caution not to make use of the bread of the Pharisees and Sadducees, nor so much as to eat with them.

3. He reproves them for the sinful distrust of their hearts, and the dulness of their apprehensions. It was a proof of the weakness of their faith, after the miracles they had so lately seen, to harbour a moment's distrust about a provision which their Master could so easily supply: and it showed their stupidity, not to understand, after what had passed, that it could not be of bread literally that he spoke, but of something spiritual and figurative, of much greater moment than bread merely. *Note*, (1.) Christ is displeased with his people when they harbour worldly fears, and are disturbed about the meat that perisheth. It is a proof of little faith indeed, to suppose that those who have a promise of heaven for their home, should want bread by the way. (2.) If we remembered better the past experience of God's care, it would administer an argument to silence our present distrusts and perplexities.

4. At last they comprehend his meaning, that he spoke not of the bread, but of the doctrines of these sects, cautioning them against the false traditions, pride, and self-righteousness of the Pharisees, and against the infidelity and licentious principles of the Sadducees; both fatally dangerous: against which we have alike need to be on our guard. *Take heed and beware* of them.

† A city in the north-east of Canaan.

p Mark 8. 27. Luke 9. 18—22. Ps. 8. 4, 5. Dan. 7. 13, 14. Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 33. 15, 16. Mic. 5. 2. John 1. 14. Rom. 1. 3, 4. & 9. 5. & 8. 3. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 2. 14, 16—18.

q Luke 9 7—9. ch. 14. 2. Mark 6. 14. Mal. 4. 5.

r Ch. 13. 11. Luke 12. 48.

s John 6. 69. & 11. 27. Acts 8. 37. & 9. 20. 1 John 4. 15. & 5. 5. ch. 26. 63. John 1. 41, 49. Ps. 2. 7. Heb. 1. 5.

t Ch. 13. 16, 17. & 5. 3—11. Eph. 1. 3.

u Matt. Ps. 56. 4. Is. 10. 5, 6. ch. 21. 22. Rom. 3. 20.

x Ch. 11. 25, 27. John 1. 18. 1 Cor. 2. 10—16. Gal. 1. 15, 16. Eph. 1. 17, 18. & 3. 18, 19.

y John 1. 42.

z 1 Cor. 3. 11. & 10. 4. Is. 28. 16. Eph. 2. 19—22. Luke 22. 31, 32. Rev. 21. 14, 19. Heb. 12. 28. Ps. 125. 1, 2 Is. 2. 2, 3. & 54. 17.

a John 20. 23. ch. 18. 18. Is. 22. 22. 1 Cor. 4. 12. Mark 16. 15, 16. Rom. 1. 16. Luke 11. 22. Lev. 13. 13, 15.

b Ch. 17. 9. Luke 9. 21, 22. Mark 8. 30. 1 Cor. 2. 8. see ch. 8. 4.

13. ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of † Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, [p] Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14. And they said, [q] Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist; some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15. He saith unto them, [r] But whom say ye that I am? 16. And Simon Peter answered and said, [s] Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17. And Jesus answered and said unto him, [t] Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for [u] flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, [x] but my Father which is in heaven. 18. And I say also unto thee, That [y] thou art Peter, and [z] upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19. [a] And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 20. [b] Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

Verses 13—20. Being now in the remotest part of the country, our Lord took occasion, in private conference, to inquire into the opinions entertained concerning himself by the people in general, and by his disciples in particular. Not that he was ignorant of either; but he meant to lead them to an open confession of their faith in him.

1. He asks concerning the general opinion which the people formed of him, who appeared under the name of *the Son of man;* the humble title he assumed when he emptied himself, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. Or it may be read, *Whom do men say that I am? the son of man?* Do they acknowledge my character and mission as the Messiah? or what do they think of me?

2. The disciples, who had heard the different sentiments of the multitude, informed him that there was a variety of conjectures formed concerning him: some supposing him John the Baptist risen from the dead: others, Elias, prophesied of by Malachi: others Jeremias, or one of the ancient prophets, sent to reform the guilty age: opinions which showed the honourable sentiments the common people entertained of him, yet far short of the truth. The meanness of his birth, relations, dress, and followers, seems to have quite excluded the notion of his true character, as the Messiah, whom their prejudices had always represented as to come with all the pomp of majesty, and the glory of a conquering hero.

3. He questions them concerning their own sentiments of him. They had been better taught, and therefore should have higher notions of his true character; and, being shortly to become teachers of others, they were peculiarly called upon to entertain right apprehensions of this important truth themselves. *Note*, We must know Jesus ourselves, his Person and offices, or it is impossible we should truly be his ministers to others.

4. Peter, according to his usual zeal and forwardness, in the name of the rest, and as their spokesman, nobly replies, *Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.* They understood his real character; they truly believed in him as the divine Messiah; the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King of his people: and were ready to confess him not merely as Son of man, but as the coequal Son of God.

5. Christ expresses his high commendation of this truly apostolic confession. It was a distinguished blessing which Peter possessed, thus to know the Lord Christ, and what neither sprung from his birth, education, or his own reasoning, but from divine revelation. So noble and open a profession of his faith showed him to be what his name imported, a rock; and hereupon Christ adds, *Upon this rock will I build my church:* which some apply personally to Peter, and may in a sound sense be admitted, as one of those apostles on whom as the foundation, the church is said to be built, being raised chiefly by their ministry, Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14. Nor can this at all countenance the absurd pretensions of the bishops of Rome, who are neither his successors in office nor doctrine. Indeed nothing can more evidence the weakness of their claims than such perverted Scriptures, wrested and pressed into the service. But by the rock more probably is meant Christ himself, who in speaking pointed to his own Person, and being evidently the Rock on which Peter himself built, the true Foundation, other than which can no man lay, 1 Cor. iii. 11. Hereon he is pleased to raise the glorious superstructure of his church: the work and the glory of it are all his own; and on his power, love, and faithfulness its stability rests: nor shall the gates of hell ever prevail against it; neither the power nor policy of Satan or his instruments shall be able to destroy the church, nor shall death or the grave finally detain one member of it: but they shall be triumphant at last, and see every foe made their footstool. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is so acceptable to Jesus as a bold profession of our confidence in him. (2.) They are truly blest who savingly know the Son of God. (3.) All we know of God and his Christ is from his own revelation: and unless he himself is pleased to teach us, we know nothing as we ought to know. (4.) The church of Christ is his own planting and building, and every member of it is fixed on that Rock of ages against which ne foe can prevail; the crafts and assaults of Satan, the malice of men, the open attacks of persecutors, and the secret machinations of heretics and hypocrites, are alike impotent against those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

6. Having engaged to erect his church, Christ provides for the government of it, and commits to Peter and the other apostles the keys, the ensigns of authority, empowering him and

them, in his name, see John xx. 23. to declare what was lawful and unlawful; to charge sin upon men's consciences, and absolve them on their humiliation: to pronounce spiritual censures, or loose men from them; and what they did upon earth in his name, and according to his will and word, he engages to ratify in heaven. And this is particularly addressed to Peter here, as being ordained to be the first preacher of the gospel both to the Jews and Gentiles, and as the honour conferred upon him for the glorious confession he had made.

7. He strictly charges his disciples at present to conceal what they knew of his divine person and character: and this for many reasons; because his hour was not yet come, and such declarations would exasperate the Pharisees to destroy him, alarm the government, and occasion an insurrection among the people, big with the hopes of a temporal Messiah; besides that they were to be better furnished, after his resurrection, with greater abilities for their work, and fuller evidence of the truth in their own souls, and for the conviction of others.

21. ¶ From that time forth began Jesus [c] to shew unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and [d] chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. 22. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, [e] Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23. But he turned, and said unto Peter, [f] Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

c Ch. 17. 22, 23. & 20. 17, 18. & 26. 2. Mark 9. 30. Luke 9. 22, 44. & 18. 31. & 24. 7, 26. John 16. 16. 1 Cor. 15. 4.

d Ch. 26. 47. & 27. 12. 1 Chr. 24. 1—19 Neh. 12. 7.

e Gr. *Pity thyself.* 2 Sam. 23. 17. 1 Chr. 11. 19.

f John 6. 70. & 8. 44. Acts 15. 10. Rev. 2. 10. Jam. 3. 15. Rom. 8. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 2 Cor. 2. 16.

Verses 21—23. To check the aspiring hopes which his own disciples foolishly entertained concerning the nature of his kingdom, he begins to inform them of the sufferings he must undergo; and *from that time*, when their faith appeared established in him, inculcated this mortifying lesson, as they were able to bear it. Christ's method is to let us into the knowledge of his truth by degrees: it would utterly have staggered us, if we had known at first all the discouragement we should afterwards meet with.

1. He foretells his sufferings and death, (strange tidings to their ears!) the scene of which would be in Jerusalem, the holy city, and the instruments the most admired characters, the elders, chief priests, and scribes, who, by their office and profession, should have been the first to receive and honour him as the Messiah: but withal he informs them to support their hopes, that the third day he should rise again. And all this *must* be. So God had decreed in his eternal counsels: and no other way could the salvation of his people be secured.

2. Peter still the foremost to speak, though now as faulty as he had been before commendable, could not bear to hear of his death and sufferings, and therefore had the boldness to take him aside and expostulate with him, expressing his displeasure at what he had heard, his abhorrence of the thought of it, and his presumption that it was impossible the Messiah should thus suffer, and the Son of the living God be put to death. *Note*, (1.) Our hearts ill bear commendation: like Peter, we are too apt to presume upon it. (2.) How intricate soever God's ways may appear, and his dispensations however painful to us, it is not for us to question the rectitude of his procedure, or pretend to be wiser than he: submission and silence are our bounden duty. (3.) Our corrupt nature ever shrinks from the cross with abhorrence. Had Christ thus started back from it, what had become of us?

3. With a sharp rebuke the Lord testifies his displeasure against Peter. *He turned*, with sternness in his look, *and said unto Peter*, in the hearing of the twelve, *Get thee behind me Satan;* begone; thou speakest under his influence: and this pretended kindness implies real enmity. *Thou art an offence* or *hinderance to me*, opposing the great end for which I came into the world: *for thou savourest not the things that be of God*, dost not relish the contrivance of infinite Wisdom, for the manifestation of his own glory, and the redemption of sinners, by my sufferings, *but those that be of men*, expecting in the Messiah a temporal monarch, and influenced by the hopes of worldly wealth, power, and honour. *Note*, (1.) Left but for a moment to ourselves, however high our attainments have been, we must instantly sink under the power of Satan. (2.) We may find often as dangerous snares in the false kindness of our friends, as in the avowed enmity of our foes. (3.) Whoever, on any pretence, would dissuade us from the path of duty, we must reject the advice with abhorrence, and rebuke them with severity. (4.) Maxims of carnal policy, and desire of earthly ease and honour, are strangely apt to insinuate themselves even into good men, and disincline them from taking up that cross which God hath appointed them. We have need of constant jealousy over our hearts, lest, imitating Peter's conduct, we should meet with his rebuke.

24. ¶ [g] Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25. [h] For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26. [i] For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 27. [k] For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; [l] and then he shall reward every man according to his works. 28. Verily I say unto you, [m] There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

g Luke 14. 27. & 9. 23—27. & 17. 33. ch. 10. 38. Mark 8. 31—38. Gal. 4. 24. & 6. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Acts 14. 22. Col. 1. 24. Esth. 4. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 18. Phil. 3. 7, 8. Heb. 11. 24.

h Ch. 10. 39. Luke 17. 33. John 12. 25. Gal. 6. 12. Rev. 12. 11. Heb. 11. 35.

i Job 2. 4. Mark 8. 36. Luke 9. 25. & 12. 19, 20. Ps. 49. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

k Ch. 24. 30. & 25. 31. & 26. 64. Zech. 14. 5. Jude 14 Job 19. 25.

l Job 34. 11. Ps. 62. 12. & 96. 13. & 98. 9. Prov. 24. 12. Is. 3. 10, 11. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Ezek. 7. 27. Rom. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 3 8. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Gal. 6. 5. Eph. 6. 8. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 2. 23. & 22. 12. 18. ch. 26. 64. Heb. 2. 9. & 12. 28.

m Mark 9. 1. Luke 9. 27. & 22. 18.

Verses 24—28. As he had foretold them of the sufferings himself must endure, he forewarns them also to expect the like treatment, and advertises them, that only thus bearing his cross they could be truly his disciples.

1. He plainly sets before them the terms of discipleship; very different from what their national prejudices suggested. *If any man will come after me*, a volunteer in my service, and choosing it with all the trials which for my sake he may be exposed to endure, *let him deny himself*, his own will and wisdom, his pride and self-righteousness, his carnal lusts and appetites, his worldly honour, ease, and advantage, and whatever else would tend to clog, retard, or turn him back from my service; *and* let him *take up his cross*, cheerfully submitting to every providential affliction, and ready to expose himself, in the way of duty, to persecutions, losses, reproaches, sufferings, yea, even to death itself, if need be, for my sake, and the open and avowed profession of my name: *and* let him *follow me* in all humility, patience, faith, perseverance, steadfast and unmoveable in the work of the Lord, whether to do or suffer according to his holy

will. Hard terms for flesh and blood! Indeed we must have more than human ability, or they would be impracticable. *Note*, (1.) Self-denial is the first lesson of Christ's school. (2.) There never yet was a Christian without his cross. Far therefore from being discouraged by what we suffer, we should rather conclude our real discipleship from this conformity to our Lord. (3.) It becomes us, however, to take care the cross we bear is the cross of Christ, and not what our own wilfulness or sins have brought upon us.

2. Christ suggests the most powerful arguments to engage us with steadiness and cheerfulness to embrace his proposal.

[1.] An eternity of happiness or misery depends on our present choice and conduct. Whoever, by base and sinful compliances with a world that lieth in wickedness, would screen himself from sufferings and death, takes the direct method to destroy for ever the life he thus seeks to preserve. Whilst he who with unshaken fidelity, for the sake of Christ and his gospel, is ready to endure the loss of all things, and even of life itself, rather than dishonour his profession, or betray the cause in which he is engaged, this man shall in eternity be unspeakably a gainer, and effectually secure the life he thus bravely dares to part with. We must therefore weigh time against eternity, and under the influence of a realizing faith, not hesitate a moment, whether we shall suffer with Christ that we may reign with him, or prolonging a momentary existence by our cowardice, perish everlastingly.

[2.] Our immortal souls are at stake, infinitely more valuable than ten thousand worlds. Admit that we should, by complying with the world, gain all that it hath to bestow, wallow in its wealth, riot in its pleasures, or rise to the pinnacle of earthly grandeur, yet, if this be purchased by the loss of our souls for ever, driven from the presence of God, and consigned to everlasting torment, how inconceivably foolish will this bargain appear shortly, and how irreparable the damage? since had a man millions of gold and silver, yea worlds unnumbered, to bestow, they would in God's account be lighter on the balances than vanity itself, yea, would be less than nothing, if proffered in exchange to redeem but one soul from eternal death. *Note*, (1.) The value of the soul, and the vanity of the world, should be the subject of our frequent meditation. (2.) How many thousands are daily bartering their souls for the most miserable pittance of this world's honours, gain, and pleasures! and yet so hath the god of this world blinded them, that they will not see the folly, the madness of their pursuits. (3.) A soul lost is lost for ever; there is no redemption in the grave. (4.) There is but one sufficient price to redeem the soul from death, and that is the blood of Christ: and all other things in God's account are as dung and dross.

[3.] The rewards of eternal glory will infinitely compensate all the sufferings of this present time. This is a perishing world; the end of all things is at hand: the Judge is at the door; the Son of man shall come in all the glory of divinity with his angelic guards around his throne of judgment, and then will he dispense his rewards according to men's works: when the faithful shall receive the eternal glory, honour, and immortality he hath promised; and the wicked, the worldling, and the apostate, the wages of their iniquity in eternal torment. *Note*, To live under the constant expectation of this great day, is the best means of strengthening us against every trial we may be called to encounter.

[4.] As an especial argument to secure their fidelity, Christ assures them, that some there present, before their death, should see the glory of the Messiah's kingdom begun, in his resurrection from the dead, the out-pouring of his Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the spreading of his gospel, and the destruction of the Jewish state and nation, their bitterest persecutors, which would be an emblem of the final perdition of all ungodly men in the judgment-day.

CHAP. XVII.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ in his pomp and glory transfigured,* ver. 1—13. 2. *Christ in his power and grace casting the devil out of a child,* ver. 14—21. *And,* 3. *Christ in his poverty and great humiliation:* (1.) *Foretelling his own sufferings,* ver. 22, 23. (2.) *Paying tribute,* ver. 24—27.

1. AND [a] after six days Jesus taketh [b] Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,* 2. [c] And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3. [d] And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5. [e] While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is [f] my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; [g] hear ye him. 6. And when the disciples heard *it*, [h] they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7. And Jesus came and [i] touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 8. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. 9. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus [k] charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. 10. ¶ And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that [l] Elias must first come? 11. And Jesus answered and said unto them, [m] Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things: 12. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed: [n] likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. 13. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

[a] Mark 9. 2—10. Luke 9. 28—36.

[b] Mark 5. 37. & 14. 33. ch. 26. 37.

* Tradition reports that this was Tabor, a high mountain in the north of Galilee.

[c] Exod. 34. 29, 35. Is. 33. 17. ch. 28. 3. John 1. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17.

[d] Ch. 13. 11. Acts 10. 43. Rom. 3. 21. Luke 24. 27, 44.

[e] 2 Pet. 1. 17. Exod. 40. 34. 1 Kin. 8. 10. Ps. 18. 10, 11. Luke 9. 34. Acts 1. 9. Rev. 1. 7.

[f] Is. 42. 1, 21. Ps. 2. 7. John 1. 14. & 3. 16. & 1. 34. ch. 3. 17. & 16. 16. Col. 1. 13.

[g] Exod. 23. 21. Deut. 18. 15—18. Acts 3, 22, 23. Heb. 2. 3. & 12. 25, 26. *i. e.* instead of all the prophets.

[h] Num. 14. 5. & 16. 22. Judg. 13. 20, 22. Dan. 8. 18. & 10. 9, 15.

[i] Dan. 8. 18 & 9. 21. & 10. 10, 18. Rev. 1. 17. Is. 41. 10.

[k] Luke 9. 21, 22. Mark 8. 30. & 9. 9. ch. 16. 20. & 9. 30. & 12. 16. Is. 42. 2. John 5. 41. & 7. 18. & 8. 50.

[l] Ch. 11. 14. Mark 9. 11. Mal. 4. 5. & 3. 1. Is. 40. 3.

[m] Ch. iii. & 11. 2—13. & 14. 3—12. & 21. 24, 25. Mark 1. 2—9 & 6. 16—29. Luke i, iii. John 1. 6—36. & 3. 23—36. & 5. 33—35. Luke 16. 16, 17.

[n] Ch. 16. 21. Luke 9. 21, 22, 44. & 18. 31. Is. 50. 6. & 52. 14. & liii. Ps. xxii, lxix.

Verses 1—13. As Christ had so lately spoken of the Son of man's coming in his kingdom, he here gives them a glimpse of his glory on the mount of transfiguration. We are told,

1. When and where this happened, and who were the spectators. It was *six* days after the former discourse above recorded: or, according to St Luke, about *eight*, he taking in the day the discourse passed, and that on which the transfiguration happened, and the other evangelists only mentioning the intervening space of time. The place was the top of a mountain apart, whither he had retired for prayer with three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John, whom he was pleased to favour with the glorious vi-

sion, the lively impression of which dwelt long after on their minds, see 2 Pet. i. 16, 17.

2. The manner of his transfiguration. As he was praying, Luke ix. 29. the glory of the divinity burst forth, and he who bore the form of a servant suddenly appeared in the form of a God, Phil. ii. 6. His face, as the sun shining in its strength, dazzled the beholders with his transcendent lustre, and such bright beams darted from his glorified body, that, surrounded with irradiation, his very raiment glittered and became white as the light. An awful, pleasing sight! Happy the favoured souls who then beheld him! and yet far happier they who shall with open face behold him in the mount of God, and be changed into the same image, fashioned like to his glorious body!

3. The attendants who waited on him, Moses and Elias. They too appeared in glory. Known probably to the disciples by immediate revelation, or by the conversation they heard, which we are told, Luke xx. 31. respected Christ's sufferings and death at Jerusalem.

4. Overwhelmed with wonder and delight, Peter, the ready spokesman for his brethren, expresses the exulting rapture of his heart, and wishes for the continuance of the glorious vision. Fain would he for ever there fix his abode, and, with a mixture of commendable piety and inconsiderate weakness, proposes to make three booths, where Christ with his celestial visitants might dwell, scarce knowing what he said through the transport of his mind. *Note*, (1.) They who have ever known experimentally the sweetness of communion with Jesus, and have by faith beheld some of his glory, long to maintain the delightful intercourse: for it is good to be with him. (2.) The place to enjoy Christ's visits is not in the busy world, or gay circle, but in retirement, meditation, and prayer: in this mount of the Lord he may still be seen. (3.) Though in some happy moments we seem for a while upon the glorious hill, we have now no abiding tabernacle there, and quickly the bright vision is removed. Blessed be God however, we look for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and there we shall be ever with the Lord.

5. A bright cloud, at the instant Peter spoke, overshadowed them, the emblem of the Divine Presence, and from the excellent glory issued forth the voice of God the Father, proclaiming the dignity, excellence, and acceptableness of his dear Son, Jesus, and enjoining on them solemn attention to all his words: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* Where we may observe, (1.) That this was a repetition of what had been declared at Christ's baptism, containing the grand truth on which our everlasting hopes depend, that God is well pleased with the undertaking of Jesus, and is in him reconciling sinners to himself, satisfied with his substitution on their behalf, and therefore not imputing their trespasses unto them. (2.) There never hath appeared but one Person under the sun concerning whom God could say, In whom I am well pleased; and that was his own Son. Him therefore we must hear, since only by and through him can God be well pleased with us: his blood, his righteousness must be alone our trust; his word of gospel grace, our constant rule; his will, our duty and delight. Lord, speak thou to my heart that I may thus hear thee!

6. Terrified with the appearance of the Divine Majesty, and trembling at the voice of God, the disciples prostrated themselves on the earth in silent adoration, conscious of their own vileness, and afraid to lift up their eyes before the holy Lord God. But Jesus kindly approached and quieted their fears, encouraged them to arise, and bid them not be afraid; the voice they had heard was not that of an angry God, but of the Father of mercies; not speaking out of the thick darkness, as on Mount Sinai, the demands of a perfect law; but out of the bright cloud of gospel light and love publishing salvation, and pointing them to a Redeemer. *Note*, (1.) Consciousness of guilt must ever make us dread to appear before a jealous God. It is in Christ's righteousness alone we can with boldness approach his throne. (2.) Jesus is the comforter of his afflicted people: and when we are dismayed under what we feel or fear, and ready to sink down in despair, his words of consolation revive our drooping hearts, and embolden us to look up.

7. Rising at the command of Jesus, when they looked around, the vision had disappeared, and Moses and Elias were gone: Jesus however still remained with them, in his usual form as before his transfiguration. *Note*, If Christ remain with us, we can easily rest content with the loss of any thing besides.

8. He charged them, as they came down from the mount, to take no notice of the vision they had seen, but reserve it till his resurrection from the dead, when that would add credibility to their report, which now, considering the state of suffering which was before him, might be disbelieved and rejected.

9. A difficulty arose in the disciples' minds; revolving what had passed; the short stay Elias made; and the injunctions of secrecy laid upon them; why it should be so often inculcated by the scribes that Elias must first come, publicly ushering in the appearance of the Messiah; and this question they begged their Master to resolve: which he doth to their full satisfaction. He tells them it was true, that Elias must be the forerunner of the Messiah, as was prophesied, Mal. iv. 5, 6. and by his preaching *restore all things*, preach the doctrines of repentance, and direct the people to him who comes to make all things new. But this had already been fulfilled: there had appeared one in the spirit and power of Elias, whom they knew not, as the person meant by the prophecy, and him the scribes and Pharisees in general had rejected, and treated with contempt, and Herod had murdered him. And as they had persecuted to death the messenger, so would they deal by the Master, that *Son of man*, whose way he was sent to prepare, who would suffer the like indignities, cruelty, and death itself by their hands. *Note*, (1.) When we do not thoroughly understand any passage of Scripture, we must go to Christ on our knees, and shall find prayer the best means of arriving at the truth. (2.) If we are treated with insult and cruelty by the world, let it not be thought strange we are compassed with a great cloud of witnesses who have trod the way before us.

Lastly: The disciples now understood clearly what he meant, and that John the Baptist was the person to whom he pointed; and from the fulfilment of the prophecy in him, they received a fresh confirmation of their faith in Jesus, as the Christ.

14. ¶ [o] And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a *certain* man, kneeling down to him, and saying, 15. [p] Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is lunatick, * and sore vexed: for oft times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. 16. And [q] I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. 17. Then Jesus answered and said, [r] O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. 18. [s] And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. 19. [t] Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? 20. And Jesus said unto them, [u] Because of your unbelief: for

o Mark 9. 14—30. Luke 9. 37—45. Ps. 50. 15. Hos. 5, 15.

p Ch. 15. 22. Luke 18. 13. Ps. 6. 2—4. Mark 9. 18.

* One who was affected with his disorder at the change and full of the moon.

q Mark 9. 14—16. Luke 9. 40.

r Ch. 6. 30. & 8. 26. & 14. 31. & 16. 8. & 13. 58. Heb. 3. 12, 19. & 4. 2.

s Ch. 4. 24. & 9. 33. & 12. 22. Acts 10. 38. Mark 9. 20—27. Luke 9. 42.

t Mark 9. 28. ch. 13. 10, 36. & 15. 15.

u Ch. 13. 58. & 6. 30. see ver. 17

verily I say unto you, [x] If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and [y] nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21. Howbeit, this kind goeth not out but by [z] prayer and fasting.

x Luke 17. 6. ch. 21. 21. Mark 11. 23. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

y Ch. 21. 22. Mark 9. 23.

z Eph. 6. 18. 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8. 1 Kin. 17. 20, 21. 2 Kin. 11. 4, 33, 34.

Verses 14—21. The next day, when Jesus with the three disciples returned from the mountain to the rest of their company, and the people who waited for him, he found his presence greatly needed, and opportunely arrived to give a fresh display of his power and mercy.

1. An afflicted father addresses him on his knees in behalf of his only son, possessed with a devil, a lunatic, and frequently seized with epileptic fits, in which he fell into the fire, or water, whichever he chanced to be near, to the great hazard of his life. In the absence of Christ he had applied in vain to the disciples, who were unable to cast him out, so that unless he could help, the case was desperate. *Note*, (1.) Tender parents suffer in every pang which their children feel. (2.) Under all their diseases of body or soul, we must carry our children's miseries to Jesus, and at least commend them in prayer to him when every other means and method fail.

(2.) Christ compassionates the case, and bids the patient be brought to him: but directs a sharp rebuke to that perverse and faithless generation, the Scribes and Pharisees, and people, who probably insulted the disciples on their failing in attempting the cure, and imagined this was a case which would baffle their Master's skill. Justly he upbraids them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, after all the miracles he had wrought before them; and well might he refuse any longer to bear with their perverseness. Yet his patience waits, and he will give them fresh instances of his power, that at least they may be inexcusable in their rejecting him. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is so provoking to the Redeemer, as the perverseness and unbelief of those to whom he hath long vouchsafed the means of grace. (2.) Men's wickedness will not prevent the exercise of Christ's goodness: and if this leads them not to repentance, it will heap up wrath upon them against the day of wrath.

3. Jesus with a word, dispossessed the devil, and the child immediately received a perfect cure. Before his authoritative command, Satan fell a vanquished foe; and by the word of Jesus, the sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith, shall we still triumph over the powers of darkness, and see the arch-enemy of our souls bruised under our feet.

4. The disciples took the first opportunity, when alone, to inquire of their Master why they had failed in attempting the cure, and dispossessing the evil spirit; being concerned perhaps for their reputation among the people, or fearful lest they had provoked the Lord to withdraw that miraculous power he had once bestowed on them. *Note*, When we see ourselves baffled in contending with the powers of evil, it becomes us seriously to inquire how we came to fail, and by what means the fault may be amended.

5. Christ gives them a full answer; it was *their unbelief* which prevented the cure. Whilst the multitude in general were *utterly* faithless *they* were culpable in a *lesser measure;* for, though they were not utterly destitute of faith, they had at this time failed in the exercise of it. For else, the least measure of this miraculous faith, possessed and exerted, was sufficient to remove the mountain now before them, and to do whatever else, however to human view impossible, should be needful to confirm the truth of their mission, to promote the glory of God and the good of mankind: but this faith must be the fruit of earnest prayer and fasting, the means appointed of God for the obtaining it. Some refer the words *this kind*, not to faith, but to the devils, supposing some more difficult to be dispossessed than others, and considering this as another reason why they could not succeed: but the former sense appears preferable. *Note*, (1.) Whenever we fail in duty, and are foiled in temptation, to this we must ever ascribe it, *It is because of our unbelief.* (2.) Though we may not be classed with unbelievers, yet have we daily cause to lament the weakness of our faith. (3.) The faith of miracles is ceased; we cannot now say to this mountain, Remove; but it is as great an instance of divine power, and requires as real an exercise of divine faith, to remove the mountains of guilt and corruption. And, blessed be the Lord! this faith remaineth in all the elect people of God.

22. ¶ [a] And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: 23. And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again, And [b] they were exceeding sorry.

a Ch. 20. 17, 18. & 16. 21. Mark 9. 31. & 8. 31. & 10. 33. Luke 9. 22, 44. & 18. 31. & 24. 26. John 2. 19. & 10. 18. & 19. 11. Acts 2. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 4. Is. liii.

b Ch. 26. 22. John 16. 6, 20.

Verses 22, 23. While they were journeying through Galilee, in their return to Capernaum, we are told,

1. That Jesus again took occasion to remind his disciples of the sufferings to which, according to the eternal counsels of God, he must be delivered up, through the treachery and malice of wicked men, who thirsting for his blood, would murder him by the most cruel and ignominious death, see Luke xxiv. 7. But for their comfort he added, on the third day he should rise again.

2. His disciples appeared exceeding sorry, and deeply affected, with what he told them. They did not understand what his rising again meant, and then all the rest appeared dark and dismal, and utterly contradictory to those opinions of the Messiah which they had entertained. *Note*, Through the darkness of our minds we suffer, needlessly, many a gloomy hour under afflictive providences. We do not look to their end, or understand how all these things are working together for our good: if we did, we should be always rejoicing.

24. ¶ And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received [c] tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? 25. He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? 26. Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. 27. Notwithstanding, lest we should [d] offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find † a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

c Gr. *Didrachma*, in value fifteen pence. Exod. 30. 13. & 38. 26. This was now demanded by the authority of the high priest and great council. Beza, however, is of opinion that this was the poll tax levied by the Romans after Judea was reduced to a province of the empire, and which Agrippa, in the reign of Claudius, remitted to the Jews.

d 1 John 2. 10. 1 Cor. 10. 32. Rom. 14. 13. & 13. 7.

† Or *a stater:* It is half an ounce of silver, in value about 2s. 6d.

Verses 24—27. The tribute mentioned here was the half shekel, about fifteen pence in value, which every Jew, above twenty years of age, paid annually to the temple for the maintenance of the service.

1. The collectors of this tax applied to Peter, at whose house, probably, Jesus abode when at Capernaum, chap. viii. 14. to

know if his Master did not pay the usual tribute. And Peter, not doubting his Master's readiness to comply with the established law, answered in the affirmative.

2. Jesus prevented him, as he came to speak to him on the matter, with a question, which showed his omniscience as acquainted with the purpose of his coming, and the right he had to exemption, had he chosen to plead his privilege. *Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?* their subjects, or foreigners who trade in their country? The answer was obvious, and Peter instantly replied, Such taxes could be exacted from none but strangers, since to tax their own children would be absurd and useless. *Then*, said Jesus, *are the children free;* and, consequently I, who am the Son of God, for the service of whose temple this is levied, am excused from the payment of it. Nevertheless he waves his right, though so poor as to be unable, without a miracle, to furnish the pittance demanded: and, to avoid the appearance of offence to those who, not knowing his character, might be led to esteem him, if he had refused to pay, a despiser of the temple, and thereby might be prejudiced against his doctrine, he orders Peter to go to the sea, and baiting his hook, to take up the first fish that came to it; in the mouth of which he would find a stater, a piece of money of the value of a Jewish shekel, which would just suffice to pay for both, and remove all occasion of offence. We may learn hence, (1.) The divine perfections which shone forth in Jesus during his humiliation. All creatures are under his control, and subservient to his pleasure: he appears acquainted with all that passes in the heart of man, and in the depths of the sea: thus, even when in the form of a man, showing still his divine power and Godhead. (2.) If Christ paid tribute, and submitted to the powers in church and state, who can plead a right to exemption? (3.) In many cases it is a Christian's duty to wave his title to what may be strictly his due, and even to suffer in his secular interests, rather than give offence, or prejudice any against the gospel. We shall in the end be no losers by such self-denial. (4.) When Christ would work a miracle, Peter must use the appointed means: for it is in the way of diligence in duty, not in sloth, that we may expect a divine interposition in our behalf. (5.) When Christ could have furnished all his wants for ever, he chose just a sufficiency for the present emergence, and depended for a subsistence afterwards in the ordinary way; to teach us, if we have enough for to-day, to trust God for the morrow.

CHAP. XVIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

We have here, 1. *Instructions concerning humility,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Concerning offences in general,* ver. 7. *particularly offences given,* [1.] *By us to ourselves,* ver. 8, 9. [2.] *By us to others,* ver. 10—14. [3.] *By others to us; which are of two sorts,* (1.) *Scandalous sins that are to be reproved,* ver. 15—20. (2.) *Personal wrongs that are to be forgiven,* ver. 21—35. *See how practical Christ's preaching was: he could have revealed mysteries; but he pressed plain duties, especially those that are most displeasing to flesh and blood.*

a Mark 9. 33—37. Luke 9. 46—48. ch. 20. 21—24. Mark 10. 42. Luke 22. 24—27.
b Ch. 19. 14. Ps. 34. 11. & 45. 10. Prov. 8. 17. & 23. 26.
c Ch. 19. 14. Luke 18. 17. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2. John 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26. Ps. 131. 2. & 138. 6. ch. 20. 26. & 23. 11. Is. 57. 15. & 66. 2. Luke 9. 48. & 14. 11.

1. AT [a] the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2. And Jesus called [b] a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3. And said, Verily I say unto you, [c] Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4. [d] Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5. And [e] whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. 6 But [f] whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.*

e Ch. 10. 40. & 25. 40, 45.
f Mark 9. 42. Luke 17. 1, 2. ch. 25. 41—46. 2 Thess. 1. 6—9. Zech. 2. 8. Ezek. xxv, xxxv.
* Drowning with a weight about the criminal's neck was a customary mode of inflicting the punishment of death, and became proverbial among the Jews for inevitable ruin.

Verses 1—6. The disciples, deeply tinctured with Jewish prejudices, entertained very false conceptions of the Messiah's kingdom, and had, in the way to Capernaum, been disputing which of them should have the precedence in it. Jesus, who knew what had been the subject of their contention, now asked them concerning it. And, after some silence and shame at being discovered, see Mark ix. 33, 34. they,

1. Propose to him the question in dispute, which of them should be promoted to the first post of honour in his kingdom; for each had formed some pretence to this distinguished place. And so ready are we all to be partial in our own favour, instead of being humbly content, in the views of our real deserts, to sit down with the least and the lowest.

2. By an apposite emblem Christ seeks to rebuke their vanity, and teach them what spirit they should put on. He took a little child and set him in the midst of them, that they might look and learn whilst he commented on the case, assuring them that such was the nature of his kingdom, that none could enter therein, or partake of its honours and privileges, unless their hearts were converted and turned from the affection of earthly grandeur and greatness, and like little children, they became dead to the contentions of ambition, and the vain desires of outward wealth and eminence. Whilst the way to secure the most honourable place among his members upon earth, and the highest throne next his own in glory, was by sinking lowest in their own apprehensions of themselves, and instead of affecting magisterial dominion over others, becoming humble, teachable, and ready to sit down at the feet of the meanest. Hard lessons these for human pride! *Note,* (1.) Besides our first general conversion from a state of nature to a state of grace, we need conversion daily from the errors and evils that still would be cleaving to us, and therefore must continually pray, Turn thou us, and so shall we be turned. (2.) The way to honour is humility. The lowliest souls are dearest to the Lord: they most resemble him; whilst pride made angels devils, defaced God's image from the human soul, drove man from paradise, and bars the gate against his return.

3. Christ expresses his high regard and tender concern for those who in this childlike spirit are his disciples indeed. Whosoever shall show them the least kindness for the sake of their relation to him, he will regard it as if the favour had been shown to his own person. Whilst to offend one of these, to persecute or oppress them, to take advantage of their simplicity or meekness to trample on them, or of their weakness to endeavour to deceive or discourage them, the most dreadful of judgments will be the punishment of such an offender; and better were it for him to have come to the most fearful death by the hands of the public executioner, even to be thrown into the sea with a millstone about his neck, than with such guilt to fall into the hands of an avenging God under whose wrath he must perish, both body and soul, in hell. *Note,* (1.) Christ has the tenderest care for his poor people; and a cup of cold water given to the meanest, in his name, shall not lose its reward. (2.) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a jealous God. They who now oppress and oppose the meek disciples of Jesus, little think against whom they offend, and the vengeance which awaits them.

Luke 17. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 19. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. with ver. 8, 9. ch. 5. 29, 30. & 26. 24.

See ch. 5. 29, 30. Mark 9. 43—48. Deut. 13. 6. *i. e.* if what is very useful or dear to thee cause thee to sin, renounce, avoid, or mortify it.

7. ¶ [g] Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! 8. [h] Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. 9. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. 10. ¶ [i] Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven [k] their angels do always behold the [l] face of my Father which is in heaven. 11. [m] For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. 12. [n] How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? 13. And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he [o] rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. 14. Even [p] so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

i Ver. 6. Ps. 15. 4. & 16. 3. & 119. 63. Luke 10. 16. Prov. 11. 12. & 14. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 8.

k Gen. 32. 1, 2. 2 Kin. 6. 16, 17. Ps. 34. 7. & 91. 11. Heb. 1. 14.

l Ps. 16. 11. & 17. 15. Exod. 33. 18, 20. 1 Cor. 13. 12. Luke 1. 19.

m Luke 19. 10. & 9. 56. ch. 10 6. & 15. 24. John 3. 16, 17. & 12. 47. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

n Luke 15. 4—7. Jer. 50. 6. Ezek. 34. 6, 8, 16, 23. Is. 53. 6, 10—12. John 10. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 25. Ps. 119. 176. Is. 63. 1. & 45. 22, 24. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. 16.

o Luke 15. 7. & 19. 9. & 7. 36—50. & 18. 33—43. John iv, viii. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16.

p Eph. 1. 5. Rom. 9. 18. John 10. 28.

Verses 7—14. We have here the wo denounced against the world because of offences. Under which are comprehended whatever hath a tendency to seduce or affright the soul from the good ways of the Lord, or to discourage and grieve the hearts of the righteous.

1. That there will be offences is certain. Considering the craft, malice, and vigilance of Satan, the perverseness of ungodly men, and their rooted enmity to the gospel, and above all, the deep and desperate native wickedness of every human heart, it is morally impossible offences should not come; and God, for wise ends, hath decreed to permit them; but this will in no wise extenuate the guilt of those by whom the offence cometh, nor abate the severity of their judgment. *Note*, (1.) We are travelling a dangerous road; this world is full of evil, of snares and stumblingblocks; the multitude lieth in wickedness, and many who pretend to know the path of safety, only lie in wait to deceive. We need be jealous of our going, cleave to God's word alone, and neither be offended with the enmity of those that are without, nor the hypocrisy and falls of those that are professors within, remembering *the foundation of God standeth sure. He knoweth those that are his*, and will keep them that *nothing shall offend them*, Psal. cxix. 165. (2.) Though the deceived and the deceiver perish together, yet will *they* lie down under aggravated guilt who have been Satan's instruments to lead others into error or sin. Their blood will be upon the heads of their seducers.

2. Whatever may be the occasion of offence, to ourselves or others, however near and dear to us it may be, we must part with it. The body of sin must be crucified. And though it may be as painful to mortify particular corruptions, as to suffer the amputation of a hand or a foot, unrelenting severity is needful, where our own souls or others' are in danger. And, however acute the pain, or however sensibly felt the loss may be, it is better, infinitely better to endure the momentary pang of present self-denial, that we may escape eternal misery, and secure a life of never-ending glory, than, for a transitory indulgence of appetite, and the sensual enjoyments of an hour, to be cast into devouring fire, and dwell in everlasting burnings. *Note*, (1.) In this state of corruption, not only the grosser pollutions that are in the world through lust must be abhorred, but every word, every action be avoided, which may tend, in the remotest way, to inflame our own passions, or insnare others. (2.) It is of absolute necessity, that we should often, in temptation, look into the burnings of hell, and gain from thence, arguments to start from the most pleasurable sins. (3.) They only who have begun the life of grace, know experimentally what is meant by these severe operations of self-denial.

3. A particular caution is given to beware of despising the least of Christ's little ones, the weakest of his disciples. We may not be indifferent about our carriage towards them, careless of what may offend them; must not treat them with contempt, as if regardless of their welfare, or slighting their weakness or infirmities: nor do ought to distress, discourage, insnare, or lead them into sin; but we should show our tenderness towards them, and our jealousy for them, by every expression of kindness in word or deed, and by a careful avoiding of whatever may grieve or hurt them.

4. He enforces his discourse by several cogent arguments:

[1.] Because the meanest heir of salvation is attended by angelic ministers. And if those glorious spirits, who in heaven behold the face of God, and stand around his throne, the ready servants of his will, do not disdain to wait upon these little ones, much less should we think them beneath our regard; and may justly dread, if we should treat them ill, these guardian spirits would be our accusers, and be employed as executioners of the divine displeasure against us.

[2.] Because it is the very purpose of Christ's coming, to seek and save lost souls. And if, on this transcendently gracious design, he condescended to stoop so low, the least of those for whom he became incarnate, have hereby an unutterable dignity and value conferred upon them, and therefore should neither be despised nor offended; for this he must highly resent. *Note*, (1.) Our souls are lost, eternally lost, without Christ Jesus. (2.) Salvation is purely of grace. When we were without help or hope, he died for the ungodly. (3.) They who are purchased by the blood of Christ should be precious in our eyes. If he did so much to save them, surely we should be peculiarly careful to do nothing to offend them.

[3.] Because it is God's will and pleasure that not one of these little ones perish. And we are bound to correspond with him herein, and, according to our ability, to help forward the purposes of his grace, and put no stumblingblocks in their way. Our Lord illustrates this by a parable, and appeals to them as judges of the case. Suppose a man possessed of a hundred sheep, and one be strayed from the flock; his solicitude is greater in searching after it, and his joy more sensible on finding it, than he feels about all the rest which went not astray. And such concern hath God for the wandering children of his grace, recovering them, and rejoicing over them: and, as he hath in his eternal councils determined their salvation, he cannot but be highly displeased with all who attempt to obstruct it, or are careless about advancing it: and regards such conduct as an avowed opposition, or criminal disregard of his holy will and pleasure. *Note*, (1.) God's people are his flock; and though sometimes they wander from him in the wilderness of sin, he will not suffer them to perish, but graciously is pleased to pursue them with mercy, and bring them back to the fold again. (2.) Though none can frustrate the purposes of God's love towards his redeemed, yet every obstruction laid in their way he will highly resent. (3.) Since

all true believers, of whatever state or condition, have one common Father, they should love as brethren, honour and esteem each other as members of the same family, avoid every occasion of grieving one another, and study every means of advancing their mutual good.

15. ¶ Moreover, [q] if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother: 16. But if he will not hear *thee, then* take with thee one or two more, that in [r] the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* [s] unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church [t] let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. 18. Verily I say unto you, [u] Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19. Again I say unto you, [x] That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven 20. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, [y] there am I in the midst of them.

q Lev. 19. 17. Luke 17. 3, 4. Jam. 5. 19, 20. Prov. 25. 8, 9. & 28. 23. & 9. 8, 9. Ps. 141. 5. Gal. 6. 1.

r Num. 35. 30. Deut. 17. 6. & 19. 15. 1 Kin. 21. 10. John 8. 17. 2 Cor. 13. 1. Heb. 10. 28.

s Num. 16. 33. Acts 8. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 20.

t Rom. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 5. 5, 9, 11, 13. 2 Cor. 2. 6. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. 1 Tim. 1. 20. Tit. 3. 10. John 2. 10.

u John 20. 23. 1 Cor. 5. 4. ch. 16. 19.

x 1 John 3. 24. & 5. 14. John 16. 23. & 14. 13. & 15. 7, 16. ch. 7. 7, 11. & 21. 22. Mark 11. 24. Luke 11. 9. Jam. 1. 5. & 5. 16.

y Ch. 28. 20. Rev. 1. 13. & 2. 1. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. Exod. 20. 24. Ezek. 48. 35. Zech. 2. 5. Rev. 21. 3.

Verses 15—20. As we must be careful not to give offence: as careful should we be to show all Christian tenderness and charity when we are justly offended. Since in this frail and corrupted state even good men are but men, and liable to fall, transgressing the precepts of prudence, justice, or charity; we are therefore here directed in such cases how to behave towards them.

1, If a brother, a professing member of our most holy faith, act unsuitable thereunto, and do us an injury, or give us cause of complaint against him, we must first give him a private and kind admonition of his fault, and mildly argue the case, desiring to bring him to repentance and amendment; more solicitous for his good than the redress of our own wrongs. We may not in this case, through fear of offending on the one hand, be silent and suffer sin upon our brother without rebuke; nor, on the other, give way to rash anger, or revenge, and by a public reproof expose him to others, which however true the charge, would serve not to recover but exasperate him the more. In this way of mild and secret admonition we may hope for success; and if he express his sorrow, and desire reconciliation, then the rebuke will be esteemed a kindness, the friendship more strongly cemented, our brother recovered, and the offence forgiven and forgotten.

2. If this method of reproof prove abortive, and he is obstinate against conviction, and displeased instead of humbling himself, then take two or three faithful, impartial Christian brethren, and in their presence let the matter be discussed that they may hear and judge, and add their weight to bring the party offending to due submission and reparation of the injury. Or, if their sentiments be disregarded also, they will be evidences before the church of the steps which have been taken, and ready to confirm the truth of the just accusation of the injured person.

3. If every other method prove ineffectual, then the matter should be laid before the church, the society of faithful people among whom such a one associates, that he may have a public admonition for his offence, and be called upon to repent and amend of the evil he hath done.

4. If he still remains incorrigible, and persists in his iniquity, then he is to be excluded from the communion of the faithful, and no more connection and familiarity is to be maintained with him; for the charity which teaches us to forgive our enemies, forbids us not to be on our guard against those who have used us ill and refuse to repair the injury. From the whole we may learn, (1.) Under every injury received, to guard our own hearts against passion or revenge; this wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. (2.) Never to speak of another's faults behind his back, till we have in love and the spirit of meekness first admonished him to his face. (3.) To be ready under every provocation to forgive and forget, the moment real repentance appears in our brother. (4.) Not to endeavour to form a party in our favour; but, in cases of offence, real or supposed, where the sentiments of brethren may differ about the facts, to let some common impartial friends hear and judge, before the matter be mentioned in public or but whispered to others.

5. Christ delegates authority to his church thus to censure offenders, and ratifies the sentence that shall be pronounced in correspondence with this his revealed word; so that those who for their notorious evils are excluded from the society of the faithful now, shall be written among the reprobate, and for ever banished from the presence of God, unless they repent of their transgressions, and then they are again to be received into the bosom of the church, and all that is past to be entirely forgiven. The absolution pronounced on them by the ministers of God on earth, shall be ratified in heaven, and, the correction having become effectual, the broken-hearted penitent is to be comforted, and restored to his former place both in the church of God, and in our brotherly affection and regard.

6. For their encouragement in every religious concern, and especially with regard to the recovery of those who are fallen into sin, that they may be restored, our Lord declares the mighty efficacy of united prayer. Whatever, according to the divine will, two or three faithful souls shall meet together with joint supplications to beg at God's hands, he will assuredly hear and grant their requests. For wherever the smallest number of real believers assemble in Christ's name, depending on his promises, and desiring above all things the advancement of his glory, there will he ever be, quickening their prayers, strengthening their faith, enlivening their hopes, and comforting their hearts; and when he is one of the company, their supplications must be effectual; for him the Father heareth always; and what an encouragement is this to social prayer!

21. ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? [z] till seven times? 22. Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, [a] Until seventy times seven.* 23. Therefore is [b] the kingdom of heaven likened unto a [c] certain king which would take account of his servants. 24. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him [d] ten thousand † talents. 25. But, forasmuch as he had not to pay, [e] his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26. The servant therefore

z Luke 17. 4. ver. 15.

a *i. e.* many hundred times. Rom. 12. 19, 20. Eph. 4. 32. Col. 3. 13. 1 Cor. 4. 12. ch. 6. 12, 14. & 5. 44. Mark 11. 25.

* A definite is here put for an indefinite number. The duty of forgiving injuries has no limit.

b Gospel church. Ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17. & xiii. John 3. 3, 5.

c Ps. 2. 6. Is. 9. 6, 7. John 1. 49. & 18. 36. ch. 25. 34.

d Gen. 13. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15, 16.

† A talent of silver is £342: 3s. 9d.

e Lev. 25. 39. Neh. 5. 2, 5, 8. 2 Kin. 4. 1.

fell down, and * worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 27. Then the lord of that servant [f] was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. 28. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred [g] pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. 29. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 30. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt. 31. So, when his fellow-servants saw what was done, [h] they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. 32. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: 33. [i] Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? 34. And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the [k] tormentors † till he should pay all that was due unto him. 35. [l] So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

* Or *besought him.* The form of lowly submission, from the servant to his master, which is here described, is still practised in the east among the Arabs, where inferiors in paying respectful deference to their superiors, fall down before them, and kiss their feet, knees, and garments.

f Ps. 103. 13. & 145. 7, 8. & 130. 4, 7. Eph. 2. 4—8. Tit. 3. 5. Hos. 11. 8. Judg. 10. 16.

g The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, in value sevenpence three farthings. The daily hire of a labourer in those days. Ch. 20. 2. & 22. 19. Rev. 6. 6.

h Rom. 12. 15. 2 Cor. 11. 29. Heb. 13. 3. They were offended and grieved at such unnatural cruelty and revenge.

i Eph. 4. 32. & 5. 2. Col. 3. 13. ch. 5. 44, 45. Luke 6. 36.

k 2 Cor. 12. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8. ch. 5. 25. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 14. 10, 11.

† Because of his cruelty, not because of the debt.

l Prov. 21. 13. ch. 6. 12, 14, 15. Mark 11. 26. Eph. 4. 32. Col. 3. 13. 1 Cor. 4. 12. ch. 7. 2. Jam. 2. 13.

Verses 21—35. As our Lord had just given directions concerning the charitable conduct to be observed towards offenders, Peter, desirous to know how far this forgiveness of personal injuries extended, proposed to his Master the question, Whether, if the offence was repeated seven times, the forgiveness must be as often granted on the repentance of the offender? He concluded this a great stretch of charity; but our Lord's answer showed him how limited were his apprehensions: *I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven:* intimating, that we must make no limitation to our forgiveness, but be always, and in all cases, ready to grant it, whenever the offender repents; imitating the divine compassions, which know no bounds, nor end. And to enforce and elucidate this, he introduces a parable wherein this godlike charity appears most eminent, and the guilt and danger of the opposite conduct is drawn in striking colours.

The parable represents,

1. The noble clemency of a great lord, who, looking into his affairs, and revising his own accounts (which it were well if every great man did) found, among other debtors, one who owed him an immense sum, the least part of which he was unable to discharge. In consequence whereof, in course of law, he gave orders that himself and family should be sold for slaves, and all he had disposed of for his use. But, terrified at the sentence, though just, the poor debtor entreats a respite, with many fair promises of payment; when, moved with his distress, the compassionate master generously and freely forgave him all, and delivered him at once from his terrors and his debt. And this may be applied to the case between God and the sinner. (1.) We are deeply in arrear to him: every sin is a debt, and we are overwhelmed with it! we possess a sinful nature; and our thoughts, words, and deeds have been so perverse before God, so often and so greatly have we offended, that no computation can reach the number of our transgressions, nor can we conceive the greatness of our guilt or provocations. (2.) The misery of our case; and what renders it most deplorable, yea, desperate, is, that we have nothing to pay. Could we render by a perfect obedience, the present debt of duty, this would make no compensation for past iniquity; but indeed, our nature being corrupt, we are so far from paying for the past offences, that we are daily, hourly increasing the immense arrears. (3.) God keeps an account of all: not a word is in our tongue, nor a thought in our hearts, but he knoweth it altogether; so that we can no more conceal our transgressions from him, than we can cancel them. (4.) If the divine law takes its course, the consequence must be, that we should be sold to suffer for our iniquities, and, in the place of torment, in body and soul continue satisfying the justice of God to eternity. (5.) The discovery of this dreadful situation made to the sinner's soul, by the preaching of the word to his conscience, or some awakening providence, fills him with terror, and sets him a crying for mercy. But usually at first the cries of the awakened conscience are for a respite, with many promises of amendment, which the sinner foolishly thinks will be accepted in payment. And he does not see his own utter insolvency, but thinks, through the ignorance and self-righteousness of his heart, that he can make God some payment; till by and by the trial convinces him his best is bad, and self-despair strips him naked at the foot of the cross of Christ. (6.) God's infinite compassions extend through the Redeemer to the most guilty and desperate. He freely and fully forgives all that is past: not that he doeth it without a satisfaction made to his justice; this the Son of his love, incarnate, and dying under the guilt of our sins, hath paid; but the mercy of pardon, reconciliation, and deliverance from the bondage of guilt and corruption, is to us freely given, to the praise of the glory of his grace, without money and without price.

2. We are told the unsuitable conduct this much obliged servant showed respecting a fellow-servant of his, who owed him a trifling debt. He no sooner obtained his own pardon and liberty, than he went out seized and throttled him, till he was almost choked, and with menaces and insolence demanded instant payment, or threatened him with a prison. In vain his poor brother begged a respite, and in the very words himself had used, desired only time, and the debt should be paid; he was deaf to entreaty, and thrust him into a jail: a piece of cruelty and oppression, that the other servants beheld with grief and indignation, and failed not to acquaint their lord with this inhuman behaviour. *Note,* (1.) Many professors who presume upon God's forgiveness, show, by their covetousness and rigorous censures of others, the hypocrisy of their hearts, and the vanity of their hopes. (2.) Offences done to us, compared with those we have committed against God, are so trivial, that we should be ashamed to show rigour in exacting reparation. (3.) Pride and passion render men unmerciful: though they know a prison pays no debts, they take delight in thus gratifying their insolence or revenge. (4.) The debtor may not complain, though he be dealt with rigorously; humble entreaty becomes his condition, especially when he suffers only the fruits of his folly or extravagance. (5.) A compassionate heart feels for the distresses of others, and, if it can afford no other relief to them, carries the case of the oppressor and the oppressed to God in prayer, and his ears are open thereunto; he will answer in mercy and judgment. (6.) It is especially grievous to a gracious soul, to see in professors of religion, a spirit of bitterness and unmercifulness, and he laments it before the Lord.

3. Just resentment fired the master's heart on hearing these tidings; and instantly citing this hardened wretch before him, he

charges him with his wickedness, and upbraids him with his cruelty and ingratitude for all the mercies he had so lately received; expostulating with him on the case, and leaving him without excuse. In wrath he bids him therefore instantly be seized, and delivered to the tormentors; to be confined in prison, and suffer the most rigorous punishment, till all the former debt should be paid.

Some have urged this circumstance as an argument, that God really pardons sin, and leaves us on our good behaviour for the future; but if we transgress, then he revives the past. But as God's *gifts and callings are without repentance*, and we are assured that he *remembers no more* the iniquities he once forgave, (Heb. viii. 12.) we must understand the forgiveness here, (if we suppose the parable is in every particular to be applied to the sinner's case,) to be the presumption the person entertained on the view of the gospel offers that he was pardoned, when in fact he was not. Or if we suppose it a real act of forgiveness to a child of God, his being delivered to the tormentors for his after sins and ingratitude, may well refer to the temporal calamities that God is often pleased to inflict on his people for their offences, visiting their iniquities with the rod, and their sin with scourges, though his loving-kindness he doth not take from them, nor suffer his truth to fail. But, after all, I am much more inclined to think that the scope of the parable is principally to be attended to, without a strict application of it in every particular to God's dealings with sinners, and then we shall see nothing can be more suited to enforce mutual forgiveness, since without it we may not hope ourselves to be forgiven of God. And thus,

4. The general design of the parable is explained, ver. 35. God will deal with us, as we deal with our brethren: and if we show an implacable and unforgiving spirit: whatever hopes of pardon we may entertain, they are delusive; his wrath hangs over us, and in the great day of account we shall be delivered to the tormentors. Most bounden are we therefore to forgive every injury, nor ever harbour the least wish or desire of revenge; for we expect greater mercy and forgiveness from God, than ever man can from us, and therefore a sense of his pardoning love should kindle ours.

CHAP. XIX.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ changing his quarters, leaving Galilee, and coming into the coasts of Judea,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *His dispute with the Pharisees about divorce, and his discourse with his disciples upon occasion of it,* ver. 3—12. 3. *The kind entertainment he gave to some little children which were brought to him,* ver. 13—15. 4. *An account of what passed between Christ and a hopeful young gentleman that applied himself to him,* ver. 16—22. 5. *His discourse with his disciples upon that occasion, concerning the difficulty of the salvation of those who have much in the world, and the certain recompense of those that leave all for Christ,* ver. 23—30.

33.

1. AND it came to pass, [a] *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan; * 2. [b] And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there. 3. ¶ [c] The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? 4. And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, [d] that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female. † 5. And said, [e] For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and [f] they twain shall be one flesh? 6. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together [g] let not man put asunder. 7. They say unto him, [h] Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 8. He saith unto them, Moses, because of [i] the hardness of your hearts, ‡ suffered you to put away your wives: [k] but from the beginning it was not so. 9. [l] And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. 10. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, [m] it is not good to marry. 11. But he said unto them, [n] All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given. 12. For there are some [o] eunuchs which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs ‖ for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

a Mark 10. 1. John 10. 40. & 3. 22.

* The country eastward of Jordan.

b Ch. 4. 23—25. & 8. 1, 18. & 9. 35, 36. & 12. 15. & 13. 1. & 14. 35. & 15. 30. & 17. 14.

c Ch. 16. 1. & 22. 15. Luke 11. 53, 54. Mark 10. 3—12.

d Gen. 1. 27. & 5. 2. Mal. 2. 15, 16.

† Made them one male, the other female, and joined them together as man and wife.

e Gen. 2. 24. Eph. 5. 31. Ps. 45. 10.

f 1 Cor. 6. 16. & 7. 2. Gen. 2. 24.

g Except for adultery, fornication, or wilful desertion. Ver. 9. Mal. 2. 14—16. 1 Cor. 7. 10—13.

h Deut. 24. 1. ch. 5. 31.

i Deut. 9. 6. & 31. 27. Acts 7. 51. & 13. 18. & 14. 16. *i. e.* their cruelty to their wives. Mal. 2. 13—16.

‡ But not commanded nor approved. The law in Deut. 24. 1, 2. was a permission only in certain cases to put away their wives.

k Gen. 2. 24. Jer. 6. 16. 1 Cor. 11. 23. ch. 28. 20

l Ch. 5. 32. Mark 10. 11. Luke 16. 18. 1 Cor. 7. 11, 12. Mal. 2. 14—16. Rom. 7. 1—3. Jer. 3. 18.

m Prov. 21. 9, 19. & 19. 13. & 9. 13.

n 1 Cor. 7. 2, 9, 17.

o Is. 56. 3—5. 1 Cor. 7, 7, 17, 32—35. & 9. 5. Mark 10. 12.

‖ The word is here evidently used to denote the chastity of a single life.

Verses 1—12. Having finished his ministry in Galilee, Christ departed to return no more, till after his resurrection, unless for one passing visit, Luke xvii. 11. When God's ministers have done their work in a place, Providence directs their removal: and till they have, none of their enemies on earth or hell can displace them. Christ was now advancing towards Jerusalem, the scene of his sufferings, and in his way took that part of Judea where John had chiefly exercised his ministry, *beyond*, or, as it may be rendered, *on this side Jordan;* and, as was usual in every place through which he passed, great multitudes resorted to him, and, according to his wonted compassions, he healed them of all their diseases, in confirmation of the doctrines which he taught.

His ever inveterate enemies the Pharisees failed not to attend him here also, using all their wiles to draw him into a snare, that they might prejudice the people against him. For which end we have here,

1. The insidious question they proposed to him concerning divorces. *Whether it was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* a question much debated in their schools; and through the abuse of the permission granted in the law of Moses, they had done it on the most frivolous pretences. The Pharisees hoped therefore either to have matter of accusation against him, if he condemned divorces, as an opposer of the law of Moses; or, if he allowed them thus generally, they would have treated him as licentious, the more serious Jews condemning those divorces which were made on trifling provocations.

2. In answer, Christ refers them to the original institution of

marriage, as the best solution of the difficulty they proposed Let them consider that, and they might resolve their own question. It would appear from thence, that such arbitrary divorces were directly repugnant to the nature of the matrimonial bond. In the very creation of the first man and woman, the indissoluble union between them might be collected. Adam had none but Eve, nor could divorce her for another, when no other woman then existed. This being of all relations the nearest, God ordained, that even a father or mother must be left for the sake of a wife: not that marriage vacates the obligation lying upon us to help and relieve them: No; but if all admit that the reciprocal relation between parent and child may not be broken, much less can the nearer connection of man and wife be dissolved. They *are one flesh*, near to each other as the members of the same body, which no one ever thought of parting with, but cherishes with tenderest care. Those therefore whom God hath thus indissolubly joined, it would be highly criminal and presumptuous in man to separate.

3. The Pharisees start an objection to this interpretation of Scripture, and flatter themselves they have Moses on their side, ver. 7. *Why then did Moses*, &c. very ready to seize the shadow of a plea, and by representing Christ as an enemy to the institutions of Moses, to render him suspected, and prejudice the people against him. Thus do wicked men endeavour to pervert the blessed Scriptures, and make them militate against themselves.

4. Christ answers their objection, and in a way that did not a little reflect on their ill tempers and conduct. What they suppose a *command*, our Lord says was merely a *toleration*, and permitted as a judicial and political law, to prevent the greater evils which must ensue; such being their *hardness of heart*, that, rather than their helpless wives should be cruelly treated, perhaps murdered to be rid of them, such being their malignity and obduracy, God was pleased for their sakes to dispense with his positive law, though *from the beginning it was not so*. Nor in the gospel state should this be any longer suffered, Christ being come to restore this ordinance to its primitive institution, and to take away the hardness of men's hearts; therefore henceforward no divorces would be allowed of, save in the case of unfaithfulness to the marriage-bed; and whosoever on any other cause should divorce his wife, and marry another, would be guilty of adultery, as he would be also who married her thus divorced.

5. The disciples, on hearing this determination of their Master, could not help, when they were alone, suggesting their apprehensions of the unhappiness of the married state, if divorces were so strictly prohibited, and that the experiment would be so dangerous, that it amounted to an injunction of celibacy. So apt are men to seek liberty for the indulgence of appetite, and to argue against the best institutions, because of some inconveniences which may arise from them. If we possess the spirit of Christianity, of meekness, patience, and love, we shall learn to bear each other's burdens, compassionate each other's infirmities, and be thankful for the comforts we enjoy, which far exceed the inconveniences divorce can be supposed to remedy.

6. Christ replies to their suggestion, that their reasoning in one view was right, and that a single state is preferable for those who have the gift of continence; especially in days of persecution and distress, and where the cares of a family, and the incumbrances thereto annexed, would make it more difficult for the first preachers of the gospel to be travelling from place to place, or take up too much of their time and thoughts, instead of better things. But their are few, very few comparatively, who are possessed of this gift; and therefore marriage with all its crosses, is far the most profitable, and to be chosen as a matter of duty; and when entered upon in the fear and love of God, the comforts of that relation will be found to overpay us for all the crosses. But some there are from the birth by natural constitution formed for celibacy, strangers to the desire of women; some by the wickedness of men are incapacitated for the marriage state; and some, seeing powerful reasons to determine their choice, for the sake of greater usefulness in the service of Jesus Christ, have such particular supplies of divine grace given them, as to be able to forego the delights of wedlock, and may laudably purpose to live a single life, though not under any vows, if afterwards they should see cause to change their sentiments; nor as any thing meritorious, as the Papists suggest; but purely, that being disengaged from the cares of life, they may be enabled to employ themselves more entirely in the work of God, than otherwise they could. *He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*

13. ¶ [p] Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. 14. But Jesus said, [q] Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. 15. And [r] he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

[p] Mark 19. 13—16. Luke 18. 15, 16. Gen. 48. 14, 15. 1 Sam. 1. 24. Jer. 49. 11.
[q] Ch. 18. 3. Mark 10. 14. Luke 18. 16. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2. Prov. 8. 17. & 23. 26. Ps. 34. 11. & 45. 10, 11.
[r] Gen. 48. 14. Mark 6. 5. & 16. 18. Luke 4. 40. & 13. 13. Num. 8. 20. Acts 8. 16, &c.

Verses 13—15. We have seen multitudes of others making their application to Christ; here we behold some pious parents bringing their children to crave his divine benediction.

1. They brought their infants, that Jesus might lay his hands upon them, and pray for them, in faith expecting that he could impart to them spiritual blessings, and that his prayers would be attended with gracious effects. *Note*, They who have tasted the grace of Jesus themselves, cannot but earnestly desire, that all theirs may share with them the inestimable mercy, and therefore fail not to present their little ones to him for his blessing.

2. The disciples, apprehensive lest such a precedent would induce others to bring their children, and thereby occasion their Master much trouble, or supposing it beneath him to take notice of infants, or useless to bring them to him; rebuked those who brought the children, and wanted to prevent their application. But,

3. Christ expressed his displeasure against his disciples for obstructing so charitable a work, and bids them suffer these babes to be brought, seeing *of such is the kingdom of heaven*. Not only like these, in their spirit and temper, should the members of his church be, but also that they, as well as grown persons, are capable of becoming subjects of the gospel kingdom, and of having interest in its spiritual blessings and privileges; and if so, then there seems no reason why they may not by baptism be admitted into the visible communion of the faithful. *And he laid his hands on them, and blessed them*, Mark x. 16. Though they cannot stretch out their infant hands to him in faith and prayer, he can confer on them his gifts of grace, and prepare them for his eternal kingdom. Thus having confirmed the privileges of the lambs of his flock, *he departed thence.*

16. ¶ And, behold, one [s] came and said unto him, Good Master, [t] what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? 17. And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [u] *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God; [x] but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. 18. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, [y] Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou

[s] He was a young man, ver. 20; a ruler, Luke 18. 18, and he came running to him, Mark 10. 17.
[t] Rom. 10. 2, 3. & 9. 31, 32. John 6. 28.
[u] 1 Sam. 2. 2. Ps. 119. 68. Jam. 1. 17.
[x] Lev. 18. 5. Rom. 10. 5. Gal. 3. 10, 12. Is. 1. 19. & 3. 10.
[y] Exod. 20. 12—17. Deut. 50. 16—21. Mark 10. 19. Luke 18. 20. Rom. 13. 8, 9. Gal. 5. 14. Jam. 2 8. Eph. 6. 2. Lev. 19. 18. ch. 22. 39.

z Tit. 1. 16. Is. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31. Luke 18. 11, 12.
a Ch. 6. 19, 20. & 5. 48. Luke 12. 33. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. Acts 2. 44. & 4. 32, 34.
* He probably flattered himself that he really lacked nothing; that his obedience to the moral law rendered him perfect, qualified him to become a disciple of Christ here, and gave him a claim to a superior degree of felicity hereafter.—*Porteous*
b Ch. 13. 22. Judg. 18. 23, 24. Ps. 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19.

shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, 19. Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 20. The young man saith unto him, [z] All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?* 21. Jesus said unto him, [a] If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow me. 22. But when the young man heard that saying, [b] he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Verses 16—22. We have here a conference between a promising young man, who came with a question of the last importance, and our blessed Lord, whose answer is designed for his conviction and humiliation, in order to lead him to a better righteousness than his own, for the obtaining that eternal life which he inquired after.

1. His address was most respectful, and his inquiry of the last consequence. Though Christ appeared outwardly mean and despicable, and he himself was a person of distinction, yet he humbly knelt before him, and with a title of uncommon veneration addressed him, desiring to be informed by him, as a prophet sent from God, by what works of righteousness he might assuredly obtain that eternal life he seemed above all things solicitous to secure. *Note*, (1.) Eternal life is the grand object, and most deserving our first concern. (2.) Youth and riches are dangerous snares, that too frequently divert the mind from the consideration of another world: but the more rare the more commendable it is, when we see any person possessed of both, seeking in the first place the kingdom of God. (3.) They who would learn the way to eternal life, must be daily coming to Christ on their knees.

2. Our Lord replies both to his address and question. As the young ruler regarded him as a mere man, the title of *Good*, in that emphatical sense, was misapplied, since no creature is absolutely and perfectly good, but God alone. As to the question, according to the views wherewith he came, expecting to obtain life by obedience to the law as a covenant of works, there was but one way: *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*, perfectly, universally, perpetually. Nothing short of this can secure a title to eternal life, under the law, where every defect, failure, or omission, immediately incurs the penalty of the curse denounced, Deut. vi. 25. In which answer Christ appears designing to lead him to a view of the impossibility of obtaining righteousness and life eternal by any doings and duties of his own, and, by unhinging him from an opinion of his own goodness and abilities, to show him the necessity of a better righteousness than his own for his title to life and glory. *Note*, (1.) There is no absolute goodness in man; all we have at best is imperfect. (2.) There was once a way to life by personal perfect obedience; but since the first man's sin none ever went that way, he only excepted, who was more than man.

3. Willing to know what these commandments were, and conceiving his abilities and inclinations equal to the task, the young ruler begs a distinct enumeration of them; and Jesus to convince him how mistaken an idea he had formed of himself, instances only in the duties of the second table, which he had probably learned by heart, and which if rightly understood would minister to him abundant matter for humiliation, and show him the impossibility of obtaining eternal life by his own obedience.

4. Ignorant of the spirituality of the law, and judging according to the wretched literal comments of the scribes, he thought he might safely vouch for his obedience. From his youth up he had escaped from the grosser pollutions that are in the world, and made conscience of his ways. He was no adulterer, thief, murderer, or perjured person; and having kept all these commandments, as he supposed, desired, with some show of self-complacence, to know what farther was required, as if he only wanted to be informed, and was ready to obey. *Note*, (1.) Pride on our duties is as damnable as the indulgence of our sins. (2.) It may appear a strange, but it is a true assertion, that the fairest characters in the eyes of the world, are usually the farthest from the kingdom of God. (3.) We may be fully assured, we know neither God's law, nor our own hearts, when we presume to say of the least of his commandments, All these have I kept from my youth. (4.) An humbling sight of our sins, not a vain conceit of ourselves, is the first step to the kingdom of God.

5. To convince him how mistaken his apprehensions were of his own goodness, Christ puts him upon giving a proof of obedience to that leading precept of the law, and only true principle of duty, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*; and he would presently see how much he lacked of the attainments he boasted. He wished to be *perfect*; if he would be so, as one step towards it, let him sell all his possessions, distribute them to the poor, have his affections taken off from earthly things, commence a constant attendant on Jesus, take up his cross, and follow his footsteps; and then he would secure the treasures of eternity, and be in the way to that eternal life he sought. *Note*, (1.) A holy deadness to the world is at all times the duty of Christ's disciples; and there may be occasions still, where literally we must be ready to part with all for his sake. (2.) Covetousness and inordinate love of the world, are often seen in the fairest professors, and are among the saddest symptoms of the insincerity and hypocrisy of their hearts. (3.) They who leave all for Christ will be no losers in the end; the treasures of eternity will prove an ample recompense.

6. Unable to bear these hard sayings, and not at all inclined to part from his great possessions, though eternal life was at stake, the young man thought the way too narrow; yet grieved to find he had not reached the perfection he fancied in himself, and loath to quit Christ and eternal life, *he went away sorrowful*, unwilling to lose the hopes of heaven, and yet resolved not to part with his great possessions on earth. *Note*, (1.) Riches are the rock on which innumerable souls are shipwrecked, and drowned thereby in perdition and destruction. (2.) The more we have of this world, in general the closer our affections cleave to it; and increasing wealth brings usually an increase of snares. (3.) Many are sorry to part with Christ, and submit with reluctance to the yoke of sin and the world, who yet perish under the bondage of corruption.

23. ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, [c] That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. 24. And again I say unto you, [d] It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 25. When his disciples heard *it*, [e] they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26. But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, [e] With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. 27. ¶ [f] Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Be-

c Ch. 13. 22. Job 31. 24. Ps. 62. 11. Prov. 11. 28. 1 Cor. 1. 26. Jam. 4. 4. & 5 1—3. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. Jam. 2. 5. Mark 10. 23—26. Luke 18. 24—27.
d Jer. 13. 23. Luke 18. 25. John 5. 44. 1 Cor. 1. 26.
e Job 10. 13. & 42. 2. Jer. 32. 17. Zech. 8. 6. Gen. 18. 14. Luke 1. 37. & 18. 27. Phil. 4. 13. Heb. 7. 25. Is. 63. 1—4. Mark 10. 27.
f Mark 10. 28—31. Luke 18. 28—30. ch. 4. 20, 22. Luke 5. 11. Phil. 3. 7—9. Deut. 33. 9.

hold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? 28. And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me [g] in the regeneration, when the Son of man [h] shall sit in the throne of his glory, [i] ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29. [k] And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. 30. [l] But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

[g] Is. 65. 17. & 66. 22. John 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15 Heb. 9. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Acts 3. 21.

[h] Ps. 110. 1. Heb. 1. 3. or ch. 25. 31. Rev. 20. 4, 11. 1 Thes. 4. 17.

[i] 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11. Luke 22. 28—30. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. Rev. 2. 26. & 3. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 8. & 2. 12.

[k] Mark 10. 29, 30. Luke 18. 29, 30. ch. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 31, 32.

[l] Ch. 20. 16. & 8. 11, 12. & 21. 31, 32. Mark 10. 31. Luke 13. 30. & 7. 29, 30. Rom. ix—xi.

Verses 23—30. On occasion of so promising a youth's departure from him through inordinate attachment to worldly wealth, our Lord, directing his discourse to his disciples,

1. Observes the vast obstructions which riches lay in the way of men's salvation. A rich man whose heart is engaged with the care and love of his substance, can hardly ever become a subject of Christ's kingdom upon earth, or an inheritor of his kingdom in heaven. Things in their nature the most impracticable may be expected to happen, even according to the proverbial expression, for a camel to go through a needle's eye, sooner than for a man whose heart is attached to his wealth, and seeks his happiness therein, to become a real disciple of Jesus, and an inheritor of glory. *Note*, (1.) The immense difficulties riches put in our way to heaven, should make us thankful in a low condition, that God hath not exposed us to this temptation; should suppress every rising of envy against our wealthy neighbours, and quench every inordinate desire of abundance. (2.) They who are rich have more duties to discharge; more sins to beset them; more temptations to struggle with; more self-denial to exercise; and a larger account of talents to settle, than others; and therefore great grace is needful to sanctify great possessions.

2. The disciples express their astonishment at their Master's assertion; and if the case stood thus, according to their mistaken ideas of the Messiah's kingdom, they do not conceive it possible to be supported, if all the rich and great are excluded, who usually sway the world; or if they understood him of the heavenly kingdom, they are ready to conclude, that few, or any, would ever attain thereunto, as many are possessed of wealth, and almost all desire it. *Note*, The wonder is, considering the difficulties in the way of salvation, not that so *few* are saved, but that *any* obtain it. The more the hinderances are, the greater diligence we need use to surmount them.

3. Christ, with concern, observing their surprise and consternation, replied, that indeed, with men, considering their native corruption and worldly mindedness, salvation was utterly out of their reach; they being unable to effect the needful change in their own hearts, or in each other's, more than human sufficiency was requisite. This is the work of God; impossibilities with us are possible with him; almighty grace can subdue the most inveterate corruptions, spiritualize the affections of the most worldly minded, and enable the rich, as well as the poor, to overcome the temptations of their perilous state, and show themselves rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. None therefore are to be despaired of; when God will work, who can let it?——Some refer this to the Messiah's kingdom upon earth, as if the answer implied, that though it appeared so impracticable to them to set up this kingdom in opposition to all the wealth and greatness of the world, yet such supports should be ministered to them, poor and inconsiderable as they were, as should enable them to withstand all their enemies, and make their labours successful.

4. Peter, in the name of his brethren, thought this no unfavourable season to inquire what they should get, since they had left all and followed him. It is true their all was not much; but such as it was, it was equally dear to them as if they had possessed greater wealth. *Note*, (1.) If our spirit be right, though our loss for Christ exceed not the widow's mite, he will accept it as if we had left greater possessions. (2.) Though it is not the mere motive of advantage that influences the faithful, we may notwithstanding with comfort look to the great recompense of reward.

5. Christ engages that they who forsake all for him, shall be no losers in the issue. *They who have followed him in the regeneration*, shall be honoured with the most eminent seats in his kingdom, and *sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

In the regeneration, refers either to the present state of the disciples who had followed Christ, and may spiritually describe the change which had passed on their souls by the renewing power of divine grace. Or this may signify their attendance upon him, and devoting themselves to his service in setting up that kingdom which was designed to effect a glorious reformation in the world. This phrase may likewise be connected with the latter part of the clause, *when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, in the regeneration;* and then it hath respect to the future state of the Redeemer's exaltation, when, after his ascension from the dead, they shall be endued with power from on high, the former Mosaical dispensation should be abolished, and they commissioned to preach the gospel, and erect the Christian church, in which *old* things, the Jewish ceremonials, would pass away, and all things become new; new ordinances be administered, and new hearts and minds be given to the converts.

Their sitting on thrones, &c. may imply either the dignity of the apostleship to which they should be advanced, to charge the Jews with their crimes, especially the rejection of the Messiah, and to denounce the vengeance ready to be executed upon them, which, in consequence of their predictions, they should see accomplished. Or this refers to their distinguished place of honour, when in the great day of the Redeemer's appearing and glory, they should be admitted to sit down as assessors with him on thrones around his own, approving and applauding his judgment, dispensed according to the word they preached, and afterwards shall, in the eternal world, reign with Christ in glory everlasting.

And whilst he thus promised the twelve this distinguished honour, he added also, for the encouragement of all who should tread in their steps to the end of time, that the like rewards should be the portion of the faithful. It is supposed, that for Christ's sake, all his true disciples would be called upon to make very painful sacrifices, and often be forced to lose the affection of nearest and dearest relations, be separated from the greatest comforts of life, and deprived of all they possessed: but he engages to indemnify them for their losses; sometimes in *kind*, by his providence so ordering events as that they shall in present advantages receive *a hundred fold*, or at least always *in comfort* shall have an abundant recompense, enjoying clearer and brighter manifestations of God's love and favour; and for temporal losses finding their souls enriched by spiritual graces; besides the glorious hope of *eternal life* in the world to come, secured by the faithfulness of the true Witness, and the unchangeable promises of God, which must needs infinitely overpay us for all the crosses and losses of this transitory world. We may learn from the whole of this discourse, (1.) To expect, if we are Christ's disciples, many a cross, and to be ready to part with whatever stands in competition with his honour and interest. (2.) To be thankful if we are not called to those severer exercises of discipleship which others before us have endured. (3.) To keep

the promises in our eye when the day of trial comes, and then we shall think nothing too hard to suffer, or too dear to lose. A sense of the Redeemer's present love, and a prospect of the glory which shall be revealed, will make every present affliction light, and cause us to rejoice in the midst of our sorrows. (4.) The time we must suffer for Christ is momentary, but our reign with him shall be eternal.

6. He adds, by way of obviating any mistake which might arise, as if eternal life was the reward of merit, not of grace, or as if priority of calling gave precedence in his kingdom, that *many who were first shall be last, and the last first.* Many of the Jews, who were first called, refusing the invitation, and many Gentiles through grace, though last invited, eagerly embracing the gospel; and also of those, both of the Jews and Gentiles, many who were truly and effectually called and converted at first, would be outstripped in attainments, and excelled in spirituality, zeal, and fidelity, by those who in order of time should afterwards come in, and be exalted to higher honours in his kingdom, which he elucidates by a parable in the succeeding chapter. *Note,* If we are called late, we must work the faster, and give the greater diligence to redeem the time.

CHAP. XX.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

We have four things in this chapter: 1. *The parable of the labourers in the vineyard,* ver. 1—16. 2. *A prediction of Christ's approaching sufferings,* ver. 17—19. 3. *The petition of two of the disciples, by their mother, reproved,* ver. 20—28. 4. *The petition of the two blind men granted, and their eyes opened,* ver. 29—34.

1. FOR [a] the kingdom of heaven is like unto [b] a man *that is* an householder, which went out [c] early in the morning to hire [d] labourers into his vineyard. 2. And when [e] he had agreed with the labourers for a [f] penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3. And he went out about the third hour,* and saw others standing idle in the market place; 4. And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and [g] whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. 5. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6. And about the [h] eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7. They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right *that* shall ye receive. 8. So when [i] even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9. And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a [k] penny. 11. And when they had received *it,* they [l] murmured against the good man of the house, 12. Saying, These † last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, [l] which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13. But he answered one of them, and said, [m] Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14. Take *that* thine *is,* and go thy way: I will give unto this last even as unto thee. 15. [n] Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? is thine eye evil, ‡ because I am good? 16. [o] So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

a Ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17. & 13. 3—52.
b Is. 5. 1, 2. Ps. 80. 8—11. Jer. 2. 21. ch. 21. 33—43. Song 8. 11.
c 1 Kin. 18. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Prov. 8. 17.
d Phil. 2. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 5—10. 1 Cor. 15. 58.
e Exod. 19. 5, 6. Deut. iv—xxii. Is. 1. 16—20.
f The Roman penny is sevenpence three farthings. Ch. 18. 28. & 22. 19. Rev. 6. 6.
* Answering, at the equinox to nine o'clock in the forenoon. Thus the others were hired respectively at twelve noon, three in the afternoon, and last of all, five in the afternoon.
g Phil. 1 7. Col. 4. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 13. Heb 6. 10.
n Time of calling the Gentiles. Rom. 16 26. Eph. 1. 10. & 3. 5. 6. Col. 1. 26. Heb. 1. 1.
i Job 19. 25. Acts 17. 31. ch. 13. 39, 40. & 24. 44. & 25. 6, 19, 31, 32. Heb. 9. 28. Rev. 20. 11, 12. 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17.
k Luke 15. 28, 29. Acts 11. 1, 2. & 22. 21, 22. 1 Thes. 2. 16. Rom. 11. 28.
† Or *have continued one hour only.*
l 1 Cor. 4. 11. 2 Cor. 11. 23, 24. Luke 15. 29. with Ruth 2. 19.
m Or *fellow.* 1 Cor. 3. 9. with Rom. 9. 14.
n Ch. 11. 25. Rom. 9. 15—21. Eph. 1. 3—11. & 2. 4—9.
‡ That is, unkind grudging, uncharitable. Deut. 15. 9. Prov. 23. 6. ch. 6. 23. Jon. 4. 1—4. Mark 7. 22.
o Ch. 19. 30. Mark 10. 31. Luke 13. 30. & 7. 29. & 12. 32. ch. 22. 14. & 7. 13. Acts 13. 48.

Verses 1—16. This parable is a comment on the text which concluded the foregoing chapter, and represents to us the gospel dispensation, and this with particular application to the Jews and Gentiles; the former of whom were ever for excluding the latter from all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, and could never endure the thoughts of the heathen being admitted to equal privileges with themselves. But so God had ordained; and though, for their fathers' sakes, the first offers of the gospel were to be made to them, yet the Gentiles were shortly to be admitted fellow-heirs, and of the same body. More generally the parable may also represent to us the sovereignty of God in the dispensation of his gifts of grace and glory. As he is debtor to none, he may do what he will with his own; may bestow his blessings in time, measure, manner, as he pleases; and reward according to the good pleasure of his will.

1. We have an account in this parable of the agreement made with the labourers by the master of the vineyard. *The vineyard* may represent the church; *the master,* the Lord Jesus; *the labourers,* as many as the Lord our God shall call; *the market-place,* the world that lieth in wickedness; where, till he comes to hire us, we are idle, unemployed, or worse, employed in mischief; serving divers lusts and pleasures, and doing no work God is pleased with or that can bring any revenue of glory to him. Our work for which we are engaged is, caring for the soul, and in this service our own benefit as well as God's glory, is consulted: for indeed, *If we be righteous, what do we unto him?* yet God is pleased to hire us to labour for ourselves, and as the reward of grace, to promise us the wages of spiritual and eternal blessings, signified by the Roman *penny,* about seven pence half-penny in value, the usual hire of a day labourer. The *day* of life is our working season, a short moment, in which we have much to do, and therefore called to do it with our might, before the night cometh, when no man can work. And if the burden be heavy, or the heat intense, the time is short, the shadows of the evening are hasting on, and the night of death will dismiss us to our eternal rest. The different hours may represent, (1.) The calling of Jews and Gentiles: the *early* morning call may point to the ministry of Christ: the third hour, to that of the apostles sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; the sixth and ninth hours may refer to their preaching still to those of Judea only, and to the dispersed among the Gentiles for a time; till at the eleventh hour the call was enlarged to the heathen world, to those who had never heard the glad tidings of salvation before, and then readily accepted the invitation of entering into the vineyard of Jesus. (2.) The different ages of those who are

effectually called of the Lord. Some are brought home to him in childhood, as Timothy. From early youth, like good Josiah, their heart is tender, and grace begins its blessed work, engaging them to give themselves up to the service of their Redeemer. Others at different periods are called to Jesus, severed by grace, in the very prime of life, from their gay pursuits; or as they are first entering on the world, brought out of it to follow Christ. Some are stopped, after a long career in evil, and in their declining years mercifully constrained to bow to the Redeemer, and a few, even at the eleventh hour, bending to the grave under decrepit age, are made single monuments of divine mercy and sovereignty, and proofs of his ability to save to the uttermost. No bonds of custom in sin, no fetters of worldly connections, no length of time, or depth of corruption, prevent the efficacy of God's grace towards his chosen. It is happy for those who begin soonest; but it is never too late. Whilst the day lasts, the call still is, *Whosoever will, let him come;* but we may not trifle with the moment of opportunity: eternity is at stake; and therefore to-day, whilst it is called to-day, we must embrace the gracious invitation.

2. The evening came, the labourers were called, their wages paid, and each received a penny. The evening is the end of time, when the great account will be settled, and all, both Jews and Gentiles, will appear at the judgment-seat of Christ, the great *steward*, to receive according to the things they have done in the body. He is represented beginning with the last, and giving to each the same reward; for, as the wages are not of debt, but of grace, in heaven (as some conceive) all shall enjoy the same perfect measure of glory; at least every vessel, if there be a diversity of capacities, shall be full.

3. They who had entered the vineyard first, seeing the rest thus recompensed, supposed their labours entitled them to more than their agreement, and therefore were disappointed when they received no more than a penny, and began to murmur and complain, as if an injustice had been done them in making those their equals in the wages who had so much later in the day entered upon the work. And this represents the case of the Jews, who, because they were the ancient people of God, were first called, and had enjoyed peculiar privileges beyond any other nation, would fain have monopolized the advantages of the Messiah's kingdom, or at least, have possessed its chief honours, and could not endure the thought that the Gentiles should be made their equals, and share the same grace and glory with them.

4. The master of the vineyard silences the murmurers, addressing himself to one of them, *saying, Friend, I do thee no wrong*, &c. There could be no injustice done to him, if he had the full sum agreed for; and therefore he ought to be content. He had a right to dispose of his own money as he pleased; and if he chose to give unto the last a penny, as well as to the first, it were wicked and envious to repine against the gracious giver. And all this is true, not only with regard to the Jews and Gentiles, but, with regard to all mankind in general. (1.) God, who is justice itself, neither can nor will do wrong to any. (2.) His gifts of providence and grace are his own; and as none have a title to either, though they on whom he is pleased to bestow them have reason to be thankful, they from whom he withholds them have no just cause to complain. (3.) If we can claim any thing from God as our own, it is only in virtue of his gracious promise, not on account of our desert. (4.) We are too apt to be making comparisons between ourselves and others; and, partial in our own favour, are ready to think that kindness shown to others, are acts of injustice done to ourselves. (5.) Envy makes us self-tormentors, and is at once our sin and our curse.

5. The text of the discourse concludes it, being the point which was to be proved; *so the first, shall be last, and the last first.* Many Gentiles should far outshine the Jewish converts who were first admitted into the church; and many rising disciples would be found, who in knowledge, grace, and holiness, would overtake and exceed those who were in Christ before them: *For*, not those who are foremost in profession, are always first in the race, but contrariwise: *many* who *are called* into the outward communion of the church are never effectually converted and turned to God; and it will be found at last, that there are *but few*, comparatively speaking, *chosen* to eternal life and glory: an assertion most alarming, and which should awaken all our solicitude to make our calling and election sure, that we may be of that few.

17. ¶ [q] And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, [r] took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, 18. Behold, [s] we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, 19. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him:* and the third day he shall rise again.

[q] Mark 10. 32—34. Luke 18. 31—34.
[r] Ch. 5. 2. & 13. 11, 36. & 16. 13. Acts 10. 41. Deut. 6. 7. Gen. 18. 19.
[s] Ch. 16. 21. & 17. 9, 22, 23. & 26. 2 John 2. 19. Is. 53. 1—12. Ps. 2 1—3. & 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—20. ch. xxvi—xxviii. Mark xiv—xvi. Luke xxii—xxiv. John xviii—xx. Acts 4. 27, 28. & 2. 23.

Verses 17—19. To prepare them for that scene of distress and sufferings on which he was about to enter, he once more took his disciples apart, as they went up together to Jerusalem, and repeated what he said before, chap. xvi. 21. xvii. 22, 23. informing them now more particularly concerning the manner of his sufferings and death, which he had foretold: That he should not only be betrayed into his enemies' hands, but persecuted with unrelenting malice, and by a most unrighteous sentence condemned to die: That he should be delivered to the Gentiles, the Romans, who alone had then the power of life and death in Judea; and, after enduring the most shocking and barbarous indignities, should suffer death upon a cross. Tidings that no doubt filled them with horror and dismay; but he adds, for their comfort and support, that on the third day he should rise again. *Note*, In all the troubles we feel or fear, it is a comfort to look forward to a resurrection-day, when they will all be for ever at an end.

20. ¶ [t] Then came to him the [u]mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit [x] the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, [y] in thy kingdom. 22. But Jesus answered and said, [z] Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink [a] of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? they say unto him, [b] We are able. 23. And he saith unto them, [c] Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* [d] for whom it is prepared of my Father. 24. [e] And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved

[t] Ch. 4. 21. Mark 10. 35—45. Jer. 45. 5.
[u] Salome. Mark 15. 40. ch. 27. 56.
[x] 1 Kin. 2. 19. & 22. 19. Ps. 45. 9. & 110. 1. i. e. be thy chief ministers of state.
[y] Ch. 19. 28. & 16. 27, 28. Heb. 2. 8, 9. & 12. 2.
[z] Rom. 8. 26. Jam. 4. 3.
[a] Ps. 75. 8. ch. 26. 39, 42. Mark 14. 36. Luke 12. 50. & 22. 42. John 18. 11. Is. 51. 17, 22. Ps. 60. 3. Jer. 25. 15.
[b] Ch. 26. 56. John 16. 32.
[c] John 16. 33. ch. 10. 17—34. & 24. 9. Col. 1. 24. Acts iv—xii. Rev. 1. 9.
[d] Ch. 25. 34. Rom. 8. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 9. Heb. 11. 16. John 17. 2. Rev. 2. 7, 10, 17. & 3. 5, 12, 21. 2 Cor. 1. 7. Eph. 1. 3—14.
[e] Luke 22. 24, 25. Mark 10. 41, 42. Prov. 13. 10. Jam. 4. 1.

with indignation against the two brethren. 25. But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26. [f] But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28. [g] Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

[f] Luke 14. 11. & 18. 14. ch. 18. 3, 4. & 23. 8—12. John 13. 12—17. ch. 11. 29. Heb. 5. 8. Phil. 2. 5—8. Rom. 15. 2. 1 Cor. 7. 19—21.

[g] Is. 53. 10, 11. Dan. 9. 24, 26. ch 26. 28. Luke 22. 27. John 11. 51, 52. & 10. 11, 15. Rom. 5. 15—19. Phil. 2. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Tit. 2. 14. Heb. 9. 28. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 2. 24. & 3. 18. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4. Rom. 8. 3, 4. & 3. 24—26. Eph. 1. 7. & 5. 2.

Verses 20—28. Far from being cured of their national prejudices by all the sufferings our Lord had foretold them he should endure, they concluded these would be only the prelude to the more glorious manifestations of his power at his rising again. And therefore,

1. Two of the disciples, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, with their mother Salome, who is supposed to have been nearly related to Joseph, and might therefore hope to have a strong interest in Jesus, came to their Master, and through her preferring their request, with deep respect she besought him to grant her a favour; and being ordered to name it, she desired him to confer on her two sons the first honours of that kingdom which they shortly expected would appear.

2. Pitying their ignorance and weakness, instead of upbraiding their pride and folly, our Lord turned to the two disciples, and gently admonishes them, saying, *Ye know not what ye ask:* your notions of the nature of my kingdom are utterly mistaken: it is not an earthly throne to which I shall be exalted; and as mistaken are you in the means of attaining the honours you seek. You are not aware of the sufferings and trials that must be endured by all those who would come to reign with me. Through much tribulation lies the entrance into heaven; and can you, think ye, drink of my bitter cup, or bear to be baptized in blood, as I must shortly be? Such sufferings as these they were not prepared for: their ambition looked so high, that they saw not the dangers which were before them, nor knew what manner of spirit they were of. *Note*, (1.) They who would reign with Christ, must first suffer with him; and every Christian should well count the cost, before he begins to take up his cross. (2.) In all our sufferings it should sweeten our cup, to think that Christ hath drank of it before us, and all the bitterness of sin he hath taken away.

3. Their self-confidence is a natural consequence of their pride, and therefore they without hesitation boldly engage for their own ability and fidelity; though, alas! they were sad strangers to themselves, and knew not what they said. *Note*, Young converts are often very forward, till sad experience hath taught them their own weakness.

4. Christ replies, and assures them they shall suffer for him, and in a manner they probably at that time little apprehended: but though they did so, still he left their request in suspense. The honour they sought was to be disposed of according to God's eternal counsels, and not to be given, *save to them for whom it is prepared of my Father*. In the distribution of spiritual, temporal, and eternal blessings, all are dispensed according to the plan laid down in the eternal mind, and concerted in the everlasting covenant of grace; nothing can be added thereto, or diminished therefrom.

5. The same ambitious spirit which spoke in the request of John and James, equally appeared in the indignation of the other ten against them, who each thought himself as much entitled to the superiority which they desired. They did not grieve for the sin of their brethren, but were angry at what they conceived an affront to them; and whilst they violently condemned their ambition, like many others, were blind to the same spirit in themselves. *Note*, Desire of pre-eminence is among the most fruitful sources of disputes among brethren. Instead of being in his own eyes the last and the least, each is for assuming a superiority, which the proud heart of his fellow is very unwilling to admit.

6. To silence the dispute and strike at the root of the evil, Jesus with the greatest tenderness called them to him; and, to beat down that spirit of ambition, so evil in itself, and so peculiarly unbecoming their holy and humble profession, he endeavours to undeceive them respecting the nature of his kingdom, which was purely spiritual. The kings and princes of the Gentiles indeed thirsted after dominion and despotic sway, and the more potent exercised unbounded authority over their weaker vassals and subjects; but utterly unlike them must their conduct be. Their greatness must consist not in lording it over God's heritage, but in their abounding labours: not in aspiring desires to rule, but in humble endeavours to promote the salvation of men's souls. The only laudable ambition Jesus can approve, is the holy strife who shall be most condescending, and the first in every work and labour of love to serve the meanest who bear the Christian name. Nor did he, their Master, recommend ought to them, of which himself had not set them an eminent example, who came not to take state upon himself, and be served with earthly pomp and grandeur, but humbled himself to the lowest offices in the service of men's souls and bodies: and, after living the life of a servant, was about to die the death of a slave, that by the sacrifice of himself he might give *a ransom for many*, even for all those whom the Father had given him, in whose stead he was about to suffer, in order to redeem them from the guilt and power of their sins, and from the wrath of God which they had provoked; and having him therefore for such a pattern of humility, they were peculiarly obliged to copy after it. *Note*, (1.) The affectation of earthly pomp and splendour is utterly unbecoming those who pretend to be the ministers of the meek and humble Jesus. (2.) The church of Christ hath never suffered greater injuries than from the tyranny and oppression of those, who, professing to be the successors of the apostles, seem to have inherited nothing from them, but that lordly, ambitious, and domineering spirit for which Jesus so justly reprimanded them. (3.) The only allowable ambition among the ministers of Christ is, who shall be most humble and serviceable to their brethren, and herein most conformed to their blessed Master's image. (4.) The life which the Lord Jesus laid down, was the price of our redemption; and being accepted of God as complete and full, the redemption obtained by it was eternal: those therefore for whom he died can never more suffer under the sins for which he paid a ransom.

29. ¶ [h] And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. 30. And, behold, [i] two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, [k] O Lord, *thou* Son of David. 31. [l] And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David. 32. And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What [m] will ye that I shall do unto you? 33. They say

[h] Mark 10. 46—52. Luke 18. 35—43.

[i] Ch. 9. 27. & 12. 22. & 11. 5. Is. 35. 5, 6. & 42. 18. & 59. 10.

[k] Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. ch. 1. 1. & 9. 27. & 12. 23. & 15. 22. Rom. 1. 3, 4. Rev. 22. 16.

[l] Ch. 19. 13. & 15. 23. with ch. 18. 19. Luke 18. 1. & 11. 8. ch. 7. 7. Phil. 4. 6. Ps. 50. 15.

[m] Ch. 7. 7. Ezek. 36. 37. Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15.

unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. 34. So [n] Jesus had compassion *on them*, [o] and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

n Heb. 4. 15. & 2. 17. Ps. 145. 8. ch. 9. 36. & 14. 14. & 15. 32. Hos. 11. 8. Is. 63. 7, 9, 15.

o Ch. 9. 29. & 12. 22. & 11. 5. Is. 35. 5. Luke 1. 79.

Verses 29—34. Advancing still towards Jerusalem, Jesus and his disciples passed through Jericho, attended as usual by a vast multitude, whom curiosity to hear or see his miracles, desire to learn, or want of his healing influence, had drawn together; when, behold, a wondrous instance of his power and compassion appears.

1. Two blind men, beggars, sat by the way-side, and hearing from some of the multitude, that the famed prophet of Nazareth, who had wrought so many miracles, was passing by, they immediately concluded it a most providential circumstance, and with united and loud supplications cried out incessantly, *Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David. Note,* (1.) In these blind beggars we may behold a lively emblem of our souls. Our understanding is darkness and we utterly destitute of all good, perishing inevitably in want and wretchedness, unless the divine mercy respect our misery and relieve us. (2.) They who feel their real state, will cry after Jesus, the only hope of the miserable and the destitute. (3.) Providential opportunities should be improved; if we neglect them now, they never may return.

2. They made so loud a noise and cried so vehemently, that the multitude rebuked them as troublesome, and bade them be silent. But this only made them redouble their prayers, saying, *Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David:* Thou, who art so able to help us, whose tender mercies have been so often extended to others, let our pitiable case engage thy notice, and move thy wonted compassions. And herein they have set us a noble example, (1.) Of fervent prayer. Their wants were great; they felt them with deep sensibility; therefore they cried so loud, so persevering: so should we do. We may meet with many discouragements in seeking Christ; but these, instead of silencing our prayer, should quicken our importunity. (2.) Of confident faith. They were fully persuaded, that what they asked, he was willing and able to grant them. His power as the Lord, his office as the Son of David, emboldened their trust in his mercy. It is by faith we must thus in every distress honour Jesus by casting our care upon him, pleading his name as the ground of our confidence. (3.) Of deep humility. They ask for mercy alone, referring themselves entirely to him for the manner in which he pleases to dispense it to them. We have no merit; can claim nothing at God's hands; deserve nothing but wrath and hell: all our hope is in his boundless grace, to supply all our poverty and wretchedness, to pardon our guilt, and bestow the gifts of his Spirit to deliver us from the power of our sin. This mercy grant, O Son of David!

3. Christ, who had heard their cries, and knew what rebukes they had met with, stood and called them to him; for he delights to revive the spirit of the contrite, and to relieve the wants of the miserable. He bids them therefore prefer their request, intimating his readiness to grant the mercy they had so importunately sought. *Note,* The promises of Christ give an unlimited scope to our prayers: we can ask nothing really good for us, which Jesus is not willing to bestow.

4. The poor blind men have a ready answer; *Lord, that our eyes may be opened.* They ask not for silver or gold, but for a boon far more difficult to be granted, which yet they are assured he can easily bestow. We have need to prefer the same prayer every day; and would to God we were more deeply affected with our spiritual blindness, that our applications might be more frequent and fervent.

5. Their cure is immediate. The compassions of Jesus left them not in suspense: he touched their eyes; a flood of day instantly broke upon them: and joining the company, they joyfully followed him, testifying their gratitude, love, and praise. *Note,* They who are enlightened by the Redeemer's grace, will from that moment cleave to him in his holy ways, and gratefully labour to advance his glory.

CHAP. XXI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the two grand hinges upon which our salvation turns; and therefore the history of his sufferings, even unto death, and his rising again, is more particularly recorded by all the evangelists than any other part of his story. We have here, 1. *The public entry which he made into Jerusalem, upon the first day of the passion-week,* ver. 1—11. 2. *The authority he exercised there, in cleansing the temple, and driving out of it the buyers and sellers,* ver. 12—16. 3. *The emblem he gave of the state of the Jewish church, in cursing the barren fig-tree, and his discourse with his disciples thereupon,* ver. 17—22. 4. *His justifying his own authority, by appealing to the baptism of John,* ver. 23—27. 5. *His shaming the infidelity and obstinacy of the chief priests and elders, with the repentance of the publicans, illustrated by the parable of the two sons,* ver. 29—32. 6. *His reading the doom of the Jewish church for its unfruitfulness, in the parable of the vineyard let out to unthankful husbandmen,* ver. 33—46.

1. AND [a] when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 2. Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me. 3. And if any *man* say ought unto you, ye shall say, [b] The Lord hath [c] need of them; and straightway he will send them. 4. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5. [d] Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.* 6. [e] And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them; 7. And brought the ass, and the colt, [f] and put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon. 8. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed *them* in the way. 9. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, [g] cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. 10. [h] And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? 11. And the multitude said, This is [i] Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

a Mark 11. 1—15. Luke 19. 29—44. John 12. 12—16.

b Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 10, 11. Acts 10. 36. Heb. 1. 2. John 3. 35. & 22. & 17. 2.

c 2 Cor. 8. 9. Zech. 9. 9. to mark his debasement, and that he was the true king of Israel. Deut. 17. 16. 1 Kin. 1. 33.

d Is. 62. 11. Zech. 9. 9. John 12. 15. ch. 11. 29. & 12. 19. 20. Ps. 45. 4. 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8. Song 3. 11.

* From the other Evangelists, it would appear that our Lord rode only on the colt; from this passage we should be apt to think that both had been used. But it is not unusual with the sacred authors, when the nature of the thing spoken of is sufficient, for precluding mistakes, to employ the plural number for the singular. — *Campbell.*

e Mark 11. 4—6. Luke 19. 32—34.

f 2 Kin. 9. 13. Lev. 23. 40. John 1. 14. & 12. 12—14.

g Ps. 118. 24—26. ch. 23. 39. ver. 15. Ps. 24. 7—10.

h Is. 63. 1. & 9. 6. & 49. 9—11. & 62. 11. Zech. 9. 5.

i Deut. 18. 15—18. Acts 3. 22. 23. ch. 2. 23. & 16. 14. Luke 4. 16—29. & 24. 29. John 1. 45. & 7. 41. & 6. 14. & 9. 17.

12. ¶ And Jesus went into the temple * of God, and [k] cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13. And said unto them, [l] It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; [m] but ye have made it a den of thieves. 14. [n] And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. 15. ¶ [o] And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, † Hosanna to the [p] Son of David; they were sore displeased, 16. And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, [q] Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? 17. ¶ [r] And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

* That is, the outermost court of the temple, where this sort of traffic was exercised.

[k] John 2. 13—16. Deut. 14. 25, 26. Mark 11. 15. Luke 19. 45.

[l] Is. 56. 7. & 60. 7. Ps. 93. 5.

[m] Jer. 7. 11. Mark 11. 17. Luke 19. 46. Hos. 12. 7.

[n] Gen. 49. 10. Is. 35. 5. Hag. 2. 7. Mal. 3. 1. ch. 4. 23, 24. & 8. 16. & 9. 35. & 11. 5. & 12. 15. & 14. 35, 36. & 15. 31.

[o] Is. 26. 11. Acts 4. 2. & 13. 45. Job 5. 2. Eccl. 4. 4. ch. 27. 18.

† *i. e.* Save now.

[p] The Messiah. Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 33. 15, 16.

[q] Ps. 8. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 26—28.

[r] Mark 11. 11—22. John 11. 1, 18. & 12. 1.

Verses 1—11. Being about to offer himself as the true paschal Lamb for the sins of his people, our blessed Lord determined to make his triumphant entry first into Jerusalem, as a prelude to those more exalted honours, to which on his resurrection from the dead he should be advanced. We are told on his approaching the suburbs, where he halted,

1. The preparations he ordered to be made. We find no heralds sent to clear the way; no guards surround his glittering car; no music fills the air with harmony; no officers of state with gorgeous robes attend their mighty sovereign. The lowly Jesus despised this pageantry; it fitted not his state of humiliation: and therefore, though he could in an instant have commanded down cherubic legions to attend his steps, and made the clouds his chariots, he chose his poor disciples to be with him, and seated on an ass' colt, nor even that his own, determines thus to make his public entry. Yet even here he takes occasion to display his divine omniscience and influence over the spirits of men; sending his disciples to the village over against them, directing them where to find the ass tied with her foal: assuring them, that if any man offered to question them for loosing the ass, it would be sufficient to say their Master wanted them, and he would immediately let them go.

2. The fulfilment of the Scripture herein is particularly remarked. Long before had the prophets Isaiah and Zechariah predicted this event; *Tell ye the daughter of Zion* glad tidings of great joy: *Behold*, admire and adore him, *thy king*, the long expected Messiah, *cometh unto thee*, bringing salvation; *meek as* a lamb, to bear every indignity for Zion's sake, and gentle to rule with a sceptre of love in the hearts of his people; *sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass;* like one of the ancient judges of Israel, and in such humility as was best suited to that character he bore. *Note*, Christ is Zion's king: his happy subjects may well rejoice in his power and love; but let his enemies tremble; though he comes now like a lamb, he will shortly roar against them as a lion.

3. The disciples having obeyed their Master's orders, and brought the ass with her colt, they spread their garments on them and seated him thereon, and with every expression of exultation and joy, which this poor, and, to human view, despicable multitude could show, they ushered him into the city, spreading their garments instead of carpets on the ground, or hanging them by the way side; cutting down boughs of trees, and strewing them by the road; carrying palm branches in their hands, (John xii. 13.) as in the feast of tabernacles, and uttering, with loud Hosannahs, their triumphant songs of praise, welcoming their adored Messiah, the Son of David, who came with divine authority from on high; wishing him all prosperity, honour, happiness, and glory; praying for the appearing of his kingdom, and that his throne might be exalted over all; and calling on the heavenly hosts to join their blessings, praise, and adoration. *Note*, (1.) The coming of Jesus into the sinner's heart is still matter of greater exultation, and deserves louder shouts of praise. (2.) They who have tasted the preciousness of a Redeemer's grace in their own souls, cannot but long to see his kingdom established in the hearts of others, and fervently pray for its more abundant manifestation in the world.

4. Such an uncommon scene excited great emotion in the inhabitants of Jerusalem, according as they were differently affected with wonder, envy, contempt, or exultation; and the general inquiry was, *Who is this?* that comes with such a train, and such exclamations. To which the multitude replied, *This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth, of Galilee*, whose doctrines and miracles have rendered him so famed, and confirmed his divine mission. *Note*, (1.) Christ is often little known, where the greatest profession of his religion is made. (2.) The poor despised multitude judge righter concerning Jesus, his character, and gospel, than the wise and noble, who often affect to despise them.

Verses 12—17. The Son of God, the King in Zion, regards his temple as his palace, and thitherward directs his steps.

1. He purges it of intruders, the buyers and sellers, who in the courts carried on their traffic: exchanging bills to purchase sheep and doves for sacrifice, or money to pay the annual half shekel; and under pretence that this was in order to further the temple service, the priests, through avarice, connived at it, enriching themselves by the extortion practised on these occasions. But the Lord overthrew their stalls, and drove them out before him, confounded and unable to bear his frowns, or resist his arm; vindicating his conduct, and condemning their wickedness by a quotation from Isa. lvi. 7. and Jer. vii. 11. saying, *It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer*, to which men should resort, and where God had promised to hear their supplications; *but ye have made it a den of thieves*, perverting it to the vilest purposes, dishonouring God, and plundering the people. *Note*, (1.) The vilest corruptions have been introduced into the church by those who, making advantage the end of their profession, counterfeit godliness in order to make gain. (2.) The eyes of his peculiar jealousy are upon his church, and nothing can more offend the blessed head of it, than to behold an avaricious spirit in those who, by their very calling, profess themselves crucified to the world.

2. When he had ejected the intruders, he sat as a King upon his throne to dispense his royal favours; healing the blind and lame who came to him in the temple, and thither the spiritually blind and lame are invited still to come to him, and by his word and Spirit he continues to manifest there his healing power and grace.

3. He rebukes the envy of the chief priests and scribes. They could not bear to see such incontestable miracles wrought by him; and when the very children, struck with the works of Jesus, joined their feeble voices to the acclamations of the multitude, and cried, *Hosannah to the son of David*, they were stung with malignant envy, and intimated to Jesus, that to hear without silencing such silly little creatures, proved him weakly vain and ostentatious. But Jesus vindicates these infant praises he heard; he approved their lispings; and had these cavillers known the Scriptures, they might have herein observed their fulfilment,

where it was written, *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength*, Psal. viii. 2. God's strength was now made perfect in their weakness, and the Messiah's praise advanced by these feeble instruments, to the confusion and condemnation of those who rejected and denied him. *Note*, (1.) Greatness and goodness are ever the objects of envy, and the proud cannot bear to hear the tribute of commendation paid to superior excellence. (2.) It is happy when children learn betimes to lisp the Redeemer's praise. Though education cannot bestow grace, yet example and instruction in the way of godliness, are means we may humbly hope God will effectually bless. (3.) The prayers and services of little children are pleasing to the dear Saviour, and he will graciously accept their feeble efforts to express their gratitude.

4. Leaving them to reflect on what had passed, he departed to Bethany where he lodged, about two miles from Jerusalem; thus for a while withdrawing himself from their malice and fury, and depriving them of the blessing of his presence, which they had so justly forfeited.

s Mark 11. 12, 13. Luke 13. 6—9. Phil. 3. 18, 19. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. ch. 12. 43—45. ver. 40—44 Luke 19. 42—44.

18. Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered. 19. [s] And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but [t] leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away. 20. And when the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, [u] How soon is the fig-tree withered away! 21. Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, [x] If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig-tree; but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. 22. [y] And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

t 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16. Rev. 3. 1.

u Mark 11. 20, 21. ch. 24. 42, 44, 50. & 25. 6, 13. Job xviii, xx. 1. 30. 13, 14.

x Ch. 17. 20. Luke 17. 6 Jam. 1. 6. Rom. 4. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

y Ch. 7. 7, 11. & 18. 19. Mark 11. 24. Luke 11. 8, 9. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 24. Jam. 5. 16. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14.

Verses 18—22. In the morning early Jesus returned to Jerusalem, and having probably come out fasting, he was hungry; being, as man, subject to all our sinless infirmities. And seeing a fig-tree remarkably flourishing, he made up to it, expecting to have found fruit, but found nothing but leaves; on which denouncing a curse upon it for its barrenness, the tree immediately began to wither. And herein Christ seems to have particularly in his view the Jewish people, of which this fig-tree was a lively emblem. They were, in their profession of religion, zealous and plausible, but barren of all true fruits of righteousness; and therefore were now given up to the curse, to be destroyed without remedy. *Note*, (1.) Christ requires of his disciples not merely leaves of profession, but the fruit of grace; though too many deceive his expectations, and rest in the form, whilst they continue strangers to the power of godliness. (2.) The curse will light upon the barren trees; often in this world the hypocrite's hope perisheth; they discover their insincerity, and wither in the eyes of man; but at farthest, the day of recompense will blast their confidences.

The disciples the next morning passing with their master the same way, Mark xi. 20. observed with wonder how soon the fig-tree was withered away which Jesus had cursed the preceding day: and so terrible are his comminations, and sure to light down upon the devoted sinner's head. In answer to which observation, Jesus replied, that this was little, compared with the power they should be endued with, if they exercised unshaken and unwavering faith in God; not hesitating or reasoning how the miracle could be performed, but trusting God's power and promises; in which case they would be enabled, not merely to dry up a fig-tree with a word, but to say *to this mountain*, on which they now stood, *be thou removed and cast into the sea*, and *it shall be done*. Such astonishing miracles should they be enabled to work; and whatever other thing they should find needful in the execution of their ministry, for the honour of God and the furtherance of his gospel, they need only ask it in prayer, nothing doubting, and it should assuredly be granted them. *Note*, The prayer of faith is sure to prevail; to this God denies nothing. If ever we want, are unhappy, or in distress, to this source it may be traced, to the distrust of his promises, his power, or his love.

z Mark 14. 27—33. Luke 20. 1—8.

23. ¶ [z] And when he was come into the temple, [a] the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, [b] By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? 24. [c] And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like-wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. 25. [d] The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? 26. But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people: [e] for all hold John as a prophet. 27. And they answered Jesus, and said, [f] We cannot tell. And he said unto them, [g] Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

a 1 Chron. xxiv. Exod. 19. 7. Num. 11. 16. Ruth 4. 4. 1 Sam. 15. 30.

b Exod. 2. 14. Acts 7. 27. & 4. 7. ch. 7. 29.

c Ch. 10. 16, 17. Eph. 5. 15. Job 5. 13.

d Ch. iii. Luke i, iii. Mark i. 1—11. John 1. 6—36. & 3. 22—36. & 5. 32—35. Luke 7. 29, 30. ch. 17. 12. Mark 9. 13.

e Ch. 14. 5. Mark 6. 20. Luke 20. 6. John 5. 35.

f Rom. 1. 18, 21, 22, 28. 2 Cor. 2. 15. & 4. 3, 4. 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10.

g Prov. 26. 4. Job 5. 13.

Verses 23—27. We have here,

1. The insolent demand made upon our Lord, and the interruption given him in his blessed work, by the chief priests and elders, the rulers in church and state; who, unable any longer to contain, and filled with indignation at what they had seen and heard the preceding day, insisted upon his producing authority for what he did, and showing the commission under which he acted, presuming that his answer would infallibly lay him open to some accusation, which they had so long wished to find against him. *Note*, When we are faithfully labouring for Christ, we need not wonder if Satan and his instruments labour to interrupt us.

2. Christ answers their demand by another. He knew how to confound them, whilst they thought to silence him, and is ready out of their own mouths to condemn them. *The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?* Was he commissioned from heaven, or went forth at his own will, or under merely human authority? The question was short, but the dilemma to which it reduced them was inextricable. They plainly saw, if they should say, John acted under a divine commission, then Christ would have an immediate proof of his own, and they would be inexcusable for not receiving him as the Messiah, to whom John bore witness. On the other hand, their own honour, lives, and safety, were at stake; the people being fully persuaded of John's prophetic character, which should they deny,

they justly apprehended lest they should be stoned like blasphemers; and therefore, contrary to their own convictions, they chose to confess ignorance, and tell a lie, rather than own the divine mission of the messenger, which would, in its consequence, involve the divine authority of Jesus. But if they thus wilfully chose to appear ignorant in one case, our Lord was fully vindicated in refusing to give them farther satisfaction about himself, seeing it was in vain to talk with those who had first resolved not to be convinced. *Note*, (1.) Worldly minds are unspeakably more influenced by the fear of men, than by the fear of God. (2.) Many are more afraid of shame than sin, and therefore hesitate not at a lie concerning their thoughts and apprehensions, their affections and intentions, their remembering or forgetting things, &c. because they flatter themselves nobody can disprove them: but there is a searcher of hearts, from whom no secrets are hid. (3.) If men wilfully shut their eyes against the truth, it is in vain to reason with them any farther.

28. ¶ But what think ye? [h] A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. 29. [i] He answered and said, I will not: [k] but afterward he repented, and went. 30. And [l] he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not. 31. Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? [m] They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, [n] That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. 32. For [o] John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and [p] ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

h Luke 15. 11—32. ch. 20. 7. Gen. ix.

i Rom. 1. 18—32. Eph. 2. 2, 3, 11, 12. & 4. 17—19.

k Luke 15. 17, 18. Acts 17. 30. Eph. 2. 1—3, 12, 19.

l Ps. 147. 19, 20. ch. 23. 3. Luke 18. 11, 12. Exod. 19. 8. Deut. 5. 27.

m 2 Sam. 12. 5—7. Job 15. 6. Luke 19. 22.

n Ch. 9. 9. Luke 7. 29, 30.

o Ch. 3. 8. Luke 3. 12, 13. & 7. 29—50. ch. 11. 18. Luke 18. 13. & 19. 1—10.

p Ps. 10. 4. John 5. 40. Zech. 7. 11, 12. Ps. 81. 11, 12.

Verses 28—32. Having silenced their cavils, he makes an attack upon their conscience, in a parable, with an application to them.

1. We have the parable itself. A certain man had two sons, whom he sent into his vineyard to work: the one appeared at first refractory, undutiful, and refused to obey his father's commands; but afterwards, reflecting on his ill conduct, he was sorry, repented, and went to his work; the other no sooner was bid to go, than with profound respect he promised immediate obedience, but never went. The question, Which did his father's will? was too evident to admit of hesitation, and they allow the penitent to be the dutiful son. *Note*, (1.) God is our Father; he commands his children to serve and glorify him; by our relation to him obedience is our duty, and should be our delight. The day of life is the day of labour, and should therefore diligently be improved by us. But, (2.) Such is our vile nature, that we are rebellious children, refuse to hearken, yea, dare to say, *We will not* serve him, but our own lusts and pleasures, and insolently turn from him, every one in his own way. (3.) Whenever by divine grace we are led to repent and return, God in Christ is graciously pleased to receive us, to forgive our wickedness and insolence; again he permits us to be employed in his service, and restores us to his regard. (4.) Whilst some prove better than they promise, others prove the very contrary; make fair professions of love to Christ and his service, but never go farther; Christians in word and in tongue, but not in deed and in truth.

2. Christ applies the parable to those who were before him: the primary scope of which is to show, that publicans and harlots, repenting, would enter the kingdom sooner than they; and probably he hath an eye here unto the Gentiles, who would repent and be converted by the gospel, when the Jewish nation, for their impenitence and unbelief, would be rejected. And this had evidently appeared in the effects of John's ministry, who came *in the way of righteousness*; his life remarkably exemplary, his doctrine directly tending to lead men to repentance, and faith in the Messiah; whereby he proved his mission from God: but, notwithstanding, *ye believed him not:* though you pretend such respect for God, as the second son did for his father, you did not receive John's testimony, nor believe the doctrines he preached: but *the publicans and harlots believed him*, were convinced of their guilt and danger, received his testimony concerning Jesus, repented and were baptized: *and*, notwithstanding these remarkable fruits of his ministry, which served to evidence the divine power and authority which accompanied his word, *ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him*, but continued obstinately hardened against every method of conviction. *Note*, (1.) The success of our ministry is one of the best testimonials of our mission from God. (2.) Formal professors are much more difficultly wrought upon, and seldomer converted, than careless sinners. Strictness in the ceremonials of religion, and the pride of duties trusted upon for righteousness, are among the strongest holds of Satan in the human heart. (3.) Wherever the gospel comes in power, converting publicans and harlots, there will it leave those inexcusable who, beholding its efficacy on others, still contradict, and blaspheme, and reject the counsel of God against their own souls.

33. ¶ Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, [q] which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine press in it, and built [r] a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: 34. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, [s] that they might receive the fruits of it. 35. [t] And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. 36. Again he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. 37. But last of all he [u] sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. 38. [x] But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. 39. And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*. 40. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? 41. They say unto him, [y] He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and [z] will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. 42. Jesus saith unto them, [a] Did ye never

q Ps. 80. 8—15. Song 8. 11, 12. Is. 5. 1—4. Jer. 2. 21. Mark 12. 1—12. Luke 20. 9—18.

r Num. iii, iv, viii. Deut. 1. 15. & 16. 18. & 17. 9—15.

s Ps. 1. 3. Song 8. 11, 12.

t 1 Kin. 22. 24. 2 Chr. 16. 10. & 23. 19, 21. & 36. 15, 16. Neh. 9. 26. Jer. xx, xxvi, xxxvi, xxxvii, xxxviii. ch. 23. 34, 37. Acts 7. 52, 59. 1 Thes. 2. 15. Heb. 11. 36.

u Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. Luke i, ii, iv, &c. ch. i, iv. John ii, &c.

x Heb. 1. 2. ch. 26. 3, 4. & 27. 1. John 11. 53. ch. xxvi, xxvii. Mark xiv, xv. Luke xxii, xxiii. John v, vii, viii, x, xviii, xix. Acts 3. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Heb. 13. 12.

y Luke 19. 27, 42—44. & 20. 15, 16. Mark 12. 9. Deut. 4. 26, 27. & 28. 15—68. & 29. 18—28. & 31. 17, 18. & 32. 15—35. Lev. 26. 14—39. ch. 8. 11, 12. & 3. 12. & 12. 43—45. & 23. 35—38. & 22. 7. & 24. 2—34. Luke 17. 22—37. & 21. 6—33. Prov. 1. 21—32. John 9. 39—41. Acts 28. 23—28.

z Ch. 8. 11. Acts 13. 46, 47. & 18. 6. Rom. 11. 11—19. P. 47. 9.

Dan. 2. 44. ver. 43. a Ps. 118. 22. Acts 4. 11. Luke 20. 17. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Is. 28. 16. Eph. 2. 14—22. ch. 16. 18. Zech. 3. 9.

read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is [b] marvellous in our eyes?

b Rom. 16. 26, 27. Col. 1. 25—27. Eph. 3. 3—9.

c See on ver. 41.

43. Therefore say I unto you, [c] The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. 44. [d] And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. 45. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, [e] they perceived that he spake of them. 46. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they [f] feared the multitude, because they [g] took him for a prophet.

d Is. 8. 14, 15. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Luke 20. 18. Is. 60. 12. Zech. 12. 3. Ps. 2. 9. 1 Thes. 2. 16. see ver. 41. 2 Cor. 3. 14. & 4. 3, 4. Dan. 2. 43, 44. Ps. 110. 5, 6.

e Luke 11. 45. 2 Tim. 4. 3.

f Ver. 26. ch. 14. 5. Luke 20. 6. Mark 12. 12.

g Luke 7. 16. John 7. 40. see ver. 11.

Verses 33—46. Another parable, nearly of the same import as the former, is here delivered. We have,

1. The privileges which the Jewish church had long enjoyed, represented by a vineyard let out to husbandmen. They had been planted in a pleasant land, fenced round by God's peculiar care, blessed with the means of grace; in the midst of them he had set up his altar, manifested his presence, deposited his lively oracles, instituted divine ordinances, appointed a holy ministry: nothing that could conduce to their fruitfulness or defence was lacking: and therefore, having settled their constitution at Sinai, or at the dedication of the temple, retiring between the cherubim, he committed to the chief priests and elders the care of his church, for the edification of which they were required, as husbandmen in a vineyard, to labour. *Note*, (1.) Christ's church is his vineyard, and under his especial care, whilst the world in general lieth in wickedness. (2.) Ministers in the church, must *labour* in the word and doctrine; a life of ease, indolence, and self-gratification, is inconsistent with this sacred employment.

2. Enjoying such means and mercies, God justly expected their profiting should appear, and sent accordingly his prophets to remind them of their obligations, and stir them up and direct them to the discharge of them, that they might, in the fruits of grace and righteousness, render that tribute to God which was so much his due.

3. The baseness and cruelty of the husbandmen to these divine messengers was astonishing. They abused, insulted, and persecuted the prophets, and even went so far as to imbrue their hands in their blood, Jer. xx. 2. Neh. ix. 26. 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. and when the Lord, in his patience and pity, sent others in succession, to see if at last some change might be wrought, the rising generation repeated all the wickedness of their forefathers. *Note*, (1.) It hath been the lot of all God's faithful ministers from the beginning to suffer persecution; and none have been deeper in this transgression than those who by office and profession filled the most distinguished places in his church. (2.) God's patience with sinners is astonishing. Though provoked and insulted in the person of his ambassadors, he still sends them with proffers of peace and pardon.

4. When, in infinite condescension and love, God sent to them his Son, to whom they might well be expected to pay reverence and attention, and from whose ministry and miracles at least, if they rejected others, some blessed change might have been hoped for, so far were they from receiving, and submitting to him, that, to fill up the measure of their iniquities, they immediately began to plot against him, and what these husbandmen had done, they were now about to repeat, to cast him out and slay him; as if, when they had crucified him without the walls of Jerusalem, they might then lord it without control in the church, and by the murder of the heir, seize the inheritance without opposition.

5. Christ appeals to them for what they thought must be the consequence when the Lord of the vineyard came; for come he surely will, to reckon with the persecutors of his prophets, and the murderers of his Son. And they, not yet understanding the meaning couched under these parabolical expressions, readily replied, no doubt the case of these wicked husbandmen will be terrible; they have nothing to expect but condign punishment for their crimes, and that the vineyard should be committed to more trusty servants. Thus unwittingly pronouncing their own doom, and justifying God's procedure in rejecting them, and calling the Gentiles into his church, who would render him more abundant honour, love, and service. *Note*, (1.) Even those who perish shall be made to confess God's righteousness, and shall out of their own mouths be condemned. (2.) The end of all the ungodly, and of the persecutors of Christ and his people is, to be miserably destroyed under the consuming wrath of an offended God.

6. When, on our Lord's intimating their concern in this parable, they had testified their abhorrence of the thought he suggested of murdering God's Son, Luke xx. 16—19. he assures them this would infallibly be the case: and they had, no doubt, often read the scripture which foretold it, Ps. cxviii. 22. *The stone* was himself, the Rock on which his church should be built up; *the builders* were the chief priests and elders, who rejected him, and *refused* to own him as the Messiah: yet, notwithstanding their malice and infidelity, he must become *the headstone of the corner*, exalted to be the head of all principalities and powers, and of his church in particular, both of Jews and Gentiles united in one glorious body. And *this is the Lord's doing*, who, in his predeterminate counsel and foreknowledge, permitted and overruled their wickedness for good, and would, at his resurrection and ascension, thus advance his Son Jesus, and give him a name above every name; and *it is marvellous in our eyes;* the obduracy of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Messiah, and his exaltation, are all marvellously ordered to advance the Divine glory, to pour confusion on the enemies of the Redeemer, and effectually to secure the salvation of his peculiar people.

7. Christ particularly addressing himself to the chief priests, elders, and people before him, makes a direct application of all he had spoken to their case. The gospel they had rejected should shortly be taken from them, and they abandoned of God, because of their infidelity and impenitence; whilst this word of salvation should be sent to the Gentiles, who would thankfully embrace it, be admitted into the Messiah's kingdom, and approve themselves faithful subjects of it in all holy conversation and godliness. Whosoever therefore among them, offended at the humiliation of Jesus, through ignorance or prejudice rejected him as the Messiah, *shall be broken*, as a man that stumbles against a stone: but whosoever, in his state of exaltation, obstinately persist in their malice against him, shall be crushed in pieces by him as under the fall of a mighty rock. *Note*, They who will not bow to the sceptre of a Redeemer's grace, must miserably perish under the iron rod of his judgments.

Lastly, The chief priests and Pharisees could not mistake his meaning; they plainly perceived the drift of his parables and discourse, and saw it expressly levelled against them, out of their own mouths drawing their condemnation, and confirming the sentence of wrath and reprobacy against them; but so hardened were they, that, instead of instantly humbling their souls that they might avert the threatened vengeance, they were so enraged that they would instantly have laid violent hands upon him, and probably have murdered him on the spot: but the fear of the people restrained them, who, taking Jesus for a prophet, would at present have interposed for his rescue; they were therefore constrained to defer their revenge to a more convenient season.

Note, (1.) The word of God is powerful and penetrating, and conscience will make the application, Thou art the man. (2.) They who are not corrected by reproof, must be exasperated thereby. (3.) It is a mercy that God hath many ways of restraining men's wickedness, though they have cast off his fear: he can bind them with human fetters, when they refuse to be governed by his divine law.

CHAP. XXII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

This chapter is a continuation of Christ's discourses in the temple, two or three days before he died: his discourses then are largely recorded, as being of special weight and consequence. In this chapter we have, 1. *Instructions given, by the parable of the marriage-supper concerning the rejection of the Jews and calling of the Gentiles,* ver. 1—10. *and, by the doom of the guest that had not the wedding-garment, the danger of hypocrisy in the profession of Christianity,* ver. 11—14. 2. *Disputes with the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes, who opposed Christ.* (1.) *Concerning paying tribute to Cæsar,* ver. 15—22. (2.) *Concerning the resurrection of the dead and the future state,* ver. 23—33. (3.) *Concerning the great commandment of the law,* ver. 34—40. (4.) *Concerning the relation of the Messiah to David,* ver. 41—46.

1. AND Jesus answered [a] and spake unto them again by parables, and said, 2. [b] The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3. And sent forth [c] his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. 4. Again, he sent forth [d] other servants, saying, Tell them who are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage. 5. [e] But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: 6. [f] And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*. 7. [g] But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but [h] they which were bidden were not worthy. 9. [i] Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. 10. [k] So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. 11. And when the king [l] came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on [m] a wedding garment: 12. And he saith unto him, Friend, [n] how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he [o] was speechless. 13. Then said the king [p] to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping [q] and gnashing of teeth. 14. [q] For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

a Ch. 9. 15—17. & 12. 43—45. & xiii. & 20. 1—14. & 21. 28—44. Luke xiii—xix. ch. 24. 43—51. & 25. 1—29.
b Ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17. & xiii. & 20. 1. & 21. 34, 43. with Luke 14. 16—24. Rev. 19. 7, 9. Song i—viii. Ps. xiv.
c Ch. iii, x. Mark i, iii. Luke i, iii, vi, x. Prov. 9. 2—5. & 1. 20—25. Hos. 11. 2, 7.
d Luke 24. 47. Acts i—ix. Prov. 9. 1—5. & 1. 20—23. Is. 25. 6. ch. xxvi—xxviii. Mark xiv—xvi. Luke xxii.—xxiv. John xviii—xx. & 6. 27—57.
e Gen. 19. 14. Acts 2. 13. Prov. 1. 24, 25. Ps. 81. 11. Heb. 2. 3. ch. 13. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.
f 2 Chr. 36. 16. ch. 21. 35. & 23. 34, 37. Acts iv—viii. & xii. & 13. 45. & 14. 4, 5, 19. & 17. 5, 13. & 18. 12. & 20. 3. & 21. 30. & xxii—xxv. 1 Thes. 2. 14, 15.
g Ch. 23. 34—39. & 24. 2—34. Luke 17. 22—37. & 19. 41—44. & 21. 6—33. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 1 Thes. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Dan. 9. 26, 27. Luke 13. 14. see ch. 21. 41.
h Acts 3. 26. & 13. 46. ch. 10. 11, 13. Ps. 81. 11.
i Prov. 1. 20—22. & 8. 1—4. ch. 8. 11. & 13. 47. & 21. 41, 43. & 28. 18—20. Mark 16. 15, 16. Luke 24. 47. Acts 1. 7, 8. & 13. 46, 47. Rom. 10. 18. Eph. 3. 8. Rev. 22. 17. Is. 42. 6, 7. & 45. 22. & 55. 1.
k Acts x—xix. Rom. 10. 18. & 15. 19. Col. 1. 6, 23. Rev. 7. 9. & 5. 9. ch. 13. 38, 47.
l Luke 19 15. Rev. 2. 23.
m Rom. 13. 14. Rev. 19. 8. & 3. 4, 18. & 16. 15. Is. 61. 10. Luke 15. 22. ch. 6. 33. 1 Cor. 5. 21. Rom. 5. 18. & 2. 22. Ps. 45. 13, 14. Eph. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10, 12.
n John 3. 3, 5. ch. 5. 20. Phil. 3. 3, 8, 9.
o Rom. 3. 19. Tit. 3. 11.
p Ch. 3. 12. & 8. 12. & 12. 45. & 21. 41. ver. 7. & 24. 51. & 13. 42. & 25. 30. 2 Pet. 2. 17. Jude 6, 13. 2 Thes. 1. 9.
q Ch. 20. 16. & 19. 30. Mark 10. 31. Luke 7. 29. & 12. 32. & 13. 24—30. ch. 7. 13, 14. & 8. 11, 12.

Verses 1—14. This parable is in import much the same as the foregoing, showing the rejection of the Jewish people for their obstinate infidelity, and the calling of the Gentiles consequent thereupon.

The gospel dispensation is compared to a magnificent entertainment made by a king on the marriage of his son, which represents the rich provision made for poor sinners, and the gracious invitation sent to them by the great Bridegroom of his church, Christ Jesus, the Son of the eternal King. We have,

1. The rich provision made on this occasion. The oxen and fatlings are killed, with all that vast abundance which became the royal table; signifying those spiritual blessings which a poor and perishing sinner needs, such as the pardon of sin, acceptance with God as righteous, a sense of his love, the comforts and graces of the Holy Ghost, spiritual supports to carry him through the journey of time, and the glorious hope of the enjoyment of God in eternity. And these afford the richest feast for a sinful soul.

2. The repeated calls sent to those who had been invited, urging their attendance. Thus in particular the Lord sent out the seventy disciples to call the Jewish people: and, when they refused to hearken, he again, after his resurrection, sent forth his apostles and evangelists, with greater vehemence to urge their coming, having now perfected the redemption of his people by the one oblation of himself, and fully obtained for them all spiritual blessings in heavenly things. He invited them therefore once more to join themselves to the Lord, and take him as their Covenant head and glorious Bridegroom. And thus in general, by his ministers to the end of time, doth the Lord send forth his gracious invitations to miserable sinners, entreating them to come and secure their own happiness, be reconciled to God, and partake of the gospel feast, where all things are ready which they can wish or need: where Jesus is ready to receive them, the Father to pardon and bless them, the Spirit to comfort and strengthen them. Well therefore may we with earnestness beseech men, as they value all that is dear to them, *Come unto the marriage.*

3. The folly and wickedness of those who were invited appear in striking colours; at first in a careless and insolent refusal of the favour done them; and afterwards, when expostulated with, and again entreated to comply, by a contemptuous treatment of the message, and a more cruel treatment of the messengers: some slighted and despised the offer, preferring their worldly avocations, and pretending more necessary engagements: whilst others, provoked with the importunity of the servants, not only insulted and reviled them, but even in a rage imbrued their hands in their blood. Thus it happened to the first preachers of the gospel: the Jewish people slighted their admonitions, and, instead of hearkening to the word of salvation, were the bitter persecutors and murderers of those who preached it. Nor were they singular herein. The same invitation hath ever since, to this very day, met with very much of the like treatment. Many continue to make light of Christ: negligent about the concerns of their immortal souls: their pleasures, their gains, their worldly engagements, occupy all their hearts, and they have neither leisure nor inclination to mind the concerns of religion. They are engrossed with the cares of life, and anxious about so many other things, that they pretend they cannot attend to the one thing needful. Thus thousands turn their backs on Christ; their farm and their merchandise occupy them wholly, and the calls of the gospel find no entrance into their deaf ears. Whilst others,

exasperated at being disturbed in their sinful pursuits by the zealous ministers of God, hate and revile them, and would, but for human restraints, renew the former persecutions. They who preach the gospel must expect to suffer for it.

4. The offended monarch, in righteous wrath, to vindicate his honour and avenge his servants' wrongs, sent forth his armies, destroyed these murderers, and burnt up their city. The Roman armies, at God's command, thus destroyed the Jewish nation, and burnt up Jerusalem, as the punishment due to them for rejecting and murdering their Messiah and his ministers. And the like vengeance awaits all that obey not the gospel, and persecute the preachers of it: wrath will shortly come upon them to the uttermost.

5. The calling of the Gentiles was a consequence of the rejection of the Jews. God's feast shall not be prepared in vain. When they who were first bidden, therefore, by their refusal were judged unworthy a place in his kingdom, he sent forth his servants into the heathen world, with a general invitation to preach the gospel to every creature. Which commission they readily executed, inviting all of every rank and station, and sinners of every degree, to come to Jesus Christ, with assurances of a ready welcome from him. And thus the Christian church was filled with an innumerable multitude of converts; some really and truly turned to God, others but false-hearted and hypocritical professors. *Note*, (1.) Christ will have a church and people in the world, however many reject his gospel. (2.) The invitation is general. God indeed knoweth those that are his: we do not; therefore must preach the gospel to every creature. (3.) Under the dispensation of grace by Jesus Christ, all petty distinctions between one sinner and another are in a manner abolished: as the least sinner must eternally perish without it; the greatest have a full and free redemption offered in him. No man perishes through the greatness of his sins, but through his unbelief and neglect of the gospel. (4.) The visible church is a mixed multitude, and will continue so till the great day of separation; we may expect to find in it bad, as well as good.

6. The discovery, conviction, and condemnation of hypocrites in the church, is represented by the king's visit to his guests; where observing one without a wedding garment (which probably might be provided for the guests on these occasions, and therefore the neglect was criminal, especially if he preferred his rags before the bright garments which lay ready for him) he addressed him with a startling inquiry, how he dared intrude himself there without a wedding-garment: and, speechless at the question, his silence confessed his guilt. Shackled therefore as a malefactor, the king commands him to be dragged from the room illuminated for the bridal feast, and thrust into the darkness without, to bewail, with unavailing expressions of bitter anguish, his presumption, sin, and folly. Where we may observe, (1.) The particular notice the Lord takes of those who profess to believe in him: he trieth the heart. Hypocrisy may deceive men, but not God. The day will come when the false-hearted shall be detected, either by sifting providences in this world, or at the appearing of the king upon his throne. May we now so judge ourselves, that we may not then be judged of the Lord! (2.) The wedding-garment here seems to be the righteousness of our Redeemer, provided for us to put on. And it is our sin, and will be our ruin, that through ignorance we know not the want of it, or through pride reject it, and dare to appear before God in the filthy rags of our own righteousness, which cannot cover our shame. (3.) They must needs be speechless in the day of God, who in profession have joined in the outward ordinances, whilst their faith hath never put on Christ, nor their hearts been conformed to his image. (4.) Hypocrites in the church will receive the sorest damnation in eternal torments, doomed to suffer agonies unutterable and inconceivable, and filled with the most excruciating rage, horror, and despair.

7. The parable concludes with the repetition of the observation Christ had made before, that *many are called, but few chosen.* An alarming notice to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith; how we came in to the Lord's table; what garments we are clothed with; and how we can bear the Master's piercing eye.

15. ¶ [r] Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk. 16. And they sent out unto him their disciples, with the [s] Herodians, * saying, [t] Master, we know that thou art true, and [u] teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man;* for thou regardest not the person of men. 17. [x] Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not? 18. But [y] Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why [z] tempt *ye* me, *ye* hypocrites? 19. Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a [a] penny. 20. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and † superscription? 21. They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, [b] Render therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. 22. When they had heard *these words*, they [c] marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

[r] Mark 12. 13—17. Luke 20. 20—26. & 11. 53. Ps. 2. 2. Jer. 18. 18. Eccl. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. Mic. 2. 1.

[s] Ch. 16. 6. Mark 8. 15.

* Probably the partisans of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee.

[t] Ch. 26. 49, 50. Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21.

[u] 2 Cor. 2. 17. 1 Thes. 2. 4. Gal. 1. 10. Acts 10. 34, 35.

[x] Ezra 4. 13. Acts 5. 37. Jer. 42. 2, 3.

[y] See ch. 16. 8. John 2. 25.

[z] Ch. 12. 38. & 19. 3. Luke 11. 16, 54.

[a] A denarius, in value sevenpence three farthings. Ch. 20. 2. & 18. 28. Rev. 6. 6.

† Or *inscription.*

[b] Ch. 17. 25. Rom. 13. 7. Prov. 24. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 17.

[c] Ver. 33, 4. 1 Cor. 1. 19, 20. Job 5. 12, 13.

Verses 15—22. Ceaseless in their designs of malice, the Pharisees, associated with the Herodians, endeavoured to entangle him in his talk, and, by some captious subject of dispute, to draw from him some expression whereon to found an accusation against him. So little can the purest innocence, or the most faultless integrity, screen us from the malevolence of wicked men.

The Herodians are thought to be a sect of the Jews who were the partisans of Herod, and were zealous for the Roman government and the payment of the tribute; whilst the Pharisees, and the rest of the nation abhorred the yoke, and hardly could brook this ignominious badge of servitude. They were therefore proper instruments on the present occasion.

1. The question they put to our Lord was, whether it was *lawful to pay tribute to Cesar, or not?* And they concluded this would necessarily involve him in a dilemma. Should he deny the lawfulness of paying tribute, straightway the Herodians would accuse him to the government as a rebel and incendiary: should he affirm it, the Pharisees thought he would immediately exasperate the people, and give them the wished for opportunity to destroy him. *Note*, It hath been the old practice of Satan's emissaries to lay snares for God's servants, and, by catching an unguarded expression, by wilful mistake or designed misrepresentation to blacken and abuse them. But there is one who heareth and judgeth.

2. To cover this insidious design, they use the deepest expression of respect. As if conscientiously disposed to follow the path of duty, and highly venerating Christ's wisdom and piety, they desired his directions for their conduct, persuaded that, being a teacher come from God, no frown nor fear of man would sway his determinations. *Note*, (1.) The fairest professions often cloak the foulest designs. (2.) Their character of Christ should be the pattern for all his ministers. Faithful and true to God themselves, no fear nor flattery must tempt them to conceal

any thing of the whole counsel of God from others; but, regardless of men's persons, with zeal and simplicity they must discharge their commission, and speak the truth as it is in Jesus.

3. Christ baffles their craft, and disappoints their designs. He knew the secret wickedness they meditated, and by his question, which showed his knowledge of their hearts, reproved their hypocrisy: *Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute-money.* Out of their own mouths he would silence them, and answer them with their own confessions; for, producing to him *a penny*, a silver Roman coin, he demanded whose image and superscription it bore: and they replied, *Cesar's*, he answered, *Render therefore unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's.* As the coining of money was the royal prerogative, the circulation of such coin implied subjection to the person whose image it bore; there could be no doubt therefore but that, if Cesar's money was regarded as the current coin of the land, there could be no unlawfulness in rendering him the tribute which bore his image, in return for the protection and administration of the civil government which they received from him. And this interfered not with their religious duties: they must *render also unto God the things which are God's.* Thus neither could the civil government have cause to be offended, nor the Pharisees be able to excuse him without condemning themselves. *Note*, (1.) When we have to deal with crafty adversaries, we need be wise as serpents, whilst we are harmless as doves. (2.) The mask of hypocrites, however naturally painted, cannot impose upon him who trieth the heart. Their hope of concealment is delusion; and whilst they tempt him they destroy themselves. (3.) Captious questions should have a cautious answer, that, if possible, they who come to insnare us may be confounded themselves. (4.) It is reasonable we should pay tribute to the government from which we receive protection. Christ's servants must on principle be loyal subjects. But, though Cesar has our tribute, God must have our hearts. (5.) We must submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: but if human injunctions contradict divine commands, God must be obeyed, and we must be content to suffer.

4. Though confounded with his reply, they could not but admire his wisdom; and, defeated in their purpose, they retired with shame as baffled foes, unable to find the least ground for accusation against him. May the Lord ever endue his ministers with the like wisdom, and enable them to disappoint the malice of those who lie in wait for an occasion against them!

23. ¶ [d] The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, * and asked him, 24. Saying, Master, [e] Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 25. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: 26. Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. 27. And last of all the woman died also. 28. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. 29. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, [f] not knowing the scriptures, [g] nor the power of God. 30. For [h] in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31. But, as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 32. [i] I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? † God is not the † God of the dead, but of the living. 33. And [k] when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

d Mark 12. 18—27. Luke 20. 27—39. with Acts 23. 6, 8. 1 Cor. 15. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

* Campbell renders the phrase in the original, *who say that there is no future life.*

e Deut. 23. 5, 6. Gen. 38. 8.

f Is. 8. 20. & 27. 11. & 28. 9, 10. Hos. 4. 4, 6. & 8. 12. John 20. 31. Rom. 15. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 15—17. with Job 19. 25, 26. Ezek. 37. 5—10. Dan. 12. 2.

g Gen. 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17. ch. 18. 26. Luke 1. 37. Phil. 3. 21. Acts 26. 8.

h Luke 20. 36. 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30. & 15. 42, 44, 49, 52. 1 John 3. 2. John 5. 29.

i Exod. 3. 6, 10. Gen. 17. 7. & 28. 21. & 32. 9. Lev. 26. 12. Acts 7. 32. Heb. 11. 16. Mark 12. 26. Luke 20. 37, 38.

† Or *God is not a god, &c.*

k Ch. 7. 28, 29. Mark 6. 2. Luke 4. 22.

Verses 23—33. The Pharisees and Herodians being foiled, the Sadducees next resolve to take the field of controversy against him. They utterly denied a future state, the existence of angels or spirits, and the resurrection of the dead: and thought they could propose a question to our Lord which it would puzzle him to decide.

1. They stated a case (whether real or imaginary was not material) founded on the Mosaical institutions, concerning the widow of a man who died childless, whose brother, according to the law, Deut. xxv. 5. was obliged to marry her, and raise up an heir to the inheritance of the deceased. The question they proposed therefore was, if a woman successively married seven brothers, and, having no children by either, at last died herself, whose wife she shall be at the resurrection, since all could claim the same title to her. They thought thus to lead our Lord to join them in denying a resurrection: or to reduce him to own his ignorance, or to make a decision they could prove to be absurd, and unsupported by reason or Scripture.

2. Christ rectifies their mistake, reproves their ignorance, and shows their objection against a resurrection to be fallacious: they erred, *not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* The Scriptures declare there shall be a resurrection, Job xix. 26. Ezek. xxxvii. Dan. xii. 2. and though the collection of the scattered atoms of the human body appears ever so difficult, it is not beyond the almighty power of God to effect. Besides, their ideas of a future state were false and carnal. There will be no occasion there for marriage, to perpetuate inheritances, or to keep up a succession of names, or to minister to our comforts, or alleviate our cares; but all will be in heaven as the angels of God, perfectly pure and spiritual, and happy as those glorious ministers which surround the throne of God. But our Lord rests not in confuting their mistakes: he supports the truth by unanswerable arguments, drawn even from the Pentateuch, the sacred authority of which books they themselves admitted. Now, concerning the resurrection of the dead, they must needs remember what God himself declared at that memorable occasion when he appeared to Moses in the burning bush, Exod. iii. 6. where he said, *I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, though these patriarchs were long since dead. He saith not, *I was*, but *I am*, he standing towards them still in the same relation: and as his being their God implies some peculiarly great and glorious advantages thence accruing, but these holy men, during all their lives, were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, exercised with various troubles and afflictions, therefore it follows, there must be a future state, where their eternal reward awaits them. Besides, *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* Had these patriarchs ceased to be when their bodies died, God could not with any propriety be said to continue in the same covenant relation to them as before. He being *their God*, proves them still alive; and the existence therefore of their souls as immortal is evident; but he was not only the God of their souls, but of the men in their whole persons. As therefore their souls now live, their bodies will be quickened also; else would he be still the God of the dead: the resurrection of the body, as well as the immortality of the soul, therefore, is here supposed, and the argu-

ment conclusive against the tenets of the Sadducees. *Note*, (1.) The cause of all our grand errors is our ignorance of the Scriptures. (2.) Many things appear to the eye of sense impossible, which the eye of faith that looks to the promises and power of God, sees not only possible, but sure and certain. (3.) They who have the Lord for their God need not wish for more: he will be their eternal portion and exceeding great reward.

3. The Sadducees were silenced, the multitude astonished; they had never before heard the eternal happiness of the righteous, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection from the dead, so nobly defended and proved.

34. ¶ [l] But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. 35. Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying, 36. [m] Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? 37. Jesus said unto him, [n] Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38. This is the first and great commandment. 39. And the second *is* like unto it, [o] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

l Mark 12. 28—34. Luke 10. 25—28. see ver. 15.

m Ch. 7. 21. Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. ch. 26. 49, 50. ver. 16.

n Deut. 6. 5. & 10. 12. & 30. 6. Luke 10. 27. Prov. 23. 26. Mark 12. 30, 33. 1 Tim. 1. 5.

o Lev. 19. 18. Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Jam. 2. 8. Luke 10. 27, 36, 37. 1 John 3. 18. ch. 7. 12.

Verses 34—40. The Pharisees here again return to the charge; and grieved, probably, he should be able to silence those whom they could not, consulted together how to put a stop to his increasing reputation, which so eclipsed their own. They who greatly shine must expect to be greatly envied. They resolved once more to try their skill, and by a question, which had afforded much disputation among themselves, endeavour, if they can, to draw something from him of which they still hoped to make their advantage.

1. The question was, *Which is the great commandment of the law?* some esteeming it to be circumcision; others, the observation of the sabbath; others, the wearing the phylacteries. And should he determine the question in favour of any one party of disputants, the rest would probably have been offended with the decision.

2. His answer carries evidence and conviction along with it. The first and great commandment is the perfect love of God; and the next, the loving our neighbour as ourselves; these two commandments comprise the whole moral law, with all the duties enforced by the prophets; and to be obedient to these, this divine principle of love can alone engage us. These commandments still continue in full force; and in the practical exercise of these consists all vital religion: for though we are not under the law, that we should expect life from our obedience, nor capable of discharging perfectly these just and holy precepts; yet we are bound to set them before us as our rule of duty, and by the gospel faith, which worketh by love, shall be enabled in a measure to walk as Christ also walked, humbly following, though unable to attain unto the perfection of his bright example. *Note*, (1.) We must love the Lord our God. We must first believe that he is *our God*, our reconciled God in Jesus Christ, and then love will be the immediate effect: this will produce a hearty obedience to his commands, and unreserved submission to his providence. The love of God will make us count none of his commands grievous, and reckon every dispensation righteous, just, and good. (2.) The love of our neighbours follows. They must be dear to us as we are to ourselves: their persons, property, characters, be regarded as our own, and we should be ready by every good word and work to do them service, wish them every blessing, and desire to act towards them, in every situation, as we could reasonably expect they should behave to us if they were in our circumstances. The more we appear under the influence of these divine precepts, the more we shall show of the spirit and power of true Christianity.

41. ¶ [p] While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42. Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, [q] *The son* of David. 43. He saith unto them, How then doth David [r] in spirit call him Lord, saying, 44. [s] The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? 45. If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? 46. [t] And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.

p Mark 12. 35—37. Luke 19. 41—44. ver. 15, 34.

q Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6, 7. & 11. 1—4. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. & 37. 24.

r 2 Sam. 23. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 21. Acts 1. 16. & 2. 30.

s Ps. 110. 1. Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Heb. 1. 3, 13. & 10. 12, 13. Eph. 1. 20—22. with Rev. 22. 16. Rom. 1. 3. & 9. 5.

t Mark 12. 34. Luke 14. 6. & 20. 40.

Verses 41—46. Having thus silenced all his opponents, our Lord is now pleased to put a question in turn to those who had so often tempted him. And he did it when they were gathered together to consult how to insnare him, that his triumph over them might be more distinguished.

1. The question seemed so plain that a child might answer it. *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* And they have their reply ready, little imagining in what difficulties it would involve them. *They say unto him, the son of David.* So far were they right. The Scripture had thus determined, Ps. lxxxix. 35, 36. Isa. ix. 7. xi. 1. It is a question we should be seriously concerned to answer, What we think of his person, offices, undertaking; and whether he is a *Christ* to us, a Saviour to the uttermost.

2. From their answer our Lord proposes to them another question of more difficult solution. How is the Messiah's being David's son reconcileable with his being David's Lord? for such the Psalmist acknowledges him, when, speaking under divine inspiration, Ps. cx. 1. he saith, *The Lord*, God the Father, *said unto my Lord*, the divine Messiah, *Sit thou at my right hand*, exalted to the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, *till I make thine enemies thy footstool;* for so long will he reign till every foe is destroyed, and the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ. *If David then call him Lord*, acknowledging him his superior, and a divine Person, *how is he his son?* and to descend from him as man?

3. This question quite puzzled them. They seemed to have been ignorant of the divine character of the Messiah; they regarded him as a mere man, and understood not the union of God and man in one Christ; or, if they knew it, they were not willing to acknowledge his Deity, and choose to be silent rather than reply. Perceiving now how unequal a match they all together were for his superior wisdom, they durst not encounter him with any more insnaring questions, and avoided any farther disputes, which they found must issue in their shame. *Note*, Many are silenced without being convinced; have their arguments confuted while their hearts still remain unconverted.

CHAP. XXIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Christ here, 1. *Cautions his disciples against the pride and hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees*, ver. 1—12. 2. *He denounces woes against them for their sins*, ver. 13—33. 3. *He foretells the ruin of Jerusalem*, ver. 34—39.

1. THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2. Saying, [a] The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: 3. [b] All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; [c] but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not. 4. [d] For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. 5. [e] But all their works they do for to be seen of men: [f] they make broad their * phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, 6. [g] And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, † Rabbi, Rabbi. 8. [h] But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren. 9. And call no *man* your father upon the earth: [i] for one is your Father, which is in heaven. 10. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ. 11. [k] But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12. [l] And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

[a] Ch. 2. 4. ver. 13, 15, 23, 27, 29. Neh. 8. 4. Deut. 33. 5. Perhaps it meaus, that they were civil governors, as Moses was.

[b] Rom. 13. 1. Tit. 3. 1. Is. 8. 20. John 5. 39.

[c] Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16. Rom. 2. 1, 2, 17—25.

[d] Luke 11. 46. Is. 10. 1. Acts 15. 10. Gal. 6. 13.

[e] Ch. 6. 1, 2, 5, 16. They impose troublesome rites on others, while they neglect them themselves.

[f] Num. 15. 38, 39. Deut. 22. 12. & 6. 8. Prov. 3. 3.

* Scraps of parchment, with some sentences of the law written on them, fastened to their forehead or hand.

[g] Mark 12. 28, 39. Luke 11. 43. & 20. 46. 3 John 9. Prov. 16. 18. & 29. 23 Hab. 2. 4.

† Heb. My *master*, or *great one*.

[h] Jam. 3. 1. 1 Cor. 3. 4. with ch. 17. 5. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 3, 4.

[i] Mal. 1. 6. John 6. 45. ch. 5. 16, 43. & 6. 1, 4, 6, 9, 14, 18, 26, 32. & 7. 11. & 13. 43. & 19. 17.

[k] Ch. 20. 26, 27. & 18. 3, 4. & 11. 29. John 13. 12—17. Phil. 2. 4—8. Heb. 5. 8.

[l] Luke 14. 11. & 18. 14. Dan. 4. 37. Job 22. 29. Prov. 29. 23. Luke 1. 51, 52. Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Prov. 15. 33.

Verses 1—12. Among all the Jewish sects the Pharisees maintained the most distinguished rank, for their reputed wisdom and piety; their specious appearance of religion, and external attention to the forms of godliness, obtained them so high a character, that it was usually said, if but two men reached heaven, one of them would be a Pharisee. Yet none ever fell under more censures from Christ than these reputed patterns of sanctity, because indeed they were the most inveterate enemies of him and his gospel: as those of a like stamp ever have been, and will be to the end of time. Their religion was outside; their hearts, enmity against God, filled with pride, self-righteousness, love of esteem, worldly-mindedness, and hatred to the power of internal, vital godliness. Whom the world therefore admired as the best sort of people in it, God abhorred as the worst, as the farthest from his kingdom and righteousness. And the case is the same to this very day. Against these whited sepulchres Christ therefore cautions his disciples.

1. He honours the office they bore as expositors of the law, who sat in Moses' seat, and read and interpreted in the synagogues the sacred oracles to the people. And so far as they spoke agreeably to the Scriptures they were to be attended to, and their word to be observed and done. *Note*, (1.) The most sacred and honourable offices in the church have often been filled by the worst of men. Yet ought not this to bring any dishonour upon the ministry itself, or prejudice us against the order, that many who are a scandal to the name they bear, have thrust themselves into it. (2.) When wicked men preach sound truth, their word is to be received, whilst their works are abhorred. Though example is most forcible to persuade: and it can hardly be expected, that they should convince others who do not themselves appear to believe the very doctrines they preach.

2. He brands the men who lived so unsuitably to the word they taught, and cautions the people to beware of imitating them. *Do not after their works: for they say and do not.* They boasted indeed of the purity of their morals, as well as the orthodoxy of their sentiments; but the one was as corrupt as the other was culpable. Several things our Lord charges upon them.

[1.] Their hypocrisy. They were very strict preachers of the law, and rigid in enforcing the additions made by their vain traditions, laying upon men's consciences burdens intolerable, whilst they themselves dispensed with their own observance of them, and their practice gave the lie to their preaching. *Note*, Many preachers pretend the greatest zeal for morality whose lives show the laxest morals; and who must therefore be damned upon their own showing.

[2.] Their formality, and desire of human applause. Their religion consisted of outside; and to make a fair show before men, was their great ambition. Instead of internal spirituality, and meditation on God's word, *they made broad their phylacteries*, these were scrolls of parchment, on which select portions of the law were written, sewed up in the skin of a clean beast, and hung at their arms, and over their foreheads: and by their uncommon breadth they meant to insinuate their uncommon zeal for the law. *And* they *enlarge the borders of their garments;* not only conforming to the precept, Num. xv. 38—40. but affecting by the width of their fringes, to show their distinguished sanctity, and observance of the command. So true it is still, that the most zealous contenders for the *form* of godliness are often the greatest strangers to the *power* of it, and the loudest devotees but mere sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

[3.] Their pride and affectation of pre-eminence. They coveted always the most distinguished place at an entertainment; and even in the synagogues, where they assembled for religious worship, the same desire of precedency appeared in their choice of the chief seats, as if their business there was more to make a figure themselves, than to pay their humble adorations. In like manner they affected sounding titles of respect, and, when they appeared in public, they loved to have deep homage paid them, and to be addressed with Rabbi, Rabbi! that others might hear and observe their importance and dignity. *Note*, (1.) There is no harm in giving or receiving titles of honour to whom honour is due: but to take a pleasure in hearing the sound, to be puffed up with the title, and to be offended at the omission of it, these mark detestable pride. (2.) Nothing can show a stronger tincture of Pharisaism, than coming to God's house to seek our own glory, and to be more anxious in what pew we are placed, than with what spirit we worship.

3. He forbids his disciples to challenge for themselves, or ascribe to others, any such pompous names as the scribes assumed. They must not be called, *Rabbi*, affecting human honour, or any title importing dominion over the faith or consciences of their brethren: nor must they be styled, *Master*, as if upon their own authority they set up for guides and leaders; but must own *one Master* only, that is Christ, whose word alone must be their rule, whilst they, as brethren, arrogated no supremacy over each other, alike submissive to their common head. Nor may they give flattering titles to any; calling *no man Father upon the earth.* Not that this forbids us honouring our natural parents, or those who have begotten us in the gospel, or paying due reverence to age or dignity; but we must regard no man as the founder of our religion, or as the head of the church, to whom, in matters of conscience, we owe implicit obedience, this being the sole prerogative of our God and Father, whose throne is in the heavens; but if any man among them excelled in gifts or graces, or was esteemed and preferred to a more honourable place in the church than others, far from being puffed up with his eminence, he is required to be the more

condescending and laborious, employing himself the more zealously and humbly for the benefit of his fellow-christians. And our Lord subjoins the most forcible argument to support what he had advanced, *Whosoever shall exalt himself*, grow proud, imperious, and assuming over his brethren, *shall be abased*, either in penitent humiliation, when brought to a sight of his sin, in this world, or be covered with confusion in the more awful day of Christ's appearing: whilst *he that humbleth himself* in every work and labour of love, and in a lowly sense of his own deep unworthiness, *he shall be exalted* in the eyes of God and all good men, and that both now and for ever.

13. ¶ But [m] woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. 14. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [n] for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the [o] greater damnation. 15. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye [p] compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him ‡ twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. 16. Woe unto you, [q] *ye* blind guides, which say, [r] Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! 17. [s] *Ye* fools and blind! for whether is greater, the gold, [t] or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? 18. And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is ‖ guilty. 19. *Ye* fools and blind! for whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that [u] sanctifieth the gift? 20. Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. 21. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by [x] him that dwelleth therein. 22. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by [y] him that sitteth thereon. 23. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [z] for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. 24. [a] *Ye* blind guides, which [b] strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. 25. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [c] for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26. *Thou* [d] blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are [e] like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. 28. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. 29. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because [f] ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, 30. And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them [g] in the blood of the prophets. 31. Wherefore [h] ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are [i] the children of them which killed the prophets. 32. [k] Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. 33. [l] *Ye* serpents, *ye* generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

m Luke 11. 52. Ezek. 22. 25. 2 Tim. 3. 6. Tit. 1. 11. ye hinder men from believing the gospel, as well as reject it yourselves.

n Mark 12. 40. Luke 20. 47. 2 Tim. 3. 5, 6. Tit. 1. 11. Job 22. 9. *i. e.* rob them of their property.

o Ch. 11. 22, 24. Luke 12. 47.

p Gal. 4. 17. 2 Tim. 3. 6. Acts 13. 45. & 14. 2, 19. & 17. 5, 6, 13.

‡ More furiously mad against the gospel.

q Is. 56. 10, 11. ch. 15. 14.

r Ch. 5. 33, 34. Jam. 5. 12. Jer. 5. 7. Ezek. 21. 23. They pretended that a man's oath by the temple did not bind him unless he swore by the consecrated treasures of the temple.

s Ch. 3. 7. & 12. 34. John 8. 44. Acts 13. 10. & 23. 3. with ch. 5. 22.

t Exod. 30. 29. & 29. 37. ver. 19.

‖ Or *debtor*, or *bound*.

u Ver. 17. Exod. 29. 37.

x 1 Kin. 8. 13. 2 Chr. 7. 2. & 6. 2. Ps. 26. 8. & 132. 13, 14.

y Ch. 5. 34. Is. 57. 15. & 66. 1. Rev. 4. 2, 3. Dan. 7. 9. Acts 7. 49.

z Luke 11. 42. with ch. 9. 13. & 12. 7. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Hos. 6. 6. Prov. 21. 3. Mic. 6. 7. Gal. 5. 22, 23.

a See ver. 16, 17.

b Ver. 23. ch. 15. 2—6. John 18. 28, 40. they scrupled to commit lesser sins, and indulged themselves in greater.

c Luke 11. 39. Mark 7. 4. ch. 15. 19, 20.

d Get your hearts sanctified, that your life may be holy. Luke 11. 41. Jer. 4. 14. & 13. 27. Jam. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 11, 20. Tit. 1. 15. Heb. 10. 22.

e Luke 11. 44. Acts 23. 3. ch. 7. 15, 21. Is. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16.

f Luke 11. 47—51.

g Ver. 34, 37. 2 Chr. 36. 15, see ch. 21. 35, 36. & 22. 6.

h Josh. 24. 22. Luke 19. 22. Job 15. 5, 6. Ps. 64. 3

i Acts 7. 51, 52. 1 Thes. 2. 15. 2 Chr. 36. 16.

k 1 Thes. 2. 16. Gen. 15. 16. Num. 32. 14. Ps. 69. 27.

l Ch. 3. 7. & 12. 34. John 8. 44. Is. 1. 15. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 29. & 12. 25, 26.

Verses 13—33. Like Ezekiel's bitter roll, we have here repeated fearful woes, like so many bolts of thunder levelled against these proud self-righteous Pharisees. The general charge against them is their being *hypocrites*, proved in a variety of particulars; and this being the character God especially abhors, we should be the more jealous over our own souls, that this rank weed of bitterness spring not up under the profession of godliness, and mar the whole.

1. Pretending to be teachers of the law, and possessed of the key of knowledge, instead of explaining the spiritual meaning of all the typical rites, as pointing to Christ; or the purport of the prophecies which related to him; they studiously sought to pervert both; commenting upon them in such a way as most entirely to overturn the true nature of the Messiah's office and kingdom, and led the people to rest on the shadows instead of the substance. Envenomed enemies to the gospel, they turned a deaf ear to all Christ advanced in proof of his own divine character and mission, and not only rejected him themselves, but used their utmost efforts, employing all their influence, their example, and their cunning, to prejudice the people against him and his gospel; reviling his person, doctrine, and miracles, and thundering out their anathemas against those who should profess to receive him as the Messiah.

2. They made the cloak of religion subservient to the basest purposes of gain and avarice; insinuating themselves into the confidence of helpless widows, on whom, by their long prayers and affected show of devotion, they imposed, and who, supposing their piety great as the appearances of it, intrusted them with the management of their affairs, and were directed by their advice, by which means, taking advantage of their superstition and credulity, they fleeced them of their substance, and enriched themselves with the spoil of the most cruel inhumanity, as well as basest injustice; for which, though they might escape the censures of men, God, the all-seeing Judge, would surely give them *greater damnation* in the day of recompense. *Note*, (1.) The vilest wickedness may sometimes be so shaded by craft, as to elude the eye of human observation. 2. The appearance of

godliness put on to cover worldly designs, is in God's account the most atrocious of crimes. (3.) Long prayers are not always culpable; it is only when they are *for a pretence*, that they become an abomination. (4.) There are degrees of misery in hell: some shall receive greater damnation than others, and the most dreadful vengeance of all shall light on the hypocrite's head.

3. They exerted the greatest zeal to make proselytes from the Gentiles, in order to heighten their own reputation, and strengthen their party, and stuck at no pains to succeed in their attempts; which, when they had done, they abused the ascendency they obtained over the consciences of their converts to instil the most virulent prejudices into them against Christ and his gospel; making them more bigotted than themselves to the vain traditions of the elders, and more bitter persecutors, even than their masters, of the disciples of Jesus, see Acts xiii. 45. xiv. 2—19. xvii. 5. xviii. 6. Thus their pretended conversion served to render them but *twofold more the children of hell than themselves*. *Note*, (1.) Every impenitent sinner and hypocrite is a child of hell, of his father the devil, and doomed to dwell with him eternally. But of these some show greater malignity against Christ and his gospel than others, and these are such usually as fancy themselves converted, and are the strictest observers of the forms and ceremonies of religion. (2.) The industry these Pharisees used to gain proselytes in so bad a cause, should condemn our negligence and want of zeal, who take so little pains to make converts to Christ and his gospel.

4. They were *blind guides*, erring through greediness after gain, and deceiving others, misleading them into the most dangerous errors respecting the obligation of oaths; distinguishing between the temple and the gold, the altar and the gift; as if they might swear by the former, and break the oath with impunity; but an oath by the latter was conscientiously obligatory; and the reason was clear, because these blind guides made gain of the gold vowed to the temple service, and of the gifts offered on the altar. But how absurd and foolish this distinction? it was the temple which sanctified the gold, and the altar which sanctified the gift, which received all their sanctity from being offered there: the oath made by the temple and altar should therefore rather be thought more binding, than that made by the gold or gift. Indeed these kinds of oaths were in themselves evil and profane; but if a man once made them, he was bound to fulfil them. An oath by the altar included all the gifts thereon; as also to swear by the temple, or by heaven, implied an appeal to him who dwelleth there, manifesting his presence between the cherubim, or sitting on his throne most high: and therefore every breach of such oath was direct perjury. *Note*, (1.) It is a dreadful thing for the poor people, when they who undertake to show them the way to heaven, are blind and ignorant; and it is still more terrible for the blind guides themselves, who will perish under the guilt of those souls they have misled and ruined. (2.) Oaths are sacred; they are an appeal to the heart-searching God; by him alone we may swear; but if any profanely swear by other things, their profaneness will be no plea for their perjury; they are still in conscience bound to fulfil their oath as to the Lord.

5. They were scrupulous about trifles, and negligent of the essential duties of religion. They were most exact in the payment of their tithes, even to the small herbs of their garden, to the mint, and anise, and cummin; but, they *omitted the weightier matters of the law*, such *as judgment*, the due administration of justice, and protecting the weak and helpless against their oppressors: *mercy*, the kind relief they should have shown to the distressed; and *faith*, a dependence upon God's care and love, and the grateful return due in consequence thereof. These they should have practised, as the most important and momentous: whilst matters comparatively trivial deserved but a subordinate regard; but they were such *blind guides*, corrupt in practice as well as doctrine, *they strained at a gnat*, or *strained out a gnat* from their liquors, as if it would choke them; pretended such a scrupulous attention to avoid the least sin, and practise the nicest morality; whilst they could *swallow a camel*, making no conscience in secret of the most enormous crimes, to gratify their pride, their covetousness, and their malice, see ver. 14. chap. xxvii. 6. John xviii. 28. *Note*, (1.) The payment of our tithes to the uttermost farthing Christ commands: *This should ye have done*. They who are unjust to God's ministers in withholding their dues; are worse than even these Pharisees. (2.) The practice of one duty can never be pleaded as a compensation for the neglect of another; and much less can observances merely ceremonial excuse the neglect of those weightier moral precepts, *judgment*, *mercy*, and *faith*. (3.) Many pretend a scrupulous conscience in trifles, who, when any thing important to them is at stake, hesitate not at committing the most flagrant immoralities.

6. Their religion consisted in mere externals, whilst their hearts continued utterly corrupt and defiled. They were very curious about washing their cups and platters, and placed much purity in this; whilst they cared little by what oppression they got the provision they ate out of them: at least, their inward parts were very wickedness, whatever specious cloak they threw over their ways. Justly therefore doth Jesus upbraid them. *Thou blind Pharisee!* blind to the pollution of thy soul; cleanse first thy inmost thoughts, principles, and designs: begin within; be pure in heart, and then you may with consistence contend for an exact conformity to the external rites and ceremonies enjoined by the law. But in their present state they were the very reverse of real purity; like whited sepulchres, garnished and glittering without, but within full of pollution and putrefaction, the lively emblems of their hypocrisy and iniquity, lurking under the splendid guise of uncommon piety. *Note*, (1.) Our hearts are our grand concern; all our services in religion will be acceptable or abominable, as they are truly purified by the blood of Jesus, or left polluted with native guilt and corruption. (2.) They who have never seen, felt, and lamented the plague of their own hearts, must necessarily be blind to all spiritual concerns, since here all vital godliness begins. (3.) The world abounds with whited sepulchres; we need to be warned of them, lest mistaking show for reality, we esteem those patterns of piety, who are in fact but sinks of pollution, full of pride, worldly-mindedness, and enmity to the power of experimental religion.

7. They pretended a high veneration for the prophets of old, and in honour of their memories, built sumptuous monuments for them, and kept them with the nicest care. They made great professions of the respect they would have paid them, had they been so happy as to have lived in their days; and condemned bitterly the wickedness of their forefathers in persecuting and murdering them: protesting against such violence, and that they would have never joined in shedding such innocent blood. Thus by their own confession they allowed themselves the descendants of those who had murdered the prophets, and how much of their spirit they had imbibed, their behaviour towards John the Baptist, and their past and present malicious designs against Jesus, plainly evidenced. Therefore he justly abandons them to the ruin they have deserved, leaving them to fill up the measure of their iniquities, by crucifying him, the Lord of life and glory, and persecuting even to death his apostles and ministers, till wrath should come upon them to the uttermost. *Ye serpents*, subtle and poisonous: *ye generation of vipers*, fierce and malignant; *how can ye escape the damnation of hell?* In their present temper and conduct it was impossible but that the eternal wrath of God must abide upon them. *Note*, (1.) Many pretend respect for past reformers and good men, who persecute with the greatest virulence those who tread in their steps. (2.) The deceitfulness of the heart is great: we are strangely apt to flatter ourselves, how well we should have done and acted if we had been

in other persons' circumstances. Many think the hard-hearted Jews, who left the Son of God to lie in a manger, who heard his doctrine, and saw his miracles, and yet crucified him, were sinners of a peculiar die; and had they lived then, they should have welcomed him with rapture to their houses and their hearts; who yet treat his word, his ministers, his people, with the same contempt and enmity. (3.) God's patience waits long with offenders, but their measures of sin will be full, and then shall wrath come upon them to the uttermost. (4.) The damnation of hell is to be freely denounced against the impenitent and hypocrites, how unwilling soever they may be to hear it, or ready to mock at these terrors of the Lord.

m 2 Chr. 36. 15, 16. Neh. 9. 26. Luke 11. 49. ch. 10. 17. Acts 5. 40. & 7. 51, 52, 59. & 22. 19. & 8. 4. & 12. 2. & xxi—xxv. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. 2 Cor. 11. 24, 25. Rev. 18. 24.

n Exod. 20. 5. Mic. 6. 16. Gen. 9. 5, 6. Ps. 9. 12. Gen. 4. 8. 2 Chr. 24. 21, 22. Zech. 1. 1. Rev. 18. 24.

o Ezek. 7. 2—12. & 12. 21—28. ch. 24. 34. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18.

p Luke 19. 42. & 13. 34. see ver. 30, 31, 34. ch. 21. 35, 36. & 22. 6. 2 Chr. 36. 15, 16. & 24. 21, 22. Neh. 9. 26. Acts 7. 52, 59.

q Deut. 32. 29. Ps. 81. 10. & 50. 7. Luke 19. 42. with Deut. 32. 11, 12. Ps. 17. 8. & 91. 4.

r Ps. 60. 26. Is. 1. 7. Mic. 3. 12. Ps. 81. 11, 12. Hos. 11. 2, 7. Prov. 1. 24, 25.

s Temple, Ch. 24. 2. Luke 19. 44. 2 Chr. 7. 20—22.

t Prov. 1. 26—30. John 8. 21, 24. & 7. 34. Luke 21. 24. Hos. 3. 4, 5.

u Ch. 21. 9. Ps. 118. 26.

34. ¶ Wherefore, behold, [m] I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify, and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city: 35. That [n] upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. 36. Verily I say unto you, [o] All these things shall come upon this generation. 37. [p] O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, [q] how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and [r] ye would not! 38. Behold, [s] your house is left unto you desolate. 39. For I say unto you, [t] Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, [u] Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Verses 34—39. Their fathers they allowed had persecuted and slain the prophets of the Lord, and they would soon prove themselves genuine descendants from them.

1. Christ foretells what would be their behaviour towards his apostles and evangelists. Once more he would give them a trial, by sending to them his ministers, invested with divine authority from him their God and King, who in gifts and graces should be no way inferior to the prophets, wise men, and scribes who went before them. But instead of obedience to their word, or respect for their persons, they would just do as their fathers before them, or worse; persecuting them from city to city, scourging them in their synagogues, and putting them to the most ignominious and cruel deaths. See Acts vii. 59. xii. 2. v. 10. xxvi. 11.

2. The measure of all their fathers' sins, which thus they imitated, approved, and exceeded, being full, God would not fail to require at their hands all the blood which had been shed for righteousness' sake, from the blood of righteous Abel, the first martyr, to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, or Jehoiada, see 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. whom they slew between the porch and the altar, and was the last martyr for the truth recorded in the Old Testament. On this generation Christ assures them shall *all these things come*; all the heavy wrath threatened for their forefathers' guilt and their own. *Note*, (1.) Every insult and injury shown to God's righteous ones, shall sooner or later, be severely avenged. (2.) The nearer judgments approach, the louder the call for repentance.

3. Christ pathetically laments over the wickedness of Jerusalem, and denounces her doom.

[1.] He laments over her wickedness, upbraiding her with ingratitude and impenitence under all the means and mercies she had enjoyed. *Thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee*, as blasphemers. Such had been, and would be again her practice; and the great truths of God have been often thus loaded with the severest censures, and the most faithful and zealous advocates for them persecuted under the specious pretence of vindicating God's honour, and punishing those whom these pretended zealots are pleased to brand as enthusiasts or heretics. Yet, says Christ, *How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.* As man, and a minister of the circumcision, Christ peculiarly regarded Israel for their fathers' sake; he wished therefore to engage them to attend his ministry, that by acknowledging him as the Messiah they might at least prevent the doom with which their rejecting him would be attended. But *ye*, the Scribes and Pharisees, who prejudiced the people against him, *would not:* effectually preventing the people from receiving Christ as the Messiah, to do which they in general seem to have been disposed; and thus these false guides brought ruin upon themselves and their deluded followers. *Note*, (1.) They who have fled to Christ for refuge, will find a sure covert from the storm of divine wrath; whilst all who refuse his salvation will be left exposed to deserved vengeance. (2.) Christ will visit for all the means and mercies men have abused; and a despised and rejected gospel will bring down the heaviest condemnation.

[2.] He reads her doom. *Your house is left unto you desolate.* God was now about to abandon them as incorrigible; to leave his temple; and his presence withdrawn, the gold became dim, the fine gold was changed. Nothing but desolation remained within those once sacred walls, when the divine inhabitant was fled; nor would it be long ere one stone should not be left on another. When God departed, their glory and defence forsook them: their city and nation, with their temple, were now devoted to utter destruction.

4. He takes his sad farewell of that temple he never more would enter; nor would they ever see him after his departure to heaven, till that great day of his appearing and glory, when too late they would be convinced of his being the Messiah, and be glad to join in those ascriptions of praise to him, at which they had been so enraged. Some suppose this refers to the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, when they shall welcome that Redeemer their fathers crucified, with hosannas, blessing, and praise. *Note*, (1.) The day is near when every eye shall behold the once crucified Jesus on a throne of judgment, and then wo to those who pierced him! (2.) They who will not see, are justly given up to the blindness of their hearts; and since they would not bow to the sceptre of a Redeemer's grace, they must perish under the rod of his judgment. (3.) If we welcome Jesus now to our hearts, and he is pleased to make them his temple, and by his Spirit to take up his residence therein, then shall the day of his appearing and glory be our exceeding great joy, and we shall rise up to welcome and call him blessed, *who cometh in the name of the Lord*, to be glorified in his saints, and admired of all that believe.

CHAP. XXIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the utter ruin of the Jewish church and nation, which was now hastening on, and was completed about forty years after; the prefaces to that destruction, and consequences of it; yet looking farther to Christ's coming at the end of time*

and the consummation of all things, of which that was a type and figure, ver. 4—31. 2. *The practical application of this prophecy for the awakening and quickening of his disciples to prepare for these great and awful things*, ver. 32—51.

1. AND [a] Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, [b] There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

Verses 1, 2. Having foretold the desolations of Zion, Christ took his last farewell of the temple's devoted walls, and went out to return no more. On his departing we are told the conversation that passed between Jesus and his disciples. They were astonished probably at his prediction, perhaps incredulous of its fulfilment, and begged him a moment to behold the magnificent structure, and view the strength and beauty of the fabric. Tinctured with national prejudices, they seem to have been overpleased with the outward glory of the building, and thought with regret of its desolations; but Christ, so far from reversing the sentence, more awfully confirms it, decreeing its utter and irrecoverable ruin; so that not even one stone should be left upon another; which, by the concurring testimony of historians, was literally fulfilled, and the very ground ploughed up where the temple stood. *Note*, We are too apt to look upon outward grandeur with the eye of sense, and to be influenced by the pomp and glory of the world; but the eye of faith sees the vanity of every thing below the sun, and looks above it for all that is truly great, and permanently glorious.

3. ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, [c] Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, [d] Take heed that no man deceive you. 5. For [e] many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6. And [f] ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars: [g] see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but [h] the end is not yet. 7. [i] For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8. All these *are* the beginning of sorrows. 9. [k] Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12. And [m] because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13. [n] But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14. And [o] this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15. [p] When ye therefore shall see the * abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand;) 16. Then let them which be in Judea flee into [q] the mountains. 17. [r] Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18. [s] Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19. [t] And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! 20. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the [t] sabbath-day: 21. [u] For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22. [x] And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. 23. [y] Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not. 24. [z] For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if *it* [a] *were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25. [b] Behold, I have told you before. 26. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, [c] Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not. 27. [d] For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28. [e] For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29. [f] Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30. [g] And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31. [h] And he shall send his angels † with a

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a Mark 13. 1—8. Luke 21. 5—11. with ch. 23. 38, 39.

b Luke 19. 44. Jer. 5. 10. & 26. 18. Mic. 3. 12. 1 Kin. 9. 7. Ezek. 7. 20—22.

c Mark 13. 3, 4. Luke 21. 7. Dan. 12. 6, 8. John 21. 21. 1 Thes. 5. 1.

d Jer. 29. 8. Luke 21. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 9. & 15. 33. & 3. 18. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 2. 8, 18. 2 Thes. 2. 3. Gal. 6. 7. 1 John 3. 7. & 4. 1.

e Jer. 23. 21, 25. & 14. 14. John 5. 43. Acts 5. 36, 37. Rev. 13. 3. ver. 11. 24.

f Jer. 4. 19. & 5. 10, 11.

g Ps. 46. 2, 3. & 27. 1—3. & 112. 7. Is. 8. 12—14.

h Jer. 4. 27. & 5. 10, 18. ver. 14.

i Hag. 2. 22. Zech. 14. 13. Heb. 12. 27. Dan. 2. 44. 2 Chr. 15. 6. Acts 11. 28. Joel 2. 30.

k Ch. 10. 17—22. Mark 13. 9—23. Luke 21. 12—24. John 16. 2. & 15. 20. ch. 23. 34. & 22. 6. & 13. 21. & 11. 6. Rev. 2. 10. Acts iv—xii, xxi—xxv.

l Ch. 7. 15. Acts 20. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 11. 19. 2 Cor. 11. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 17. 2 Pet. 2. 1. Jude 4, 18. 1 Tim. 4. 1.

m 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 10, 16. Heb. 10. 25.

n Dan. 12. 12. ch. 10. 22. Rev. 2. 10. Mark 13. 13. Heb. 3. 6. & 10. 39.

o Ch. 4. 23. & 9. 35. Acts 2. 5. Rom. 1. 8. & 10. 18. & 15. 19. Col. 1. 6, 23. Mark 1. 15.

p Mark 13. 14. Luke 21. 20. Dan. 9. 25, 27. & 12. 11. Luke 19. 43.

* Roman armies.

q Gal. 1. 17. Gen. 36. 8. Prov. 22. 3. Heb. 11. 7.

r Job 2. 4. Ch. 6. 25. Luke 17. 31. Mark 13. 14—16.

s Luke 23. 29. Hos. 13. 16. 2 Kin. 15. 16. 2 Sam. 4. 4.

t Exod. 16. 29. Acts 1. 12. *i. e.* the Jewish Sabbath.

u Dan. 12. 1. Joel 2. 2. Lev. 26. 14—39. Deut 28. 15—68. & 29. 18—28. & 31. 17, 18. & 32. 21—35. Prov. 1. 24—32. Ps. 21. 8—12. & 69. 20—28. Is. 65. 12—15. Zech. 11. 9. & 14. 2. Mal. 4. 1. Luke 21. 23, 34. & 19. 43, 44. 1 Thes. 2. 16. Heb. 6. 8. & 10. 26, 27, 29. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. ch. 8. 12.

x Is. 1. 9. & 6. 13. & 65. 8. Zech. 13. 8, 9. & 14. 2.

y Mark 13. 21. Luke 17. 23. & 21. 8.

z See ver. 5, 11. Deut. 13. 1, 2. 2 Thes. 2. 9—11. Rev. 13. 13. John 5. 43. Ch. 7. 15. 2 Pet. 3. 17.

a John 6. 37. & 10. 20, 28, 29. Rom. 8. 28—39. 1 Pet. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 19.

b John 16. 1. Is. 44. 7, 8. & 46. 10. & 48. 5, 6.

c Jude 19. Rom. 16. 17, 18.

d Luke 17. 24. Is. 30. 13, 14. & 24. 1—6. & 10. 22, 23. & 26. 21.

e Luke 17. 37. Job 39. 29, 30. Jer. 16. 16. Dan. 9. 26, 27. Amos 9. 1—4. 1 Thes. 2. 16.

f Is. 13. 10. Ezek. 32. 7. Zeph. 1. 14—18. Joel 2. 30, 31. & 3. 15 Amos 5. 20. Mark 13. 24—37. Luke 21. 25—33. Acts 2. 19, 20. Rev. 6. 12—17.

g Dan. 7. 13. ch. 16. 27, 28. & 26. 64. Rev. 1. 7.

h Mark 16. 15, 16. ch. 28. 18—20. or 13. 41. Acts 26. 19. & 13. 46—48. 1 Cor. 15. 51. 1 Thes. 4. 16. ch. 25. 32, 33.

† *Or with a trumpet and a great voice.*

great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Verses 3—31. Ascending the mount of Olives, opposite to which the temple stood full in view, the disciples, as he sat there, came privately unto him, saying, *Tell us when shall these things be?* the destruction of the city and temple; *and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* According to their rooted prejudices they seem still to have expected him to appear as a glorious temporal Messiah; and by his coming meant not his appearing in the day of judgment; or, *by the end of the world*, the final consummation of all things; but rather the end of the present age, and the period of the Jewish economy; supposing it probable, that the destruction of the temple would pave the way for the erection of another far more magnificent, when in all the pomp of earthly majesty he would appear, and they should be highly advanced in that universal kingdom they expected him to establish. They were very solicitous therefore to be informed of the signs which should usher him to the throne; and Jesus, to caution them against delusion, to rectify their mistakes, and to confirm them in the faith when they should see the predictions accomplished, answers their questions.

1. He cautions his disciples against deceivers. Having rejected the true Messiah, yet impatient for the temporal deliverance they expected from him, the Jews were open to receive every pretender who set up in his name; and to the false Christs and false prophets who should arise, were they justly to be given up, who so obstinately and wickedly had rejected the true. They must pay no regard to the pretensions of these deluders, and turn a deaf ear to their emissaries, who say, Christ is in the desert, or hid in some secret chamber, and ready to appear. Nor are they to be believed, though they may do strange feats, and pretend to work miracles, which will impose upon the credulous. So powerfully indeed will the great seducer play off his illusions, that nothing but God's effectual grace and everlasting promises could preserve even the elect from being deceived: but Christ, who had chosen, would keep them; and therefore they must remember these cautions now given them in the day of temptation, (ver. 25.) which would set them on their guard, and preserve them from seduction. *Note*, (1.) The devil and his instruments may do strange things to support the credit of his falling cause, and lying wonders may be wrought that may stagger the incautious; but whatever would draw us from Christ must be rejected with abhorrence. (2.) It is the comfort of Christ's real disciples, that it is not possible they should be fatally or finally deceived. (3.) Novel pretensions and opinions in matters of religion are ever to be suspected: there cannot be a new, or another gospel. (4.) We are kept by the power of God unto salvation, yet are warned to be on our guard, as if we were to keep ourselves. He who hath ordained the end, hath also appointed the means.

2. Wars and rumours of wars will precede the threatened destruction. By insurrections and seditions against the Roman government in Judea, thousands miserably perished; whilst intestine commotions and slaughter among themselves prepared the way for their final destruction, when, on their last revolt, the Romans marched their armies to besiege and utterly ruin their city and nation. Yet Christ warns his disciples not to be discouraged by these things, so as to discontinue their preaching, or be terrified in their minds; *for these things must first come to pass, but the end is not yet;* the Jews shall be spared a little longer, to experience other judgments. *Note*, (1.) The ravages of war make dreadful work: we cannot but tremble at the alarm; though where the heart is fixed on the Rock of ages, we shall not be troubled. Nature will shudder, but faith can raise us above our fears. (2.) God's decrees are unchangeable. What he hath ordained, must come to pass; and this should quiet our minds, and silence our murmurings, we know he doth all things well.

3. Another sign he gives them of the approaching desolation. *Nation shall rise up against nation*, &c. great commotions being in the Roman empire between the contenders for sovereignty; *and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places;* all which came to pass before the destruction of Jerusalem: and are called *the beginning of sorrows;* being but the prelude to the pangs in which she should expire, as all the temporal judgments which light upon the heads of sinners, are but the beginning of sorrows, inconceivably bitter as they are endless.

4. He bids them expect a fiery persecution. Far from standing high in that earthly kingdom with which they flattered themselves, nothing but bonds, imprisonment, and death in all its most terrible forms, awaited them; hated both of Jews and Gentiles for the sake of Christ, and his gospel which they preached. And these trying seasons would have awful effects on many who before professed the faith of Jesus, but now, when the cross lay so heavy, would be offended, and apostatize; for suffering times are the sieve for hypocrites, whose fair profession then is quickly blasted. They studiously seek occasions to quarrel with religion and then revolt from it, content to be Christians only as long as it costs them neither the loss of ease, interest, nor honour; and as apostates usually turn the bitterest persecutors, by such false brethren they should be betrayed, and hated with uncommon malignity. Through the concurrence of such unfaithfulness amongst professors, such enmity in their persecutors, and such deluding and seducing teachers as would arise, *iniquity* would peculiarly *abound;* and, as the consequences of it, *the love of many* should *wax cold.*—Though persecution would make the flame burn fiercer in some, many would be glad to seek a shelter from the storm by concealing their profession, or falling into decays, into sects and parties, lose the vital warmth and power of godliness, at least for a time; for souls truly alive to God may under temptation suffer much, and, like trees in winter, it cannot be known whether they will ever spring again; but where there is still grace in the heart, there will be a revival, and a return to their first love. But for the comfort of those who approve themselves faithful in these trying times, *they* shall be saved. The remnant according to the election of grace shall not perish in the furnace of adversity, but either comfortably survive their troubles in this world, or have a more abundant recompense in that which is eternal.

5. Notwithstanding all their sufferings, *this gospel of the kingdom*, that points the way to the kingdom of grace and of glory, *shall be preached in all the world*, to which their very persecutions eminently contributed, (Acts viii. 1—4.) the apostles and others carrying the glad tidings into all the kingdoms under the Roman empire, and probably beyond its limits, (Col. i. 6, 23.) *for a witness to all nations*, of pardon and peace to those who believed, and as a testimony against those who persisted in their infidelity. And all this was done within forty years after our Lord's ascension, and before Jerusalem was destroyed, and is mentioned as the last sign of its approaching ruin.

6. Having foretold the signs of the times, our Lord proceeds to inform them of the immediate causes of the destruction, and to direct them how to act when the desolation came up as a flood. They *would see the abomination of desolation;* the Roman armies compassing their city and the holy place, with standards flying, on which they bore the images of their gods, so hateful to the Jewish nation; and then whosoever read the prophet Daniel, would see by the event his prediction verified. When this was the case, then it was high time for them to flee, and leave the devoted city and country; betaking themselves to the mountains for concealment from the ravages of the invaders. And when

the danger was so near and urgent, not a moment was to be lost: they must not go into their house, if walking on its roof, to pack up their goods, nor return from the field to carry off their clothes; but, as they were, instantly flee for their lives to some place of safety, as we are told the Christians immediately did to Pella, on the approach of the Roman army. In this season of distress some will be found in circumstances peculiarly melancholy and grievous: even *such as are with child, and give suck*, whose flight will be hereby greatly retarded, and it will be more difficult for them to escape. Also they had need pray, *that their flight might not be in the winter*, when the inclemency of the weather, and depth of the roads would increase their calamity: *nor on the sabbath day*, when many, who still were attached to the rigid observance of that day, would be scrupulous of travelling, or when the Jews would prevent their journey as contrary to the law. But flee they must, for in the city of Jerusalem, during the siege, there would be such a scene of misery, horror, and distress, as never before was known, nor ever shall be, till the time of the consummation of all things: so that should these calamities continue, not one of the Jewish nation should be left. But God having yet a remnant among them, according to the *election of grace*, and from the descendants of those who should escape the sword, designing in some future day to raise up a people for himself; he therefore hath shortened these calamitous days, not dealing with them in that rigour they deserved, but for his elect's sake sparing them from an utter extirpation. *Note*, (1.) In days of tribulation, when God opens a door of escape, we must thankfully embrace the opportunity. Though we may never fly from duty, we must not expose ourselves to unnecessary danger. (2.) Delays are dangerous; especially where our souls are at stake. The present moment only is allotted us to flee for refuge to the mountain of a Saviour's grace. (3.) At the worst of times, and in the worst of places, God hath a few, and for their sakes he is graciously pleased to shorten the days of calamity. The men of this wicked world little think how much they are indebted to those whom they often despise and abhor.

7. He adds a repeated caution against deceivers, whose fallacious promises in these calamitous times would be more easily credited; and pretending to come as the Messiah to rescue the Jewish nation from the Roman yoke, would find many ready to receive them, and willing to be deluded with the least shadow of hope: and their pretended signs and wonders would have a great effect on multitudes; but they must remember this warning, and reject all these impostors.

8. He assures them the ruin of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation should be sudden, irresistible, and awful, as when the blast of lightning darts from the cloud. And as eagles by their quick scent discover and seize the carcass, so should the Romans, bearing the figures of eagles on their standards, surround the city as a corpse to be devoured by them, and through the land hunt out, seize, and destroy this devoted people.

Some suppose there is a reference here to the swift spreading of the gospel through the world, as a light from heaven illuminating the earth, breaking through the clouds of darkness and superstition, seen far and wide, attended with most amazing success, when innumerable converts eagerly flocked to Christ, as eagles to the carcass, which was indeed the case, but the former sense seems to be principally intended.

9. The utter ruin of the ecclesiastical and civil state of the Jewish nation will then *immediately* ensue. All their glory will depart, all their temple service cease, their entire dispersion be accomplished; metaphorically represented by a total dire eclipse of all the luminaries of heaven, and by a dissolution of the very frame of nature. Then will the Messiah, whom they have rejected, appear to execute the threatened vengeance upon them; and all their tribes with deepest anguish and distress will too late mourn their infidelity, and feel the weight of that blood they imprecated on their heads.

Lastly, On this final ruin of Jerusalem, the angels of the churches, Christ's ministers, shall blow the gospel trumpet, and spread its awful pleasing sound throughout the earth, which, accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit and power, will be made effectual to the conversion of all the elect of God through the whole earth: and this gospel will continue to be preached till the end of time, when he shall have accomplished their number: and then shall he be revealed from heaven at the day of final judgment, of which this is the type and figure.

Though to this single event of the destruction of the Jewish people and nation, I incline to think this prophecy most immediately applicable; yet probably there is also contained in it a strong reference to the more awful appearance of the great Judge of quick and dead in the last day, whose coming will be ushered in with the same signs of wars, pestilence, famine, and earthquakes, whose gospel will be first spread through all lands; and whose appearance will be sudden, unexpected, and terrible as the lightning; and then shall all those things literally come to pass, which are here recorded. Before the brightness of his presence shall the sun and moon be darkened, the stars fall from their spheres, the elements melt, the heavens be wrapped together as a scroll, and the earth be consumed. With horror the guilty world, startled from their slumbers and security, will behold the terrible Judge seated on his throne, surrounded by angelic hosts, the ministers of flame, who wait his orders, and execute his sentence. Too late with tears of anguish and despair they will bewail their inevitable misery, who had ever before refused to mourn in penitence their provocations. With power irresistible, and glory inconceivable, shall the Son of man be revealed in clouds burning with vengeance against his foes, bright with refreshing beams of cheering light to gladden the hearts of his redeemed. Then every eye shall see him, and from his lips expect their irrecoverable doom. Awakened from the dust by the last trumpet's blast, around his throne shall his elect be gathered, conducted by ministering angels, whilst every bosom glows with hope, delight, and joy unspeakable and full of glory; and welcomed by their Lord, as those his grace hath chosen, his power hath preserved, their eternal bliss shall be secured; whilst they in wonder, love, and adoration bow before him, with thankfulness unutterable own the sovereign favour, and ascribe to him alone the everlasting praise. Thrust from his presence, speechless with guilt, covered with shame, the unbelievers, the impenitent, the hypocrite, shall then be consigned to their mansions of eternal horror, torment, and despair, and find the just but terrible reward of their deeds. Consider, sinful soul, ere that day comes, *who can dwell with devouring fire? who can dwell with everlasting burnings?*

32. ¶ Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh: 33. [i] So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors. 34. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. 35. [k] Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. 36. ¶ [l] But of ‡ that day and hour knoweth no *man*, *no*, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. 37. [m] But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son

[i] Luke 21. 29—33. Mark 13. 28—36. Jam. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Ezek. 7. 2—13. & 12. 22—28. ch. 11. 16. & 16. 2 & 23. 36. Heb. 12. 37. It took place within forty years after Christ's death.

[k] Mark 13. 31. ch. 5. 18. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Ps. 102. 26. Is. 40. 8. & 51. 6. Heb. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 25. Tit. 1. 2.

[l] Ver. 42, 44. ch. 25. 6, 19, 31. Mark 13. 32. John 5. 28. Acts 17. 31. & 1. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10.

‡ *i. e.* day of the last judgment.

[m] Luke 17. 26—36. Gen. vi, vii. Job 22. 16. 2 Pet. 2. 5. & 3. 6. 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20. Heb. 11. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 2, 3.

of man be. 38. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40. [n] Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41. Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 42. ¶ [o] Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43. [p] But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44. [q] Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. 45. [r] Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46. [s] Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47. [t] Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48. [u] But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49. And shall begin [x] to smite *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50. [y] The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51. And shall ‖ cut him asunder, § [z] and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

n Luke 17. 34—36. 1 Cor. 4. 7.
o Ch. 25. 13. Rom. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 16. 15. Mark 13. 33—37. Luke 21. 34—36.
p Luke 12. 39. 1 Thes. 5. 2. Rev. 16. 15. & 3. 3. 2 Pet. 3. 10, 11.
q Ch. 25. 10. Luke 12. 40. Rev. 21. 2. & 19. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 6. 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12. Phil. 4. 4. Jam. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 7.
r Luke 12. 42. & 19. 17. ch. 25. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 2. John 21. 15—17. Acts 20. 28. Gal. 6. 10. Eph. 4. 11—13. Heb. 3. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 2.
s Rev. 16. 15. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. see ver. 42.
t Ch. 25. 21. Luke 19. 17. & 22. 29, 30. & 12. 44. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Dan. 12. 2, 3.
u Luke 12. 45. 2 Pet. 2. 3, 4. Ezek. 12. 22—28.
x Is. 65. 5, 13. John 9. 10. 2 Cor. 11. 10.
y Ver. 42, 44. 1 Thes. 5. 2. 3. Rev. 16. 15. John 5. 28, 29.
‖ Or *cut him off.*
§ Campbell considers this a Syriasm, denoting, he will deprive him of his office, and so cut him off from his family.
z Job 20. 29. Ps. 11. 6. ch. 8. 12. & 22. 13. & 13. 42, 50. & 25. 30.

Verses 32—51. As the events predicted would speedily have their accomplishment; they must prepare for them.

1. They may judge of the approach of Jerusalem's ruin by the signs mentioned, as easily and as surely as they would conclude summer at hand when the fig-tree begins to bud and put forth leaves. The things Christ had spoken would certainly and speedily have their fulfilment: heaven and earth should pass, sooner than one jot or tittle of his word could fail; and they of that generation would behold it, though the very day or hour fixed in the divine decree for Jerusalem's fall, no man nor angel knew, that being a secret in the Divine Bosom.

Many understand the last verse as a transition to what relates to the final judgment. It is fixed in the divine mind: it cometh certainly; the time is short; the hour unknown, that we might be always ready, lest that day should come upon us unawares.

2. He describes the sensuality and security in which the Jewish people would be surprised. Like the men of the old world, who slighted Noah's warnings, persisted in the service of their lusts and pleasures, and, drowned in carnal gratifications, would not believe the threatened judgment, till wrath came upon them, and the flood swept them away. In such a state of false peace and worldly pursuits would the Jews be found when their destroyers came, notwithstanding all the warnings of Christ and his apostles; and then, by wondrous turns of providence, where two persons were found at the same employments in the field, or at the mill, one shall be taken, either a captive or slain, and the other shall be left, escaping from the hands of the enemy.

And this will especially be the case with the world of the ungodly before the great day of the Lord comes. They will be surprised in the midst of sensual and earthly gratifications; refusing to hear the voice of God's ministers calling them to repentance, he will give them up to the spirit of slumber. Their indulgences drive them to infidelity, and their unbelief hardens them in their sins; so reciprocally do the love of pleasure and infidelity operate. Thus they will put far away the evil day, though they only impose upon themselves, and will be more terribly surprised with its sudden arrival: and then an awful and eternal separation shall be made between the children of men who were before of the same occupation, engaged in the same labours, dwelling perhaps under one roof, or partners of the same bed; but of whom one was taken by sovereign distinguishing grace, and called by the gospel to be a servant of Jesus, and the other left a slave of corruption. These shall now be for ever separated; the one caught up to the Saviour's bosom, the other left to the eternal misery and ruin he hath chosen. What thankfulness then do all they who are taken owe to *him*, who, when others so near, so like themselves perish, is pleased to save them with an everlasting salvation!

3. He admonishes them in the view of these things to be always ready, faithfully discharging their trust, and, as uncertain of the time, ever wakeful and watchful, that when these judgments come, they may be found on their guard. And what is here said, was not peculiarly directed to them, but is spoken to all, who being in jeopardy every hour, and not knowing whether the very next they may not be called to meet their Lord by death, or at the throne of judgment, have continual need to be expecting and preparing for their great change. Two things we know: That Christ will come, but when is uncertain, and therefore left uncertain, that we might be always ready; unless we act more foolishly respecting our souls, than any man of common prudence does with regard to his person or substance; for if he be admonished of danger from the approach of a thief by night, he will watch to prevent the robber's entrance: and how much more then are we called to watch, that we may not be surprised at midnight with the coming of the great Judge, and perish in a fatal security, body and soul for ever? Our Lord enforces this great duty of watchfulness by the case of a master and his two servants, the one negligent, the other diligent and watchful; recommending it to us to copy the example of the wise and faithful servant, that we may receive his reward, and escape the misery which neglect and carelessness about the concerns of our souls must necessarily be attended with.

[1.] The wise and faithful servant represents every gracious soul, and especially the ministers of Christ, who are sent by him the great Ruler of his family the church, to serve in their several departments, according to their several capacities. Their business is to *serve*, not themselves, but the heirs of salvation, for whom they are appointed to labour; studying to render them every kind office, and to give them that meat of the sound, savoury, and strengthening doctrines of truth which they need; and this regularly in due season, and as shall best suit the state of every one of their people. Herein the faithful minister must approve, (1.) His *wisdom*, in studying and consulting their wants, and how to supply them. (2.) His *faithfulness*, in discharging his trust, with a constant regard to his Master's honour, and an eye to the real good of those committed to his care; willing to approve himself to their consciences, and, when both cannot be

done, more solicitous to profit than to please them. (3.) His *diligence*, always employed in the blessed work, that when his Master comes, he may be *found so doing*. *Note*, Love of idleness and ease in a minister is doubly criminal. Where such a faithful servant thus labours, he shall not lose his reward. The blessing of Jesus shall rest upon him in life, in death for ever; he will have the comfort of his work while he lives, will feel satisfaction in it when he dies, and the blessing shall follow him unto the eternal world, where he shall be advanced to the highest honours, and shine forth in the kingdom of Jesus as the sun, for ever and ever. May such a prospect animate our zeal and quicken our diligence!

[2.] The very reverse is the conduct and end of the wicked servant; under which character every minister and professor of religion is represented, whose practice and principles contradict his pretensions. (1.) His *practice* is described as bad, very bad; quarrelsome, insolent, and oppressive to his fellow-servants, and abusing the power he is intrusted with over them. Instead of studying their good, and labouring for their service, he is wholly taken up with the indulgence of his own appetites. If he can find good eating and drinking for himself, he cares nothing how his master's interest fare; and his company are those with whom he can feast to the full, in luxury, excess, and drunkenness. *Note*, The Lord observes the conduct of those who call themselves his ministers and servants. He marks their pride and insolence; smiting with words of reproach, or, under pretence of vindicating their Master's honour, abusing with the exercise of oppressive authority their more faithful fellow-servants, usually because they are faithful. The Lord sees their carnal lives, their unbecoming associates, their compliances with a world lying in wickedness, and their partaking in other men's sins, perhaps lost in excess themselves. *Ministers!* yet, horrid to tell, drunkards, or companions with them! Will He not visit for these things? (2.) His *principles* are as infidel as his practice is immoral. Far from living in a constant expectation of his Master's coming, he puts far off the evil day, and flatters himself there is no danger yet. And thus his heart is emboldened to live after the fashion of the world, and to neglect the awful charge committed to him. *Note*, There is much more infidelity both in ministers and people professing godliness than they themselves are aware of; yet many a man would be shocked and affronted to be charged as an infidel, whose practice, notwithstanding, every day evidences the infidelity of his heart, and demonstrates that it is impossible he can believe the solemn account he must shortly make, when he so seldom, or so carelessly thinks of it, and takes so little pains to prepare for it. (3.) His *doom* is fearful. Surprised by his Master's coming in death or judgment, his negligence and guilt will stare him in the face, when it is too late for repentance or amendment. He shall be cut off from all his sensual pursuits, in the midst of his iniquities; and, separated for ever from the Lord, his portion shall be appointed him with hypocrites in the deepest abyss of misery, where eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth bespeak the unutterable torments of the damned. Let every careless sinner, and, above all, every negligent, faithless, worldly-minded minister, read this awful sentence and tremble, whilst yet there is hope. They shall assuredly receive greater damnation than any others, who, under the guise of a pretended commission from Christ, have deluded and destroyed the people committed to their charge, and, by their errors, negligence, or ill examples, lie down with the blood of lost souls upon their heads crying for vengeance.

CHAP. XXV.—anno domini, 33.

The necessity of preparing to meet the Lord in judgment is enforced, 1. *In the parable of the ten virgins*, ver. 1—13. 2. *In the parable of the three servants*, ver. 14—30. 3. *In a more plain description of the process of the last judgment*, ver. 31—46. *And these are things of awful consideration, because of everlasting concern to every one of us.*

1. THEN [a] shall [b] the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten [c] virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth [d] to meet the bridegroom. 2. [e] And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. 3. They that *were* foolish [f] took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4. [g] But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5. [h] While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. 6. [i] And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. 7. [k] Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. 8. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for [l] our lamps are * gone out. 9. But the wise answered, saying, *Not so;* lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to [m] them that sell, and buy for yourselves. 10. And while they went to buy, [n] the bridegroom came; [o] and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: [p] and the door was shut. 11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, [q] Lord, Lord, open to us. 12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13. [r] Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

a Ch. 24. 27, 36. 42.
b Ch. 3. 2. & 5. 17. & xiii. Dan. 2. 44.
c 2 Cor. 11. 2. Rev. 14. 4. Ps. 45. 14. Rev. 21. 2, 9.
d Gen. 19. 1. & 46. 29. Num. 23. 15. Eph. 5. 31. Rev. 19. 7.
e Ch. 20. 16. & 13. 20—23. 47. & 22. 10. Rom. 9. 6.
f 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16.
g 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Zech. 4. 2, 3. John 1. 16. Phil. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 12.
h Ch. 24. 48. 2 Pet. 3. 4. Rom. 2. 4. Rev. 2. 21. Song 5. 2. & 3. 1. Eph. 5. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 6, 7. ch. 26. 43. Rom. 13. 11. Jam. 3. 2. ch. 26. 40, 43.
i Ch. 24. 31, 44. 1 Thes. 4. 16. & 5. 2. Rev. 16. 15. Luke 12. 46. Prov. 1. 24. Mic. 6. 9. Phil. 4. 5. Mark 13. 35. Luke 12. 20. Heb. 10. 25. Jam. 5. 8, 9.
k Ch. 5. 16. Luke 12. 35. 2 Per. 3. 14. ch. 13. 6, 17. 21. & 7. 27.
l Job 8. 13, 14. & 18. 5. & 21. 17. & 11. 20.
* Or *going out.*
m 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11—13. Mark 16. 15. Eph. 3. 8.
n Ch. 24. 36, 44. Rev. 1. 7. & 22. 12, 20.
o 2 Tim. 4. 8. Eph. 4. 13. 2 Pet. 1. 4—11. 1 Pet. 1. 13.
p Ps. 95. 11. Luke 13. 25.
q Heb. 12. 17. ch. 7. 21—23. Luke 13. 25. Ps. 1. 6. & 5. 5. & 6. 8. Hab. 1. 13. 1 Cor. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 19.
r Ch. 24. 42. Mark 13. 33, 35, 37. Luke 21. 34, 36. 1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 16. 15.

Verses 1—13. Though this parable, as connected with the former chapter, may have a particular reference to the destruction of the Jewish people, who had slighted the gospel salvation, and neglected their day of grace, yet it may well be understood as of more general import, and including a warning and caution to men in every age and place.

The parable itself is taken from a common custom in those days, when the bridegroom used to go in the evening, attended by his friends, to the house of the bride, who, on hearing of his approach, went out with lights, accompanied by a number of virgins, her companions, to welcome his arrival, and conduct him to the entertainment provided on that occasion; and such shall be the state of the gospel church, at the coming of Christ, as we see here represented. We have,

1. The persons here spoken of, *the virgins, who went out with their lamps to meet the bridegroom.* The *Bridegroom* is the Lord Jesus, who condescends to call his church his spouse; and to honour every member of it with that near and exalted relation. *The virgins* are those professors of religion who appear desirous to present themselves to Christ in the comeliness, beauty, and simplicity which his righteousness and grace puts upon them: they *go forth to meet him*, found in his ways and ordinances here on earth, expecting his coming from heaven, and if they are *his* indeed, loving and looking for the day of his appearing.

2. The characters of the virgins. They were very different as their actions showed. *Five of them were wise;* and as an evidence of their foresight and prudence, they took care to be well provided with oil, that they might have enough if they should tarry long in waiting. These represent the faithful souls made wise unto salvation, whose hearts are truly supplied with the oil of divine grace, and have not only the light of profession, but the real experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ, possess a living principle, and partake of a divine nature; but *five were foolish*, who, though in appearance associated with the others, were unacquainted with the life-giving truths of the gospel; professors, but not possessors of the grace which is in Jesus Christ; shining to others in a name to live, but really dead and dark in their own souls: they have lamps but *no oil with them*, destitute of spiritual life; careful only to make a fair show in the flesh, and recommend themselves to their neighbours as Christians, without a single eye to Christ, and a real desire in simplicity and godly sincerity to approve themselves to him. And they are foolish indeed, who thus deceiving others, most fatally deceive and destroy their own souls.

3. The bridegroom not coming so soon as they expected, *they all slumbered and slept;* but as their state was different when awake, it was different also when asleep. Indeed *the wise*, the faithful souls, through the abiding corruption of their nature; worldly avocations; removal from the gospel and the communion of lively Christians; slothfulness, or neglect of spiritual exercises; the power and prevalence of temptation; outward ease and affluence; connection with others lifeless or careless in their walk; through these and the like causes, even once vigorous Christians fall sometimes into a lifeless state of soul: the love of Christ, and of their brethren, waxes cold; indifference to the concerns of eternity succeeds; and, though they lament it, the sorrow is not deep or lasting; notwithstanding the root of the matter is in them, and afflictions, the word, and renewed breathings of the divine Spirit, will yet revive the dying flame. The *foolish*, satisfied in external profession, sleep the sleep of death, sunk in carnal security, and utterly resting upon the form of godliness.

4. At midnight the cry of the bridegroom's approach startled them from their slumbers, and instantly they were summoned to meet him with their lamps. Thus suddenly surprised are we often by death; and even gracious souls start at the summons, not expecting it so near, and conscious of their own unfaithfulness: while horror seizes the hypocrite and the sinner, and they awake to meet their inevitable doom. But doth our Lord delay? Is this moment yet our own? Awake then, thou that sleepest; prevent this dire alarm.

5. Instantly they arose, and began to trim their lamps. The wise found much to do, and blushed to be thus overtaken, but their oil soon revived the expiring flame; their faith and love regained their exercise, and welcoming their Redeemer, they confidently expected to be found of him in peace. The foolish too essayed to prepare; but, alas! too late: their lamps were gone out, and no oil to be procured: in vain they seek to beg from their companions, or buy from others; they have lost the moment which cannot be regained. Thus even in this world the lamp of profession is often extinguished, and the unfaithfulness of the heart appears; though if the hypocrite's hope burns to his last hour, in death it expires: then he will know the value of what he hath lost when it cannot be regained: none will then be found able to impart of their grace, what the best possess being barely sufficient for themselves. Whilst there is life indeed, the market is still open to the latest moment; they who come to Christ may buy pardon, grace, and peace, without money, and without price; but when death closes the scene, the lamp of hope is for ever extinguished; and as the tree falleth it must lie.

6. Whilst the foolish virgins went to buy, the bridegroom came. Many on their death-beds express deep concern for their neglected souls, and think, by some extraordinary acts of devotion and charity, still to purchase heaven; mistaking the market, and spending their labours on that which satisfieth not. Christ alone can save a sinking soul, and to the last; they who come humbly to him never find it too late.—*They that were ready went in with him to the marriage;* all who are found clothed in his righteousness, and shining in the graces of his Spirit, are admitted to his eternal presence, and sit down with him in glory; *and then the door was shut;* they who are entered into the rest of the blessed, go out no more; and they who are once excluded, can never more gain admission: the great gulf is fixed, and despair hath for ever barred the door of hope. Too late *the foolish virgins came;* importunately craving admittance: for in death and judgment, they will often learn to pray and cry who never prayed before; but all entrance is refused to them, and the bridegroom utterly disowns them; *verily I say unto you, I know you not;* and wo to that sinful soul thus abandoned of God to his misery, and doomed never to enter into his rest!

7. The inference from the whole is, *Watch therefore;* the concerns of our souls are infinitely momentous, and will not admit of being trifled with; the time is short; eternity depends upon our improvement of it. We know neither the day nor the hour when we shall be summoned away; the sleeping virgins had a midnight call, and why not you or I? Watch therefore, that you may be always ready to go forth with joy to meet the Lord.

14. ¶ [s] For *the kingdom of heaven is* * as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods: 15. And unto one he gave five † talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. 16. Then [t] he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. 17. And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. 18. But he that had received one went and [u] digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. 19. [x] And after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. 20. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: [y] behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. 21. His lord said unto him, [z] Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, [a] I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22. He also that had received [b] two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23. His lord said unto him, [c] Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been

s Luke 19. 12—27. Rom. 12. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 7, 11, 28. Eph. 4. 11. ch. 21. 33. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

* Campbell would supply the ellipsis here thus, *The Son of man is*, &c.

† A talent is £342 3s. 9d. and denotes here gifts, offices, and opportunities.

t 1 Pet. 4. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 18. Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. & 3. 14, 15.

u Phil. 2. 21. & 3. 19. Ps. 17. 14.

x Luke 16. 2. Eccl. 12. 14. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 12—15. & 4. 5. Rom. 14. 12.

y 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Jam. 2. 18. Rom. 15. 19. Acts 20. 24. 2 Tim. 4. 2.

z 1 Cor. 4. 5. Rom. 2. 29. Luke 19. 17. & 16. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 7. ch. 24. 47.

a Ps. 49. 14. Rev. 2. 26, 27. Luke 22. 29, 30. John 12. 26. & 17. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Ps. 16. 11. Heb. 12. 2. Acts 2. 28. with Gen. 39 4.

b 2 Cor. 8. 12. Rom. 12. 6—8. 1 Pet. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 2. 1 Cor. 4. 2.

c See ver. 21.

faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 24. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, [d] Lord, [e] I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25. And I was [f] afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. 26. His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked* and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: 27. [g] Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28. [h] Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. 29. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not [k] shall be taken away even that which he hath.† 30. [l] And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

d Ch. 7. 21. Luke 6. 46.

e Tit. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 8. 1. Ezek. 18. 25, 29.

f Rev. 21. 8. Luke 19. 20, 21.

* Or *malignant.*

g Luke 19. 22, 23. Job 15. 5, 6. 2 Sam. 12. 6. 7. ch. 12 37. Tit. 3. 11.

h Luke 19. 24. Ezek. 46. 17.

i Ch. 13. 12. Mark 4. 25. Luke 8. 18. & 19. 26. John 15. 2. Rev. 22. 11. Ps. 27. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Cor. 6. 1.

k Ezek. 33. 13. 2 John 8. Gal. 3. 4.

† Some MSS. read: *even that which he seemeth to have.*

l Ch. 8. 12. & 8. 12. & 13. 42. & 22. 13. & 24. 51. Luke 17. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Rev. 14. 10, 11. & 21. 8. & 22. 15.

Verses 14—30. As a farther illustration of the method in which the Lord will deal with the visible members of his church, the following parable is delivered. Christ is the great Master and Lord of all: we are all his servants in profession, and they especially who are put in trust with the gospel: our great business therefore here below is, to make our profiting appear to the glory of our Lord. We are told,

1. The trust committed to these servants during their master's absence. To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to another, one; to the least a very considerable sum, a single talent of silver amounting by the lowest computation to upwards of £187; and these talents may refer either, (1.) To the gifts he bestowed on his disciples after his ascension, qualifying them with extraordinary miraculous powers, and furnishing them with ability for the discharge of the arduous trust committed to them, whilst he went up to heaven, being in the fulness of time again to return, and call his servants to account for the improvement of that which he had committed to their care; or, (2.) The talents may refer in general to all the gifts of nature or providence of which we are possessed, and which are lent us of the Lord purely to serve the purposes of his glory, and promote the interests of his kingdom; and for them we must be accountable to him in the great day of his appearing. Some have more than others, God being sovereign in his bounty; and as we deserve nothing from him, it is a mercy that we should be intrusted with the least talent. They who by their station, abilities, or possessions, are intrusted with much, whose capital is large, and influence most extensive, have the more to answer for, and need give the greater diligence; but all have something; the meanest have one immortal soul to care for, infinitely more precious than millions of silver or gold.

2. The improvement each made of the talents committed to them. Two of them immediately set themselves to work, and by their diligence doubled their capital. Thus faithful ministers and Christians laying out themselves in the Redeemer's work and service, see the most abundant blessing attending their labours of love. Their own souls are enriched with knowledge and grace, whilst they are serving others; the church is edified and increased, and immortal souls are gained for Christ, in his account the richest treasure. One of the servants, and he that had least, was negligent and careless; instead of making use of his talent, he went and hid it in the earth: representing herein the character of those, whether ministers or professors of religion, who make no improvement of their natural abilities, or providential endowments; but are so buried in earthly mindedness, and attention to this world's pursuits, that they have neither inclination nor leisure to serve the interests of Christ and of souls.

3. After a long time the master of these servants came to reckon with them: for though the Lord Jesus waits long, he will assuredly come at last; and we must at his tribunal, every one of us, render up our account. Oh! that it might be with joy, and not with sorrow!

[1.] The faithful servants with readiness appeared, and gave up their accounts, highly to their master's satisfaction, who failed not abundantly to reward their diligence. He that had five talents had gained other five: he that had two had doubled them; both therefore are received with the same token of approbation, and partake of the same rewards. Thus in the day of Christ, the faithful ministers and disciples of Jesus acknowledging the trust committed to them as a matter of grace, will produce full evidence of their diligence and profiting, and, whether it be less or more of the gifts of nature or providence which they have possessed, their Lord will graciously accept the improvement they have made, will commend their fidelity, and abundantly reward them; exalting them to a throne of glory in his eternal kingdom, and admitting them into the participation of those unspeakable and never ending joys which are at his right hand for evermore; a reward indeed infinitely exceeding all their services. But as it was through grace they received their talents, through grace alone were enabled to improve them; so it is of grace, not of debt, they receive the recompense so far beyond all they could desire or deserve.

[2.] The slothful servant next appears, and fain would excuse his own negligence by the most unjust reflection upon his gracious master; pretending apprehensions of his austerity and rigorous exactions, as if he expected to reap where he had neither manured the soil nor sown the seed: producing therefore the talent, and pleading fear, he hopes his lord will be satisfied with his own, and not disapprove his care of hiding it, that he might restore it entire at his return. Such are the sentiments, pleas, and excuses of the false and faithless disciple. (1.) He hath hard thoughts of God, and thinks his demands too rigorous and severe, desirous to lay the blame of his sins on him rather than himself. (2.) He is under the bondage of fear; the little he affects to do proceeds from a slavish principle: and where this reigns, no acceptable service can be rendered to God. (3.) He depends for his acceptance with God on a negative religion, and thinks it very sufficient if he can plead he hath done no harm, hath not been so bad as others, nor indulged in those excesses which they fell into; though he can produce neither the works of faith, nor labours of love. (4.) He presumes on the validity of his plea, and sees not that there is a lie in his right hand.

[3.] Convicted out of his own mouth, judgment is pronounced on him. His sloth and wickedness were evident; and to be idle in the service of God, is highly criminal. His very excuse showed self-contradiction: since if he had so austere a person to deal with, at least he should have given the money into a banker's hands, where it would have been equally safe, and borne lawful interest. *Note*, The sinner's excuses in the day of judgment will but prove his guilt more evident: if God was the hard Master he pretends, he ought to have been at more pains to please him, and more diligent to improve the measure of gifts or grace,

however small, which was vouchsafed him. Justly therefore doth sentence proceed, *take the talent from him;* for they who use not the gifts, means, and mercies, temporal or spiritual, which they enjoy, deserve to forfeit them; *and give it unto him who hath ten talents;* God thus graciously rewarding the fidelity and diligence of his servants with an increase of blessings, adding to the store they have improved, whilst he often strips off even the profession of the hypocrites, and deprives them of the common gifts of nature, providence, or gospel privileges which they before enjoyed. Nor doth the unprofitable servant's punishment rest in the mere loss of what he possessed: but in the sufferings to which he shall be doomed, when *cast into the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* *Note,* (1.) Hell is the place of the sinner's torment; and the miseries of that dismal mansion, the direst expressions of human agony and distress can but faintly represent. (2.) If the slothful and unprofitable meet so fearful a doom, where will the extravagant and abandoned appear, who have squandered instead of hiding the talent, and abused it to the most immediate dishonour and injury of the Master who intrusted them therewith?

31. ¶ [m] When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32. And before him [n] shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: 33. [o] And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34. [p] Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35. [q] For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; 36. Naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited * me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? 38. When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?* 39. Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40. And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, [r] Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. 41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, [s] Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. 42. [t] For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; 43. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45. Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, [u] Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. 46. [x] And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.

m Job 19. 25. Zech. 14. 5. ch. 16. 27. & 19. 28. Acts 1. 11. & 3. 21. & 17. 13. Jude 14. 1 Thes. 4. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8. Heb. 9. 28. Phil. 2. 9, 10. Rev. 1. 7. & 3. 21. & 20. 11. & 22. 12, 20.

n Joel 3. 11—14. Rom. 14. 10, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 20. 12. ch. 13. 49. Ezek. 20. 38. & 34. 17, 22. Mal. 3. 18.

o Ps. 110. 1. Heb. 1. 3. Rev. 3. 21. ch. 24. 51. Ezek. 34. 17—22. 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17.

p Heb. 9. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Eph. 1. 3—5. John 14. 2. ch. 20. 23. Rom. 8. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 9. Mark 10. 40. Heb. 11. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 9. Rev. 21. 7.

q Is. 58. 7. Ezek. 18. 7. Heb. 13. 1—3. & 6. 10. 1 Tim. 5. 10. Jam. 1. 27. & 2. 15, 16. 2 Tim. 1. 16.

* The English word *visited* does not sufficiently express the import of the Greek verb here; when the subject of discourse is a sick person, or one in distress. Campbell renders it, *Ye assisted me.*

r Ch. 10. 42. Mark 9. 41. Prov. 14. 21, 31. & 19. 17. Heb. 6. 10.

s Ps. 6. 8. & 1. 5. & 109. 17. ch. 7. 23. Luke 13. 27. ch. 3. 12. & 8. 12. & 13. 42, 50. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Is. 66. 24. Rev. 14. 10, 11. & 20. 9, 15. Mark 9. 44, 46, 48. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6.

t Jam. 2. 13. Deut. 23. 4. Judg. 1. 7. ch. 7. 2. Ps. 18. 26. Jam. 2. 13—16. 1 John 3. 17. Amos 6. 6.

u Prov. 14. 31. & 17. 5. & 21. 13. Acts 9. 5. Zech. 2. 8. Ps. 105. 15.

x Dan. 12. 2. John 5. 29. Rev. 14. 11. & 20. 10, 15. & 3. 21. & 7. 15—17. & 21. 7. & 22. 14. 1 John 3. 2. & 2. 25. Ps. 16. 10, 11. & 17. 15. & 13. 24, 26.

Verses 31—46. Without a parable, our Lord proceeds in these verses to give a delineation of that awful process which will be observed in the great day of final judgment: may it awaken our minds to prepare for it! We have,

1. The majesty of the eternal Judge displayed. *The Son of man,* the incarnate Jesus, who once suffered on a cross, and is now exalted to the crown, all power being given him in heaven and in earth; at his bar shall the nations be assembled, and every individual of the sons of Adam must then appear before him, to receive, according to the decisions of his justice, everlasting happiness or eternal torment. In the glory of essential Deity, with the peculiar dignity of Mediator, shall he be revealed; the myriads of bright angelic hosts shall grace his train, and stand the ready ministers to execute his orders; whilst seated on a throne of glory, brighter than the sun when he goeth forth in his strength, every eye shall see him, and from his lips expect their irrevocable doom. Shall I be there? my soul, tremble at the thought, and give all diligence to be found of him in peace.

2. The all-discerning eye of Jesus, incapable of mistaking the true characters of men, shall now make the final separation. His sheep, who in faith unfeigned, and love without dissimulation, followed him the true Shepherd, shall, in distinguished honour, be placed high at his right hand; whilst *the goats,* the hypocrites and impenitent, whose hearts remain uncleansed from their native filthiness, who lived and died in sin unpardoned, shall be degraded to the left with shame, the prelude to their approaching fearful sentence. Reader, consider where shall thy place be?

3. The faithful shall be received with the most endearing welcome. *Then,* when he shall have made the separation, and no one spot remains among the glorious host, addressing himself with every endearment of voice and aspect, *the King,* whose word is with power, and his sentence unchangeable, he *shall say unto them, Come* ye, the everlasting objects of my love, whom by grace I have chosen and called, and who have followed me in the regeneration; come to be for ever with me, to behold, and partake of my glory, *ye blessed children of my Father,* honoured with this distinguished title; though despised, abhorred of men, precious to the God of heaven, blessed with his present and eternal favour; come, *inherit the kingdom,* as joint-heirs with me; a kingdom that cannot be moved, eternal in the heavens; compared with which all earthly grandeur vanishes, as the glow-worm before the meridian sun; a kingdom of never-fading glory, *prepared* by the power and grace of the Almighty, on purpose to crown the felicity of his chosen, and this *from the foundation of the world.* From eternity the plan was laid; in the creation the design appeared; and now the thrones are ready to receive you, that you may reign with me for ever and ever. With what rapture and delight, with what joy unspeakable and full of glory will the redeemed hear this address from the mouth of their

adored Judge, of their beloved Lord! Oh that my lot may be amongst these saints in light!

4. Christ mentions the evidences of their relation to him as his people, clearly shown in the regard paid for his sake to their brethren in affliction and distress: the destitute, hungry, and naked their hands were open to relieve; the sick were cheered by their presence and sweet counsel; and all the horrors of a prison kept them not from visiting the faithful there confined for the testimony of Jesus Christ, supporting their wants, and not ashamed of their bonds. Works of genuine charity these, which, though in no wise meritorious, or challenging a reward at his hands, Jesus remembers, and in the riches of his grace is pleased to mention to their honour, as undoubted tokens of their faith unfeigned. Surprised to hear their Lord make mention of their poor insignificant services, and, with deep humility, conscious how little they deserved it at his hands, the righteous were ready to question and disclaim the works attributed to them. They never saw, at least the most of them, their Lord in the flesh, and cannot hear without some confusion his declarations with regard to their duties; when they ever blushed to think how defective they had been: but the King from his throne shall answer with strongest assurances of his kind acceptance of their conduct, that he regards what they did for the meanest of his disciples whom in his infinite condescension he is pleased to call, *my brethren*, as done unto himself. He interprets our practice by our principles; it is not so much the duty, as the spirit in which it is performed, that he respects. The least deed of charity, even a cup of cold water, when bestowed with a desire to his glory, and proceeding from love to him, shall be remembered with distinguished honour. And in the least of his poor people Jesus is still present with us; and what we bestow to relieve their wants, will be equally acceptable to him as if we had visited him in the days of his flesh, and ministered to him of our substance. What an engagement and encouragement this to every work and labour of love!

5. Sentence is passed on those at the left hand. With terror in his voice, frowns of terrible ire, the Judge shall pronounce the unchangeable decree. *Depart from me*, ye objects of my abhorrence, whose guilt and impenitence provoke my indignation; be for ever banished from my presence, and therewith from all bliss, and ease, and happiness, for ever. *Depart ye cursed*, on whom my wrath eternally abides, and all the penalties of a broken law; vengeance shall pursue you to the bottomless pit; thither must ye be driven, *into everlasting fire*, to dwell in flames that never can be quenched, where an agonizing body adds to the misery of the tortured soul; and as intolerable as the torment is, so eternal is the suffering; no ray of hope shall ever cheer the horrid gloom: there is neither prospect of an end, nor remission of the torture: but black despair adds bitterness inexpressible to every pang the damned feel: and this not originally designed for you; but *prepared for the devil and his angels*, whom ye have chosen to imitate; his service to obey, his works to follow, and therefore with him must suffer; alike in sin, alike in punishment. With such companions to spend eternity, how terrible! in such torments to lie down, how intolerable! Oh sin, sin, what hast thou done!

6. The reason of the sentence is given, and the criminals' plea overruled. The instances of their guilt are produced, drawn from the omissions of those duties which the righteous practised, the sure evidences of the want of that faith which worketh by love. Engrossed with selfish considerations, negligent and at ease, they cared not for the distresses of the miserable, nor sought to alleviate them: were unconcerned what the faithful suffered for their Master's sake; and if at any time humanity, sensibility to distress, ostentation, or self-complacence opened their purses to the relief of indigence, their gifts never flowed from the divine principle of love to Jesus and his brethren, nor were directed to his glory alone, therefore they were as reprobate silver. They object indeed to the charge, and, because they never saw Christ in the flesh, presume they cannot be accused of thus neglecting him; but the plea is frivolous. Christ is one with every member of his church, suffers in them, and with them; and every insult, slight, or neglect shown to them, he reckons done to himself. And this should comfort the despised and suffering servants of Jesus, he feels, and takes a part in all their troubles; and let those who treat them with indignity tremble. They may pretend indeed, they mean to discountenance and discourage a deluded sect; to ridicule or suppress a company of enthusiastic religionists, and the like: but men need well consider what they do, and whether they act clearly on the authority of their Bibles, and under the influence of fervent charity, lest a persecuted Jesus should rise up terribly to avenge his own and his people's wrongs. If the doom of the negligent, the unmerciful, and uncharitable be so dreadful, what will be the case with the unjust, and the persecutors of God's people?

7. The sentence is no sooner pronounced than executed. *These shall go away into everlasting punishment;* there is no appeal from Christ's bar, nor escape from his judgment; the doom is irrevocable; the execution immediate. Driven from his presence, they are cast into the burning lake, and the smoke of their torments ascendeth up for ever and ever. *But the righteous*, who in their Redeemer were found complete, and in their characters, by his grace approved as faithful, shall go *into life eternal;* to the enjoyment of God in his kingdom and glory, to partake of all the blessedness which the boundless love and power of an all-sufficient God can bestow on his most favoured children; their holiness and happiness perfected, and their bliss secured for eternity.

CHAP. XXVI.—anno domini, 33.

The cross of Christ is the Christian's glory. We here see him entering on the scene of his sufferings. We have, 1. *The preface to them.* [1.] *The previous notice given by him of them to his disciples,* ver. 1, 2. [2.] *The rulers' conspiracy against him,* ver. 3—5. [3.] *The anointing of his head at a supper in Bethany,* ver. 6—13. [4.] *Judas' bargain with the priests to betray him,* ver. 14—16. [5.] *Christ's eating the passover with his disciples,* ver. 17—25. [6.] *His instituting the Lord's supper, and his discourse with his disciples after it,* ver. 26—35. 2. *His entrance upon them, and some of the particulars of them.* (1.) *His agony in the garden,* ver. 36—46. (2.) *The seizing of him by the officers, with Judas' help,* ver. 47—56. (3.) *His arraignment before the chief priest, and his condemnation in his court,* ver. 57—68. (4.) *Peter's denying him,* ver. 69—75.

1. AND [a] it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, 2. [b] Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. 3. ¶ [c] Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4. And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*. 5. But they said, [d] Not on the feast *day*, * lest there be an uproar among the people.

[a] John 13. 1. with 17. 4.

[b] Mark 14. 1, 2. Luke 22. 1, 2. John 13. 18.

[c] John 11. 47—53. Acts 4. 25—28. ch. 21. 3. Is. 53. 2, 3. Ps. 2. 1, 2. & 64. 4. & 41. 7. & 56. 6. & 22. 12, 13.

[d] Gen. 3. 1. ch. 21. 26. & 14. 5. Luke 20. 6. John 7. 12, 40. Prov. 21. 30. & 19. 21.

* Literally, *the festival;* the day of the paschal sacrifice.

Verses 1—5. The time was now at hand fixed in the eternal counsels, when Messiah, the prince, should be cut off for the sins of his people.

1. He gives his disciples notice of his betrayal and approaching crucifixion, that they might be the less surprised. He had finished his discourse on the sufferings they might expect, and their encouragement to bear up under them, and now he was going himself to set them the bright example they should copy. The views of a suffering Christ should support every suffering Christian. Within two days the dreadful plot should be executed: and it is as sure as if already done, that he *is betrayed to be crucified.*

2. Just at this time the chief priests, scribes, and elders, the members of the Sanhedrim, and the men of highest authority among the Jews, exasperated now beyond measure, and resolving upon the death of Jesus, assembled to consult upon the properest means of accomplishing their bloody purpose. The high priest's palace was the place where these conspirators met; and having weighed the dangers of an uproar which might ensue, if on the feast-day they should attempt to arrest him amidst the concourse of people who attended him, they resolved, if possible, to watch their opportunity to seize him privately, and either thus to make away with him, or get him condemned by the Roman governor, and execute him as a malefactor, on account of crimes they were ready to lay to his charge. *Note*, The fear of man often restrains those from wickedness, who are unawed by any fear of God.

6. ¶ [e] Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, * and poured *it* on his head, as he sat *at meat.* 8. But when his disciples saw *it*, they [f] had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste? 9. For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. 10. When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, [g] Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. 11. [h] For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. 12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* [i] for my burial.† 13. Verily I say unto you, [k] Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

e John 11. 1, 2. & 12. 3—9. Mark 14. 3—9. Luke 7. 37, 38. ver. 12.

* Rather, *balsam.*

f Eccl. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. Mark 14. 4. John 12. 4—6. Judas stirred up the rest.

g Ps. 109. 31. Job 42. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 10. 18.

h Deut. 15. 11. John 12. 8. & 13. 33. & 16. 5, 28. & 17. 11. Acts 3. 21. with ch. 18. 20. & 28. 20. John 14. 19. Heb. 13. 5, 8.

i Ch. 27. 57—60. Mark 15. 42—47. Luke 23. 50—56. John 19. 38—42.

† Rather, *it is to embalm me.*

k Mark 16. 15. ch. 28. 19. Rom. 1. 8. & 10. 18. & 15. 19. Col. 1. 6, 23. Is. xlii, xlix, liv, lx.

Verses 6—13. Jesus, though he spent the day at Jerusalem, retired at even to Bethany, a village at a little distance from thence, and was now in the house of Simon the leper: one of those probably who had experienced his healing power, and had become his faithful disciple. We are told,

1. The singular mark of respect shown him by a gracious woman who was present when they sat at meat. She poured upon his head a box of precious ointment, as the profession of her faith in him as the Messiah, the anointed of God, and as a token of her love to him, as her adored Lord and Saviour.

Some have imagined that this occurrenee is the same with that related, John xii. 1. and they reconcile the accounts by supposing, that this woman, there said to be Mary, Lazarus' sister, who with his family were invited to the entertainment, might not only anoint our Saviour's head, but his feet also; though one of the evangelists mentions the one, and the other the other; and that this, though here introduced, was done six days before. Others suppose they are two distinct occurrences, differing in time, place, and manner, and this to me seems most probable.

2. The offence the disciples took at the matter. They among themselves censured the action as an unnecessary waste of what might have been more profitably employed, if the money, so valuable a box of ointment would bring, had been given to the poor; and perhaps meant tacitly to blame their Master for permitting this to be done, and not discountenancing the woman. *Note*, (1.) Charity bids us put the best construction on what is dubious; and we should be very careful, how we censure those of over-doing or as guilty of imprudence, who go farther than we dare or care to do. Probably the fault we complain of will be found more justly retorted; and that not their intemperate rashness, but our lukewarmness and want of zeal and love for Jesus is to be blamed. (2.) That is never waste which is employed for Christ and his service.

3. Christ rebukes his disciples, and vindicates this gracious woman. He knew their murmurs, and expostulates with them on the unjustness of their indignation, *why trouble ye the woman*, by such harsh judging, and unkind sentiments of her conduct? The work was both suitable and seasonable, deserving commendation, not censure. Among the poor, for whom they expressed such jealousy, they would always find objects to exercise their charity, but his bodily presence with them was short, and therefore this act of respect was not only pleasing to him, but had a particular view which they knew not: it was intended for his burial, as an embalming of his body though now alive, which she would not have an opportunity to do when he was dead; and this she did either by revelation, or the Holy Ghost directed her to the action for this end. So far therefore from issuing to her reproach, it should be mentioned to her perpetual honour as the evidence of her genuine faith and love, wherever the gospel should be preached in the whole world. *Note*, (1.) If we knew the principles and motives on which others act, we should often see abundant reason to approve that conduct which now we condemn. (2.) It is a real grief to a gracious soul to be censured for well-doing, especially by those whose approbation he had reason to expect; but our judgment is with the Lord, and our reward with our God. (3.) We never need want opportunities of doing good, if we have hearts to do it; objects of distress every where abound. (4.) Those who honour Jesus he will honour. A name in his records, or the book of life of the Lamb, secures immortal fame and glory.

14. ¶ [l] Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15. And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for [m] thirty pieces of silver. 16. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

l Mark 14. 10, 11. Luke 22. 3—6. ch. 10. 4. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12, 14. John 6. 70, 71. & 13. 27.

m Zech. 11. 12, 13. ch. 27. 3. Exod. 21. 32. *i. e.* £1 8*s.* 5½*d.*

Verses 14—16. The traitor Judas provoked with the vindication of the woman, and vexed at the reproof which he peculiarly felt, as having been the chief murmurer and instigator of the rest, given now up to the devil's power, presently arose full of malice and resentment, and went directly to the chief priests, who wanted, but could not hope to find, so fit an instrument for their hellish purpose. We may not startle that one of the twelve was a traitor, or had a devil: where shall we find, among professors in general, so small a proportion of hypocrites and apostates? We have,

1. The offer he made. *What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?* This was the very thing they desired: they dared not to seize him openly; nothing therefore could be more

opportune than to have a traitor among his followers, who could introduce them secretly, that they might arrest him without an uproar. The love of money, backed by a resentment at a supposed affront, hurried him on; and though conscious of his Master's innocence, he does not presume to vindicate his own baseness by pretending the discovery of any crime, or daring to appear as an evidence against him; yet resolved to ruin him, he proposes this villanous treachery. *Note*, (1.) Many want only opportunity and temptation, to show the baseness and hypocrisy of their hearts. (2.) None wound the cause so deep as those who from apostles turn apostates, and employ their bitter enmity against the gospel they once preached and espoused. (3.) When the heart is bent on mischief, the devil will suggest the means. (4.) The love of money is the fatal bait by which thousands have perished, and for gold have basely sold their God.

2. The chief priests eagerly embraced the offer, and immediately the bargain is struck for thirty shekels of silver, in value about three pounds fifteen shillings, which was by law the price of a slave, Exod. xxi. 32. *the goodly price he was valued at by them*, Zech. xi. 13. *Note*, (1.) They who sell themselves to work wickedness, often find the wages wretched as the service is vile. (2.) Many cry out against the falsehood of this traitor, yet by crafty bargains, and inordinate profit on their goods, how often have they lied, deceived, defrauded, and sold their Master for less than thirty pieces of silver?

3. From that time Judas *sought opportunity to betray him*, that acquainting them with his retirement, they might seize him in the absence of the multitude. The way of sin is headlong, one crime draws on another, the conscience is hardened by the repetition of guilt, and onward the miserable slave of Satan is hurried to the precipice of eternal ruin.

17. ¶ [n] Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? 18. And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, [o] The Master saith, [p] My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. 19. [q] And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. 20. ¶ [r] Now, when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. 21. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that [s] one of you shall betray me. 22. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? 23. And he answered and said, [t] He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. 24. [u] The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but [x] woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. 25. Then Judas, which betrayed him, [y] answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, [z] Thou hast said.

n Mark 14. 12—17. Luke 22. 7—13. John 18. 28. Exod. 12. 6. & 13. 3, 6. Lev. 23. 5, 6. Num. 9. 3. & 28. 16, 17. Deut. 16. 1—4.

o Ch. 8. 25. & 21. 3. & 23. 8, 10. John 20. 16. & 11. 8, 23. Acts 10. 36.

p Ver. 2. John 7. 30. & 12. 23. & 17. 1. & 13. 1. Luke 22. 53.

q 1 Sam. 15 22. Exod. 23. 21. John 15. 14. Deut. 12. 28.

r Mark 14 18—25. Luke 22. 14—30. John 13. 21—34. Exod. 12. 4, 6. Deut. 16. 1.

s John 6. 70, 71. ver. 2. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12—14.

t Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12—14. John 13. 18, 26. Luke 22. 21, 22.

u Gen. 3. 15. Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. 52. 14. & 53. 1—12. & 50. 5, 6. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7.

x Ps. 55. 15—23. & cxx. ch. 27. 3—5. Acts 1. 16—20.

y Ps. 94. 7. Prov. 30. 20. Jer. 8. 12. & 2. 35.

z Ver. 64. John 18. 37. ch. 27. 11. *i. e.* it is just so.

Verses 17—25. We have here our Lord's celebration of his last passover.

1. The preparation for that solemnity. *The first day of the feast of unleavened bread*, when the paschal lamb was to be killed and eaten in the evening; the disciples presuming their Master would keep the passover at Jerusalem, though they knew of no house ready for his and their reception, asked him where they must prepare the paschal supper? and Christ, at the same time that he gave them a striking proof of his omniscience, directs them to a person who, on delivering the message he gave them, would show them the place they sought. *Say unto him*, who was probably a disciple, and well knew Jesus, *the Master saith, My time is at hand*, the time of his departure: *I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples;* this was therefore the last kind office he would be able to show him. The disciples, without hesitation, obeyed: found all things as he had said; prepared the passover; and at even when he came, the twelve sat down with him at the table. *Note*, (1,) Christ must send to prepare himself a welcome in our hearts, when he saith, *I will*, the work is done. (2.) When we follow Christ in his commands, he will make us feast with him in his comforts.

2. During the supper he took occasion to inform them of a circumstance which many of them would be shocked to hear; and this was, that one of them *should betray him.* He well knew the traitor and the plot, and gave them this notice for the confirmation of their faith, when the thing should come to pass. Exceedingly distressed at the thought that he should be betrayed, and more that one of them should be so perfidious, with anxious solicitude the eleven began severally to ask him, *Lord, is it I?* each perhaps trembling at the deceitfulness and treachery of their hearts; or rather grieved at the suspicion, and conscious of their innocence, desired to clear themselves from such an imputation. Just then, it seems, Judas stretched out his hand to dip the bread into the dish, and by this circumstance Christ pointed out the traitor; *he that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me;* which he mentions, to make the perfidy appear more base, and to show the fulfilment of the Scripture; whilst he adds a terrible commination, if any thing might startle the hardened conscience of this apostate. The Son of man must indeed, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God be thus betrayed, but wo to the traitor; *it had been good for that man if he had not been born*, a convincing proof of the eternal misery of every damned soul. With impudent effrontery, unabashed, though conscious of his guilt, Judas, who had been silent before, perceiving himself pointed at, endeavoured to brave it out; either fancying that Christ could not know of his guilt, or would not directly charge him with it, and therefore said, *Lord, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.* The reply is express: he was the man. *Note*, (1.) True humility will ever make us jealous over these vile hearts; we know not to what we may be tempted, nor how weak we are to resist: nothing is too bad for the best to do if left one moment to themselves; therefore we should *never be high-minded, but fear.* (2.) The more nearly we have been connected with Jesus, in the participation of his ordinances, the more aggravated will be the guilt of unfaithfulness. (3.) Many put a bold face upon a bad cause, and they may indeed escape the judgment of men, but God trieth the heart.

26. ¶ [a] And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and * blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28. For this is my [b] blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29. But I say

a 1 Cor. 11. 23—29. & 10. 4, 16, 17. Mark 14. 22—25. Luke 22. 19, 20. John 6. 55.

* Many Greek copies have, *gave thanks*

b Exod. 24. 8. Zech. 9. 11. Heb. 9. 14—17 & 13. 20. ch. 1. 21. & 20. 28. Rom. 5. 10, 11 15—21. Jer. 31. 34. Heb. 8. 10—12.

unto you, [c] I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you [d] in my Father's kingdom. 30. ¶ And when they had sung an [e] hymn, [f] they went out into the mount of Olives.

c Luke 22. 16. Ps. 104. 15. Acts 10. 41.
d Ch. 3. 2. & 4. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 24, 28. Luke 22. 29, 30.
e Or *psalm, i. e.* Ps. cxiii—cxviii.
f John 18. 1, 4. Luke 20. 39. Acts 1. 12.

Verses 26—30. All Jewish ordinances were now about to be abrogated, and among the rest the passover. In its room Christ here institutes the great gospel ordinance called from hence, *The Lord's Supper*, where he is held forth as our passover, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and we are invited to come and feast thereon. The paschal supper being ended,

1. Our Lord took bread which lay by him, and blessing it, broke, and gave to his disciples, commanding them to eat; and explaining the import of what he did, saying, *this is my body*, the representation of the sacrifice I am about to offer for your redemption, when my body shall be thus broken on the tree, the constant memorial of which shall thus be observed in my church to all ages, as the passover perpetuated the memory of Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

The doctrine of transubstantiation raised from hence is too absurd to need confutation; and not only gives the lie to our senses, and contradicts the very nature of a sacrament, but would make Christ eat his own flesh and blood.

2. He took the cup, and with thanksgiving and prayer having consecrated the wine, gave it to them, and commanded them all to drink of it, as the representation and memorial of that blood which he was now just ready to shed, to confirm and establish the new testament, or covenant, and to procure for them all spiritual blessings, especially that chief of all, the remission of sins; and for as many also, as afterwards, trusting on his atonement, should plead the redemption hereby purchased for them, from sin and guilt for ever.

3. He takes a solemn farewell. No more would he ever drink of this passover cup: the very ordinance itself was henceforth abolished, to give place to this new institution in the gospel church. No more would they enjoy this free and familiar converse with him, till the day, the glorious day arrived, when, admitted to his eternal kingdom, they should partake of those unutterable joys (signified by *the new wine*) which are at his right hand for evermore. *Note*, A dying saint with delight takes his farewell of all the comforts he ever enjoyed here below; sweet as ordinances, the word, communion with God, were to his soul, he is going where, instead of the drops he tasted here below, he shall be admitted to drink of the living streams of eternal consolations, that flow uninterrupted, ever new, from the throne of God.

4. They closed the solemnity with a hymn, and never is the song of praise more suitable than on such an occasion. Hereupon departing from the house, he retired, by moonlight, to the mount of Olives, the place appointed for the scene of his agonizing sorrows.

31. Then saith Jesus unto them, [g] All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, [h] I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32. But after I am risen again, [i] I will go before you into Galilee. 33. [k] Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended. 34. Jesus said unto him, [l] Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, † thou shalt deny me thrice. 35. Peter said unto him, [m] Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. [n] Likewise also said all the disciples.

g Mark 14. 27—31. John 16. 32. ch. 11. 6
h Zech. 13. 7. Is. 53. 5, 10. Rom. 8. 32. Job 19. 13—16. Ps. 33. 11.
i Mark 14. 28. & 16. 7. ch. 28. 10, 16.
k Mark 14. 29—31, 66—72. Luke 22. 31—34, 54—62. John 13. 36—38. & 18. 15—27. ver. 69—75. Ps. 30. 6.
l John 13. 38. 1 Cor. 10. 12.
† His principal crowing, about three o'clock in the morning.
m Ps. 30. 6. Prov. 16. 18. & 29. 23.
n Exod. 19. 8. & 24. 3, 7.

Verses 31—35. In their way to the mount of Olives, we are told,

1. The prediction of his sufferings, and of their flight, which Christ delivered to his disciples. He foretells them of the offence they would take at the treatment he must meet that very night, insomuch that every one of them would desert him, and fulfil the Scripture, Zech. xiii. 7. but though he should be smitten, and die, as it was prophesied of him, yet he should rise again, and come to them, recover them from their fright and dispersion, and go before them into Galilee, where they would meet him to their unspeakable comfort. *Note*, (1.) We know not our own weakness till the trying hour comes, and by our falls we are convinced. (2.) We are never safe, and must never be secure. The sweetest seasons of communion with Christ are sometimes succeeded with the sorest temptations. (3.) The Lord is very pitiful: he knoweth our weakness, and doth not cast us off, though for our cowardice and unfaithfulness we so often deserve it: he turns again, and restores the fallen, by his grace bringing them back to his blessed self.

2. Peter, unable to bear such a reflection, with presumptuous confidence engages for his own fidelity, though all the rest should fly. He not only trusted on his own resolutions, but intimates a strong conceit of his superior courage. *Note*, A haughty spirit is sure to fall. We have lost our footing the moment we begin to think any thing as of ourselves; and if Jesus hath any love to our souls, he will let us feel, by sad experience, our own weakness and corruption.

3. Christ warns him of the delusion he was under, in this self-confidence of boasting: he assures him, that all his vaunted courage would quickly fail him. Yea, that he should not only forsake, but disown him, repeatedly disown him; and that during the present night, before the crowing of the cock announced the approaching return of day. And this he solemnly confirms, *Verily I say unto thee.* He knew Peter better than Peter knew himself. *Note*, The forwardest to boast are usually the first and foulest in their falls.

4. Peter still persists in his vain confidence, though warned by him who could not err, and with increasing vehemence, unable to bear the suspicion of denying his Master, solemnly affirms, that he will sooner die than be guilty of such baseness. And all the disciples joined his assertion, unwilling to be outdone by Peter, and equally confident of their own zeal for their Lord. *Note*, (1.) When death and danger are at a distance, it is easy to boast great things; but when they come, how many stagger! (2.) It is among the follies bound up in the human heart, that we are all apt to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think; and sad experience is in general needful to bring us to a more humbling view of our weakness and wickedness.

36. ¶ [o] Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. 37. [p] And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be [q] sorrowful and very heavy. 38. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and [r] watch with me. 39. And he went a

o Mark 14. 32—42. Luke 22. 39—46. John 18. 1. Heb. 5. 7. Ps. 22. 2.
p Ch. 4. 18, 21. & 16. 16, 23. & 17. 1. & 20. 20. Mark 5. 37.
q Is. 53. 3, 4, 10. John 12. 27. Gal. 2. 13. Heb. 5. 7. Ps. 116. 3. & 18. 4. & 69. 1, 2. & 22. 14.
r Ch. 24. 42. & 25. 13. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 18, 19.

little farther, and [s] fell on his face, and prayed, saying, [t] O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*. 40. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour? 41. [u] Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: [x] the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak. 42. [y] He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. 43. And he came and found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy. 44. And he left them, and went away again, and [z] prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, [a] Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: [b] behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

s Num. 14. 5. & 16. 22. Deut. 9. 18. 1 Chr. 21. 16.

t Luke 22. 42. John 12. 27. Heb. 5. 7, 8. ch. 20. 22. John 5. 30. & 6. 38. Phil. 2. 8. Acts 21. 14. 2 Sam. 15. 25. & 16. 10, 11.

u Ch. 24. 42. & 25. 13. ver. 38, 43. Mark 13. 33—37. 1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 16. 15. Eph. 6. 18.

x Song 5. 2. Rom. 7. 18, 22. Gal. 5. 17, 24. Ps. 78. 39.

y Ps. 22. 1, 2. & 109. 4. Heb. 5. 7, 8. Phil. 2. 8. Acts 21. 14. 2 Sam. 15. 25. & 16. 10, 11. ch. 6. 10.

z Ps. 109. 4. 2 Cor. 12. 8. Ps. 22. 1, 2. Heb. 5. 7, 8.

a 1 Kin. 18. 27. Eccl. 11. 9. Judg. 10. 14.

b Ver. 18. John 13. 1. Luke 22. 53. ch. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19. ver. 2, 11—16. Gen. 13. 13. with ch. 9. 11.

Verses 36—46. With sacred reverence we are called to approach the scene of our Redeemer's agony. The storm of divine vengeance now arose to discharge all its fury on him who bore our sins and carried our sorrows.

1. The place whither he retired was called Gethsemane, *an olive-press*; for there it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put him to grief. The companions he took with him, were his disciples, all but Judas: and leaving the others at a distance, with an injunction to sit there, He, with Peter, James, and John, retired into some more secluded part of the garden to pray. They who had seen his transfiguration, are chosen to be witnesses of his deepest humiliation.

2. There his agony began: the sorrows of death compassed him about, and distress and consternation unutterable seized upon his soul. The words in the original are most emphatical; expressive of the heaviest load of grief, perplexity, dejection, and anguish. No outward cause appeared; the conflict was internal: the powers of darkness now rallied their once defeated forces, and summoned up all their fury for this decisive blow. The wrath of an offended God due to the sins of millions of mankind all centred now on their Redeemer, and weighed him down under the intolerable burden. Death, with all its horrors of ignominy, shame, and torture, stood before him; and, worse than ten thousand deaths of the body, the pains of hell got hold upon his soul, the wages of our iniquities.

3. In this distress he acquaints his disciples with the sorrows of his soul, that even now pressed him down to the gates of death, and only would end entirely with his expiring breath: sorrows such as mortal never knew before, and perhaps beyond what even the damned ever felt. He enjoins them to tarry there and *watch* with him; observe his agony, and be on their guard against their own approaching temptations.

4. He humbly applies to Him, whose terrors he suffered with a troubled mind. Being truly man, as well as God, he could not but wish for relief from pain, from pain so agonizing, and therefore poured out strong crying and tears, Heb. v. 7. He went a little further, that alone he might tread the wine-press of the wrath of God, and there falling on his face, under a load of guilt and misery to the humanity insupportable, he poured out his complaints before his Father, *O my Father*, for with unshaken faith he still looked through the dark cloud; *if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*; if, consistent with the glory of the divine perfections and the redemption of his people, these torments may be alleviated or removed, his nature craves relief: *nevertheless*, if all I suffer is needful to glorify thee and to secure their salvation, I am all resignation; I bow my neck, and say, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt*; his human will, with perfect acquiescence, submits to the divine. *Note*, (1.) In all our sorrows it is good to make God our refuge, and in prayer to pour out our griefs into his compassionate bosom. (2.) Humble desire to be delivered from our sufferings is perfectly consistent with the most unfeigned resignation under them. (3.) Whether our troubles are removed or not, it is a sure token for good when we can say, *Not my will, but thine be done.*

5. Arising from the earth, he returned to his three disciples, and, lo! astonishing to tell, whilst their Master was agonizing they were asleep. Oppressed with grief, their senses were stupified, and their eyes closed: so weak and wretched is man, left for a moment to himself. But Christ rouses them from their slumbers, and gently chides their disobedience to his commands, and inattention to his sufferings; and directing his discourse to Peter, who lately appeared so forward in his professions of fidelity and zeal, he said, *What!* is it possible! asleep! and I overwhelmed with anguish. *Could not ye*, from whom I had such expectations, and whose plighted vows of constancy till death promised other conduct, *could ye not watch with me one hour?* so short the space, so little difficult the command. *Watch and pray*; you have need to be awake, if not to sympathize and join with me, at least to guard yourselves, *that ye enter not into temptation*, and by this sloth and drowsiness be exposed to fall more easily, when the approaching hour of your temptation comes. Yet, whilst he thus gently rebukes and admonishes, he also pities and kindly excuses them, *the spirit truly is willing*; he knew their hearts were really attached to him, their love without dissimulation, and that their desire was to serve him: *but the flesh is weak*; the corruptible body weighed down the soul, and the remaining corruption and indwelling evil hindered them from doing the things which they would; and he knew whereof they were made, forgave, and cast the mantle of love over the failings he could not but condemn. *Note*, (1.) Slothfulness and neglect of prayer in time of temptation, are the sure forerunners of a fall. We need always watch; but when we are forewarned of danger near, we should double our guard, and be more importunate at a throne of grace. (2.) Whilst we dwell in these bodies of flesh and corruption, we shall find sad warrings within; and they whose souls are most sincere and sensible, will groan most, being burdened with this body of sin and death, and long to get rid of it. (3.) We have a compassionate High Priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and will not withdraw his love from us when we fall under temptation, but in mercy will restore our souls to paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

6. Our Lord again retires, repeats his fervent supplications, and submits to all his Father's will. Again he returns and finds his disciples sleeping; their heavy eyelids were involuntarily closed, and all his remonstrances were ineffectual to keep them awake and watchful. The third time he withdraws, redoubles his prayers, renews his self-resignation, and is heard: though the cup may not pass from him, he is strengthened to bear the load, and patiently to yield up his soul to God. Coming to his disciples, still they sleep, and now he consigns them to their repose, if they can or dare any longer indulge themselves when his foes and theirs are now at hand. It is high time to awake when the

traitor is so near. *Arise, let us be going,* not to flee from the sufferings before him, but to meet them: since the hour, fixed in the divine decree, is come, Jesus is prepared, and resigns himself into the hands of his enemies. *Note,* (1.) Though we have not an immediate answer, we must pray and not faint. (2.) Repetition of the same requests in prayer is often far removed from the *vain repetitions* which our Lord condemns. Reiterated cries in the same words bespeak the warmest importunity of desire. (3.) When calls and warnings raise us not from spiritual slumbers, it is a mercy if Jesus sends heavier judgments, or corrections to rouse our sluggish souls.

47. ¶ And, [c] while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves from the chief priests and elders of the people. 48. [d] Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; hold him fast. 49. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed him. 50. And Jesus said unto him, [e] Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they and [f] laid hands on Jesus, and took him. 51. ¶ And behold, [g] one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear. 52. Then said Jesus unto him, [h] Put up again thy sword into its place; [i] for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. 53. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and [k] he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? 54. But how then [l] shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? 55. In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. 56. But all this was done [m] that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. [n] Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

c Mark 34. 43—52. Luke 22. 47—53. John 18. 3—11. Acts 1. 16. ver. 55. Ps. 3. 1. & 2. 1, 2. John 18. 3.

d John 18. 3, 12. 2 Sam. 20. 9, 10. Ps. 28. 3. & 55. 21.

e Gr. *Companion.* Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13, 14. 2 Sam. 16. 17.

f Lam. 4. 20. Acts 2. 23. John 18. 12.

g John 18. 10. ver. 33, 35.

h John 18. 11. Rom. 12. 19. 1 Pet. 4. 16, 19. 1 Cor. 4. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 10. 3.

i Gen. 9. 6. Ezek. 35. 3. Rev. 13. 10. Ps. 55. 23.

k 2 Kin. 6. 47. Dan. 7. 10. Ps. 91. 11. & 34. 7.

l Is. lii. Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Gen. 3. 15. Lev. i—vi, xvi. Num. xix, xxviii, xxix. Is. 52. 13. & 50. 5, 6. Dan. 9. 24—26. Zech. 13. 7. Luke 24. 25, 26, 44, 46. Acts 17. 3. & 26. 23.

m Ver. 54. Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Tit. 1. 2. Is. 44. 26.

n Ver. 31. John 16. 32. Job 19. 13, 14. Ps. 88. 8, 18. & 38. 11. Is. 63. 3, 5. 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 16.

Verses 47—56. As the words dropped from his lips, his enemies appear to seize him.

1. Judas, who knew the place of his Master's retirement, led the way; one of the twelve, and lately dipping his hand with him in the same dish, now the guide of this savage band, composed of Roman soldiers, and the servants and officers of the chief priests, armed with swords and staves, and under their authority pretending to seize Jesus as a criminal. Thus, whilst good men often sleep unapprized of danger, the wicked are awake and plotting their destruction. It is well for us, that one is our guardian who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

2. He had given them a signal before they set out, lest in the night they should mistake, by the glimmering of torches, the person of Jesus; and this was, that whomsoever he should kiss, that was he whom they should seize and bind. Accordingly, with the most hardened impudence, he no sooner descried his well known Master's face, than he approached with the deepest professions of respect and warmest good wishes, and with a kiss executed his traitorous design. Well knowing his villany, Jesus rebukes his baseness, and with the piercing title of *Friend,* that should have spoken ten thousand daggers to his heart, replies, *Wherefore art thou come?* how durst thou be present? What! lost to all shame! adding such impudence to foul ingratitude! *Note,* The bitterest enmity lurks often under the most plausible professions and apparent civilities.

3. Christ is immediately arrested and bound as a malefactor. He quietly yielded up himself, now his hour was come, and as a criminal submitted to the arrests of divine judgment for our transgressions. Though wicked men indeed meant only to gratify their malice, they fulfilled *the determinate counsel of God,* Acts ii. 23.

4. Peter, fired with zeal at what he saw, instantly drew his sword, and, attempting a rescue, struck at one of the high priest's servants, who probably appeared very active on that occasion, and cut off his ear. His zeal in itself was commendable; but this exertion of it was neither enjoined nor discreet; and therefore,

5. Christ rebuked him for his rashness, and bid him sheath his sword; *for they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.* Resistance at present only exposed them to useless danger; but, ere long, they would see those who arrested their Master fall by the hand of the Romans, or in some civil tumult as their own executioners. As for them, the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but spiritual; patience and prayer were their best defence. Besides, Christ neither needed their help, nor chose to be rescued: if he had, effectual succours were even now at hand: more than twelve legions of angels, upwards of seventy thousand, were ready to appear, one of the least of whom could destroy a world. He had only to ask his Father, and these ministers of flame would attend his orders; *but how then* should *the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?* and their accomplishment, wherein also was involved the salvation of his people, was far dearer to him than his own safety. *It must be* that he should suffer, that he might redeem; and therefore he willingly resigned himself as a lamb to the slaughter, Is. liii. 7. *Note,* (1.) God wants not our services; we mistake when we think our feeble arm of importance to his cause. (2.) Christ's sufferings were voluntary; he might, whenever he pleased, have been released; but his love to sinful souls bound him stronger than the cords of his persecutors. (3.) Surrounded as the people of God are with enemies, still more and mightier are those which are for them than all who can be against them; the innumerable company of angels is their guard, and minister to the heirs of salvation.

6. Christ turns from his disciples to the multitude, and mildly expostulates with them on their present conduct. What use was there in all this armed host? had he behaved as a desperate villain who needed such force to overcome him? or had he fled from public justice, that at midnight, in this clandestine manner, they sought to arrest him? The gentleness and innocence of all his conduct confuted the one; and his public daily appearance in the temple, the other: but the Scripture must be fulfilled, and God's eternal counsels thus receive their accomplishment. *Note,* They who are the most inveterate enemies of Christ and his church are only instruments in God's hand; whose very wickedness he overrules to bring about the counsels of his own will.

7. His disciples hereupon shamefully deserted him, and fled. Seeing him passively submit, fearing lest Peter's rash action should exasperate the guard, and that they should be murdered, or seized with their Master, each endeavoured to shift for himself and left him alone to bear his burdens. Their baseness and

ingratitude herein were highly criminal: but thus it became him to *tread the wine-press alone.*

o Mark 14. 53—65. Luke 22. 54, 66—71. John 18. 12—14, 19—24. Ps. 22. 16. Acts 3. 32. Is. 53. 7.

57. ¶ ° And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. 58. But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace,

p Ver. 33, 35. Prov. 9. 6. & 13. 20.

and went in, [p] and sat with the servants,

q Ps. 27. 12. & 35. 11. Acts 6. 13. 1 Kin. 21. 10, 13.

to see the end. 59. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council,

r Dan. 6. 4. 1 Pet. 3. 16.

[q] sought false witness against Jesus, to

‡ None that witnessed any thing criminal, or who agreed together.

put him to death; 60. [r] But found none: yea, though many false witnesses

s Jon. 2. 19. ch. 27. 40. Mark 15. 29. Acts 6. 13.

came, *yet* found they ‡ none. At the last came two false witnesses, 61. And

t Is. 53. 7. Acts 8. 32. Ps. 38. 13, 14. ch. 27. 12, 14.

[s] said, This *fellow* said, [t] I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it

u Josh. 6. 26. Mark 5. 7. Acts 19. 13. 1 Kin. 22. 16. Lev. 5. 1.

in three days. 62. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee? 63. But Jesus [t] held

x Ch. 11. 4, 5. & 16. 16. John 1. 49—51. & 10. 30, 36. & 6. 69. Is. 9. 6, 7.

his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I [u] adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us

y Ver. 25. ch. 27. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 13. *i. e.* It is as thou sayest.

whether thou be [x] the Christ, the Son of God. 64. Jesus saith unto him, [y] Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you,

z Ps. 110. 1. Dan. 7. 13. ch. 16. 27. & 24. 30. & 25. 31. John 6. 62. Acts 1. 11. Rom. 14. 10. 1 Thes. 4. 16. Rev. 1. 7. & 20. 11.

[z] Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 65.

a Lev. 21. 10. 2 Kin. 18. 37. & 19. 1. Gen. 37. 29, 34.

[a] Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. 66. What think ye? They answered and said,

b Lev. 24. 16. Acts 6. 13.

[b] He is guilty of death. 67. [c] Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with

c Is. 50. 6. & 52. 14. & 53. 3. ch. 27. 30. John 19. 3.

‖ Or *rods.*

‖ the palms of their hands, 68. [d] Saying,

d Judg. 16. 25. Mark 14. 65. Luke 22. 64. Acts 3. 22.

Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

Verses 57—68. Our Lord, being seized as a malefactor, is dragged before the rulers, and his process begun.

1. His judges were his inveterate persecutors, the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who, though in the dead of night, waked to do him mischief, and were now assembled at the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest. Before this confederacy of treacherous men was he presented as a criminal, whilst they sat in judgment upon him. The Lamb of God, now about to be offered for the sins of the world, was thus presented to the priest, (see Lev. xvii. 5.) before he bled on the altar.

2. Peter, whose fright began a little to abate, solicitous about his Master's fate, followed at a distance the crowd, and mingling with the servants in the hall, thought he might, unnoticed, there hear the issue of the trial, and see whether Christ would deliver himself by some miraculous act of power, or what punishment they would inflict upon him. Thus, without a call, having thrust himself into temptation, he could not expect divine support; and his cowardly hypocrisy, of appearing among the crowd as one of those who had been employed to seize the prisoner foreboded no good, for they who are ashamed to be known as Christ's disciples, if brought to the trial, will, like Peter, solemnly disown him.

3. Having brought Christ to their bar, and previously determined his condemnation, the question was, where to procure evidence to furnish them with a pretext of putting him to death; nothing less than his blood being able to satisfy his merciless and unjust judges: but though they endeavoured to procure accusations, and suborn witnesses against him, yet the falsehoods they advanced were so palpable and inconsistent, that they carried their own confutation, and even before such partial judges, could not furnish the shadow of a crime. At last two false witnesses appeared, and with virulence and insolence alleged they had heard him say, *I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.* He had said no such things. His words were, *Destroy ye this temple*, not that *made with hands*, as they added, Mark xiv. 58. but the temple of his body, John ii. 21. and his raising it up referred to his own resurrection; not the rebuilding of the material house of God. But by such a false quotation they meant to accuse him as an enemy to the holy place, and a blasphemer against God, as well as one that dealt in magic, from his presuming to say he could raise such a building in three days. A far fetched accusation indeed! and too weak to support the bloody sentence they desired to ground thereon. *Note*, If false witnesses rose up against the innocent Jesus, laying to his charge things he knew not of, let it not appear strange if we meet with the like injurious treatment. The disciple is not above his Master.

4. Unable longer to restrain his rage, the high priest in a fury arose, vexed to be able to produce no more plausible accusation; and out of all patience to behold the meekness and silence of Jesus, *dumb as the sheep before her shearers*, Is. liii. 7. he bids him make his defence instantly, if he had aught to say why sentence should not pass upon him. But Jesus held his peace. He knew their designs, and that the clearest evidence of innocence would weigh nothing before such judges. The high priest hereupon adjures and commands him upon oath to answer whether he were indeed the Messiah, God's eternal Son, or not, that from his own mouth they might obtain a charge against him which they sought for from other witnesses in vain. *Note*, The silence of Jesus should teach us meekness before our bitterest persecutors.

5. To this solemn interrogatory Jesus makes a direct reply. He was apprized of their captious design; but his hour was come; therefore he professes himself to be that very Messiah concerning whom the high priest spoke, though he knew the disdain with which they would treat his claim: *nevertheless* he made it before them all. And since they would admit no present proof of it, he would give them one *hereafter* which should astonish them, *Ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.* Which should be fulfilled in the effusion of his Spirit after his ascension, in the ruin of their state and nation, and most eminently in the great day of his appearing and glory, when they who now sat as his judges, must stand as criminals at his bar, and perish under his righteous vengeance. *Note*, Impenitent sinners will one day be convinced, when it is too late, of the eternal ruin they have brought upon their heads by rejecting the Lord's Christ.

6. Pretending to be shocked at such blasphemy, in token of his abhorrence, the high priest rent his clothes, and appealing to the council for the evidence of the crime, now clear from the confession of Jesus, presumes further witnesses to be needless: and all concurred in opinion that he deserved to die as a blasphemer, for arrogating to himself divine power and honours. Thus was he condemned, though innocent, that we might be acquitted, though guilty.

7. No sooner was he thus unjustly condemned, than they began to treat him with all manner of indignities; some of the company, or the officers and servants, *spit on his face*, in token of detestation and contempt; beat and buffeted him with the palms of their hands, or with rods: and in ridicule of his prophetic character, having blindfolded his eyes, bid him tell who smote him. To such insult and suffering did the holy Jesus submit for our sakes: he hid not his face from shame and spitting, that our faces might not be covered with everlasting shame and contempt; he was bruised for our iniquities, that we might not be crushed for ever under the wrath of God. If we then, for his sake, are rendered contemptible, ridiculed, and mocked by wicked men, let it be remembered how much more he bore for us; and let us never be ashamed of his reproach.

e Mark 14. 66—72. Luke 22. 55—62. John 18. 15—18, 25—27. with Ps. 1. 1. & 119. 115.

f Ch. 2. 22, 23. & 3. 13. & 4. 12, 13.

* Campbell prefers to read, *Said to them, This man too was there, This fellow*, &c.

g Ch. 2. 23. & 21. 11. Luke 2. 30, 51. & 4. 16. John 1. 45.

h Ch. 16. 16. ver. 33, 35.

i Ver. 34. Luke 22. 60. Mark 14. 71. John 18. 26, 27.

k Ver. 34. Mark 14. 30. John 13. 38.

l Ps. 119. 59, 60. Ezek. 7. 16. Zech. 12. 10. Jer. 31. 18. 2 Cor. 7. 11.

69. ¶ [e] Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus [f] of Galilee. 70. But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. 71. And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there,* This *fellow* was also with [g] Jesus of Nazareth. 72. And again he denied with an oath, [h] I do not know the man. 73. And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. 74. [i] Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. 75. And Peter remembered the words of Jesus, which said unto him, [k] Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. [l] And he went out, and wept bitterly.

Verses 69—75. We have here the memorable event of Peter's fall and recovery. A warning to us never to be self-confident, lest we should fall like him; nor when fallen, however foully, to despair, since the same door of hope is open for us.

1. His sin, with all the aggravations of it, is faithfully recorded; and blessed be God for the simplicity of the sacred historians. Had they in their account of God's saints, like the histories of human biographers, blazoned the excellencies, and concealed the faults and infirmities of their worthies, how many a dear child of God would have wrote bitter things against his soul! Whilst his Master was suffering within, Peter sat with the servants without. In bad company no good can ever be expected: in the devil's palace we must not hope for protection: and if we will associate with the crowd of his servants, the consequence naturally follows, we must be like them or be laughed at. (1.) The temptation came first from one of the servant maids; for the weakest instrument, in the devil's hands, can do much mischief. She shrewdly suspected, perhaps by Peter's melancholy looks, that he was a disciple of Jesus; or she had seen him formerly among Christ's attendants; and therefore charged him with her suspicions. Peter, quite disconcerted, shuffled out an answer, false, as he knew, and faithless, pretending not to understand her, and before them all denying the charge. *Note*, Many who would hesitate at a direct lie, stick not at an evasion, and will pretend not to understand what is said, when in truth it is because they are ashamed of their profession, and dare not avow their knowledge of Christ: which is most base, cowardly, and criminal. (2.) The second temptation quickly followed, and from a similar quarter. With infinite contempt of Peter's appearance, another maid servant came up to him as he stood in the porch, perhaps meaning to steal off for fear of farther discovery, and looking in his face, perfectly recollected his person among the followers of Jesus, and confidently asserted before those who stood by, that this fellow was certainly a disciple of Jesus the Nazarene: as if it was a reproach to admit such a fellow into their company. With such contempt and insolence are the disciples of Jesus often treated by those who know *them* not, because they knew *him* not. To silence such a suspicion, he solemnly denies even his knowledge of the person of Jesus, as if he had never seen him; and to gain credit, backs his assertion with an oath, a shrewd proof of the falsehood he urged: for they justly are to be suspected of making no conscience of a lie, who make none of rash oaths. (3.) A little while after, one who, perhaps excited by what had been suggested, marked Peter more narrowly, and was convinced by his provincial dialect and accent that he must be a Galilean, concluded certainly he was a follower of Jesus, and asserted it to his face before the company, with this evident proof, *thy speech bewrayeth thee*. Quite in a consternation, and not knowing what to say or do, he thought with a resolute air to carry it off; and, as in a passion at being suspected of such a thing, he began to curse and to swear, affirming, with the most horrid imprecations, that he never had the least knowledge or acquaintance with *the man* they mentioned, nor had ever before in his life seen him. He could not indeed have taken a more effectual way to prove he did not belong to Jesus; his disciples never used such language. *Note*, (1.) One lie generally paves the way for another, and then perjury becomes needful to support the falsehood. So dreadfully connected are the links of sin. (2.) A real disciple of Jesus may ever be known by his discourse; his speech will indeed bewray him. (3.) Whilst we look at such a fearful fall, we should tremble for ourselves, and dread the first step of deviation from the path of truth, lest, with Peter, we should be hurried down the precipice.

2. His recovery affords us as amazing an instance of divine grace, as his fall hath done of human weakness and corruption. *Immediately*, as he spoke, *the cock crew*, a sound in Peter's ears more terrible than the bursts of loudest thunders; it instantly recalled to his memory what Jesus had foretold, and he had most guiltily accomplished; his baseness, ingratitude, profaneness, perjury, all stared him in the face, and overwhelmed him with confusion. Unable to stay there a moment longer, *he went out* to give vent, in some retired corner, to the bursting anguish of his soul, and with tears of bitterest sorrow and unfeigned repentance, bewailed his sin, and found mercy with a pardoning God. *Note*, (1.) Nothing so deeply affects the truly gracious heart, as the sense of his ingratitude and base returns for all the love of Jesus to his sinful soul. (2.) They who have never wept with Peter over their sins, it is to be feared have never felt their bitterness. (3.) It is never too late to return to God. None perish merely because of the greatness of their sins, but through their impenitence and unbelief.

CHAP. XXVII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

We have in this chapter the affecting story of the sufferings and death of our Saviour, Christ, which are the only foundation of every fallen sinner's hope. We have here, 1. *The delivering of him to Pilate*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *The despair of Judas*, ver. 3—10. 3. *The arraignment and trial of Christ before Pilate*, ver. 11—14. 4. *The clamours of the people against him*, ver. 15—25. 5. *Sentence passed and executed upon him*, ver. 26—33. 6. *The indignities done him, and reproaches cast upon him*, ver. 34—44. 7. *Many remarkable signs attended his death*, ver. 45—56. 8. *His burial, and the watch set on his grave*, ver. 57—66.

1. WHEN the morning was come, [a] all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: 2. And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. * 3. ¶ [b] Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4. Saying, I have sinned, [c] in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, [d] What *is* that to us? see thou *to that*. 5. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, [e] and departed, and went and hanged † himself. 6. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. 7. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. 8. Wherefore that field was called, [f] The field of blood, unto this day. 9. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, [g] And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, ‡ whom they of the children of Israel did value; 10. And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

a Mark 15. 1—14. Luke 22. 26. & 23. 1—28. John 18. 28—40. & 19. 15. Acts 4. 25—28. & 2. 23. Ps. 2. 1—4. Is. 53. 7, 8.

* Or, *the procurator.*

b Ch. 26. 66. 1 Kin. 21. 27. Job 20. 5, 15. 2 Cor. 7. 10. with ch. 26. 15.

c Ver. 24. Acts 18. 6.

d Acts 18. 15. Job 13. 4. & 16. 2.

e Acts 1. 18, 19. 2 Sam. 17. 23. 1 Sam. 31. 4, 5. Judg. 9. 54.

† *Strangled himself.* The word in the original plainly denotes strangling, but does not determine how, whether by hanging or otherwise.

f Acts 1. 19. Jer. 16. 2.

g Zech. 11. 12, 13.

‡ Or *whom they bought of the children of Israel.*

Verses 1—10. Though they had condemned the innocent Jesus as worthy of death, they had not in their hands the power of capital punishments, and therefore must have him sentenced by the Roman governor before they could proceed to execution, the sceptre being now departed from Judah, and the country become a Roman province. Hereupon we are told,

1. On a second council held in the morning, in order effectually to get their bloody purposes executed of putting him to death, they determined to accuse him before Pilate, at that time the Roman president, as an infamous malefactor and incendiary; and accordingly, binding him as a criminal, they led him ignominiously through the streets, from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's palace, and delivered him up, that sentence might be pronounced upon him, and that he might die the death of the cross, unwittingly fulfilling the predictions of Jesus, chap. xx. 19.

2. Remorse had by this time seized on the conscience of Judas. When he saw that Jesus was condemned and ready to be executed, filled with horror, and agitated with self-indignation, anguish, and despair, he ran to the temple, and there, in one of the chambers, to which the council seems to have been adjourned, he brought the hated price of his wickedness, the thirty pieces of silver, and, publicly acknowledging the atrocious crime he had committed in betraying innocent blood, would have returned their wages of unrighteousness. But they, instead of being struck with conviction, treated his confession with contempt. He had answered their ends; and as to the means employed, or the guilt he had incurred, they cared not about it; as if it was nothing to them that they had bribed him to commit the villany, and were that moment persecuting to death the innocent person he had betrayed. Made desperate by such neglect, and the unavailableness of this attempt to stop the prosecution of Jesus, his life became a burden, and the devil urged him to put an end to it. Casting down the abhorred silver in the temple before them, and flying to some solitude, he immediately hung himself: by self-murder finishing the measure of his iniquities. *Note*, (1.) The time will come when the sweetest sins will be turned into the poison of asps. (2.) There is no repentance without restitution of ill-gotten gain, and taking shame to ourselves before the accomplices of our guilt. (3.) When wicked men can bring the professors of religion to join them, indifferent to the remorse they afterwards behold in them, they only mock at the calamity, and at sin the cause of it. (4.) The love of money hath been the fatal snare to many a soul: for this they have plunged themselves into the gulf of perdition. (5.) Despair is among the greatest crimes, and often ends in self-murder, a remedy still worse than the disease. For the deepest guilt there is mercy to be hoped: but when men fly from God to the devil for ease, they are undone for ever.

3. The money being left, they consulted how to dispose of it. Pretending conscience, they would not put it into the temple treasury, though probably it was taken from thence, because it was the price of blood; and therefore, with the show of great piety and humanity, laid it out to purchase a small piece of ground which had been dug up by a potter, and was of little value, to bury strangers or proselytes: whereby they perpetuated their own infamy: the people who knew what money made the purchase, calling it justly Aceldama, or the field of blood. And herein they exactly fulfilled what the prophet had foretold, Zech. xi. 12, 13. The words are said to be in Jeremy, though only found in Zechariah; concerning which there are many ways suggested to solve the difficulty. The most probable seems to be, either that in the division of the sacred books the last volume began with Jeremiah, and therefore, though containing all the latter prophets, bore his name; or that Jeremiah had so prophesied first, but had not committed it to writing, and Zechariah confirmed and wrote it in his prophecy. The words, as they stand in the prophet, are, *They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it to the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter, in the house of the Lord.* Thus did they who rejected the Messiah, fulfil all the prophecies concerning him. *Note*, (1.) They who are bitter persecutors of God's people, still study to maintain the character of piety and humanity among men. (2.) Christ's blood hath provided a resting place for poor sinners after death. And though he was treated with such contempt, and his price so low, we see in his humiliation peculiar glory; and the deeper his abasement was, it renders him in the eyes of all that believe more precious.

11. ¶ [h] And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? ‖ And Jesus said unto him, § Thou sayest. ‖ 12. [i] And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. 13. Then saith Pilate unto him, [k] Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? 14. And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. 15. ¶ [l] Now at *that* feast the governor was

h Mark 15. 2. Luke 23. 3. John 18. 33, 37. 1 Tim. 6. 13. with ch. 26. 25, 64.

‖ Or, *Thou art the King of the Jews?*

§ *i. e.* It is so as thou sayest.

i Ch. 26. 63. Is. 53. 7. Acts 8. 32, 34. ver. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 23.

k Ch. 26. 62. John 19. 10.

l Ch. 26. 2, 5. Luke 23. 17. Mark 15. 6. John 18. 39.

wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. 16. [m] And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. 17. Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, [n] Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or [o] Jesus which is called Christ? 18. For he knew [p] that for envy they had delivered him. 19. ¶ When he was set down on the judgment-seat, [q] his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. 20. ¶ [r] But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. 21. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.* 22. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? [s] *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified. 23. And the governor said, Why? what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. 24. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, [t] he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of [u] this just person: see ye *to it.* 25. Then answered all the people, and said, [x] His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

m John 18. 40. Luke 23. 25. Mark 15. 7.

n Josh. 24. 15. 1 Kin. 18. 21. ver. 21.

o Ch. 21. 9, 11.

p Acts 7. 9. John 9. 22. & 12. 42. Eccl. 4. 4. Joh 5. 2. Prov. 27. 4.

q Is. 11. 10. ver. 4. Acts 13. 46. with Dan. 2. 1. & 4. 5. Job 33. 15, 16.

r Mark 15. 11. Luke 23. 18. John 18. 40. Acts 3. 14, 15.

* There is in the verses 17—21. some appearance both of tautology and of incoherency, which Campbell proposes to remove by including the 18th and 19th in a parenthesis.

s Is. 53. 2, 3. John 15. 13. & 10. 32. Rom. 8. 7, 8.

t Deut. 21. 6, 7. Job 9. 30. Ps. 26. 6. Prov. 30. 20. Jer. 2. 35.

u Ver. 4, 19. Deut. 17. 6. & 19. 15.

x Deut. 19. 10. Acts 5. 28. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. Heb. 10. 29. Josh. 2. 19. 2 Sam. 2. 16. the crucifixion of multitudes of them by Titus, and in their miseries for 1700 years past, they have felt the effects of their wish.

Verses 11—25. Behold the Son of God a prisoner at a human bar; and He to whom every knee must bow, and meet as their eternal Judge, now appears as a criminal before Pilate; having condescended to bear our sins, he submits to suffer in our stead as a transgressor. We have,

1. The charge laid against him. Knowing the jealousy of the Roman government, the chief priests, his accusers, had suggested, that, in assuming the character of the Messiah, he meant to raise an insurrection, and make himself a king. Pilate therefore interrogated him on this head, whether he presumed to arrogate the title of *King of the Jews*, and Jesus acknowledged the charge: though he assumed no such temporal dominion as they suggested; his kingdom was not of this world: see John xviii. 36. The chief priests and elders were hereupon very loud and clamorous in their accusations, as if he was a perverter of the people, a sower of sedition, forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, and affecting the sovereignty of the country. To all which Jesus, with astonishing patience, made no reply. What they said was indeed notoriously false, as themselves knew: but he wanted not to defend himself; his hour was come; and he stood prepared to answer the demands of divine Justice, and to bear our sins in his own body on the tree. Therefore, when Pilate urged him to reply to the charges, and clear himself of these accusations, he observed a profound silence, to the great astonishment of the governor, who could not account for so unusual a behaviour in a person whose life was at stake, and depended on that moment. *Note*, (1.) It hath been usual with the enemies of the servants of Jesus, to dress them up so as to render them suspected by the civil government, and to insinuate ill designs against the state, in order the more easily to oppress them. (2.) Silence is often the best answer to the accusations of malice; and when we know our defence is sure to be overruled, it is fruitless to contend.

2. Pilate, convinced of the innocence of Jesus, and well knowing the motive of the virulence shown against him by the chief priests, who were stung with envy at the excellence of his character, and the high reputation he held with many, which eclipsed their own, wished for a pretext to release him. And hereunto he was yet more induced by a message from his wife, who just at that time, whilst the trial was going on, sent to entreat him to do nothing against that *just man* before him: for she had that morning been terrified by a very uncommon dream concerning him, which bore strong marks of a divine original: and therefore conjured him to discharge the prisoner, lest he should bring down the wrath of God upon himself and family by condemning the innocent. Therefore, as it was an established custom at that feast to gratify the people with the release of any prisoner whom they chose, Pilate thought he could not fail of succeeding by proposing to the people their choice, whether of Barabbas or Jesus. The infamous character of Barabbas, who for sedition and murder, and other villanies, was held in the greatest detestation, left him no room to doubt that the people would prefer Jesus, whom they had so lately ushered with hosannas into the city, and whose excellences all must have seen. *Note*, (1.) God hath access to the spirit, and can speak to our souls when our senses are locked up in deep repose. (2.) Sinners have sometimes solemn warnings: but they are too apt to slight the heavenly admonition. (3.) The nearer and dearer any person is to us, the more are we obliged to watch over them for good.

3. The multitude, instigated by the craft of their wily priests, who represented Jesus in every black and diabolical colour, engaged them to prefer Barabbas before him: and, to the astonishment of Pilate, they demanded the murderer, and rejected the Lord of life and glory: and, not content with this, when the governor, willing to release Jesus, inquired of them what they wished he should do with him whom many regarded as the Christ, or Messiah, they with one consent cried out, *Let him be crucified*, a death the most painful, ignominious, and accursed. Shocked at such a demand, Pilate remonstrates with them on the injustice and cruelty of such an action, *Why, what evil hath he done?* On severest scrutiny, his judge could see no fault in him, his adversaries prove none, nor did even the traitor suggest the shadow of a crime. A glorious testimony of the avowed innocence of Jesus. But notwithstanding, this tumultuous assembly, wrought up to a pitch of fury by their malignant priests and rulers, with louder cries demanded his crucifixion, determined to extort the governor's consent, and bear down reason and justice with rage and clamour. *Note*, (1.) How little dependence is to be placed on popular applause. They who one day cried, Hosanna to the Son of David, now cry, Crucify him, crucify him. (2.) The unspotted innocency of the Lamb of God evidently shows, that he bore not his own sins, but the sins of others: he voluntarily submitted to die as a criminal, that he, though just, might suffer the punishment due to the unjust, and thereby bring us unto God.

4. Pilate, unable to prevail with them, and not having resolution to deny their request, so importunately and clamorously urged, for fear of an uproar; yet conscious of the innocence of Jesus, and shocked at the thought of murdering a just man, bethought himself of a miserable expedient to pacify his conscience without disobliging the people: and therefore, though yielding to their importunity, he protests against the fact; and, taking

water before them all, he washed his hands, that by this significative action he might appear clear from all the guilt which should ensue, declaring himself innocent of this righteous blood; and therefore, since they compelled him to condemn the innocent, he lays it wholly upon them to answer for the crime before God and the world. An absurd procedure indeed in a judge, whom nothing should awe from the administration of impartial justice. And it but the more aggravated his guilt, thus avowedly to act against his own conscience, and to do the very thing against which he protested. But such contradictions must follow, where men's convictions are strong, but their corruptions stronger.

5. They hesitate not to subject themselves to all the consequences which might ensue; and, since Pilate seemed scrupulous, they are very ready to quiet his conscience by solemnly transferring all the guilt upon their own, madly imprecating on themselves and their latest posterity the vengeance, if any were due, *His blood be on us, and on our children.* So daring do presumptuous sinners grow; so little are they apprehensive of the consequences of their impiety. But these murderers soon found the vengeance they imprecated terribly lighting on their devoted heads, in the utter destruction of themselves and families; such multitudes being crucified by Titus during the siege, that the crosses stood so thick around the walls, that there was no more room for them; five hundred in a day thus miserably expiring. And to this hour the effects of that imprecation are visible upon this miserable people; and will be, till, returning to the Lord whom they once rejected, the wrath shall be removed, and their iniquity be forgiven.

26. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had [y] scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

27. ¶ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the * common hall, and [z] gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers*. 28. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. 29. And when they had platted a crown of thorns † they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30. [a] And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31. [b] And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*. 32. [c] And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

y John 19. 1—15. Luke 23. 24, 25. Mark 15. 15—20.

* Or *governor's house.*

z Ps. 22. 16. Prov. 20. 12. Luke 23. 11. Mark 15. 16—18. John 19. 2, 3. with Gen. 3. 18.

† Probably of the nabn or nabka tree of the Arabians, a plant common in the East, and very fit for the purpose.

a Ch. 26. 67. Is. 50. 6. & 52. 14 Mic. 5. 1.

b Ps. 22. 6—8. & 69. 7, 19. ch. 21. 39. Heb. 13. 12.

c Mark 15. 21, 22. Luke 23. 26, 33. Num. 15. 35. 1 Kin. 21. 13. Acts 7. 58. Heb. 13. 12. ch. 21. 39. John 19. 17.

Verses 26—31. The matter being thus determined:

1. Pilate having released Barabbas, that most infamous criminal, delivered Jesus over to their will, having first scourged him severely, in hopes of moving their compassion, John xix. 1. but finding it all ineffectual, and that they were bent on his destruction, he appoints his immediate execution on the cross, as they insisted. And herein we may observe, (1.) The fulfilment of the Scriptures, Psal. cxxix. 3. Is. l. 6. liii. 5. where these stripes had been foretold. (2.) In the release of Barabbas we have an emblem of our own deliverance through Jesus Christ. As guilty are we as this notorious prisoner; we have robbed God of his glory, and often laboured to murder our own and others' souls. For which we must all have perished without hope, had not our divine Substitute yielded up himself that we might go free, and that the chief of sinners might find in him plenteous redemption. (3.) Bloody as the stripes of Jesus appear, we need bless God for them, since by these stripes we are healed.

2. Being delivered into the hands of the inhuman soldiers, they dragged him into the common hall, and, to make themselves merry in his miseries, and in the view of the character he assumed as a king, they stripped off his clothes, arrayed him in a scarlet robe in mockery, and platting a crown of thorns, in derision placed it on his head, giving him a reed or hollow cane, for a sceptre, and gathering the whole band around him, they, with insulting homage, bowed the knee, and addressed him with the deriding title of King of the Jews; whilst some spit in his face in contempt of his majesty, and others snatched the cane out of his hand and smote him on the head, that the thorns might wound the deeper his sacred temples. With horror, indignation, and astonishment, whilst we reflect on their wickedness, let some measure thereof be transferred to our own. They were but the instruments, we the cause, of all his torment. And when we see the innocent Lamb of God submitting to these indignities, and look on that face, marred more than any man's, defiled with spitting, black with buffetings and dyed with blood streaming from his temples, what emotions of love and gratitude should glow in our bosom towards him who endured such things for us, that we might not be the mockery of devils, the scorn of angels, and abhorred of God?

3. Glutted with cruelty, and satiated with such inhuman mirth, they stripped off his robes of mock majesty, and put on him again his own seamless garment, the perquisite of those who should be more immediately employed in his execution. Then, binding his cross upon him, John xix. 17. they led him, as a lamb to the slaughter, a spectacle through the city, to suffer without the gate. But, it seems, wearied out with his sufferings, his strength failed him, and they were obliged to release him of his load, lest they should be disappointed of their cruelty in nailing him alive to the tree. Seizing on one who was passing by, known probably to have been a disciple of Jesus, and therefore treated with such indignity, they compel him to bear the cross after Christ to the place of execution. *Note,* Every faithful soul must expect his cross, and be content to go to Jesus without the camp, *bearing his reproach.*

33. ¶ And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34. [d] They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: ‡ and when he had tasted *thereof,* he would not drink. 35. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, [e] They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36. And, sitting down, they watched him there; 37. And set up over his head his accusation written, [f] THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 38. [g] Then were there two thieves crucified with him; one on the right hand, and another on the left. 39. ¶ [h] And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, 40. And

d Ps. 69. 21. John 19. 28. Mark 15. 23.

‡ Or *wormwood.* The word sometimes denotes any bitter or poisonous infusion.

e Ps. 22. 18. John 19. 23, 24. Mark 15. 24.

f It avowed his innocence and Messiahship in three languages which were generally understood. Mark 15. 26. Luke 23. 38. John 19. 19—22. Deut. 23. 5.

g Is. 53. 12. Luke 23. 32, 33. Mark 15. 27, 28. John 19. 18.

h Ps. 22. 7. & 69. 20 & 109. 25 Lam. 2. 15. Mark 15. 29. Luke 23. 35. Is. 53. 3.

The Saviour

Engraved by J. Freeman from an Original Painting by Guido.

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saying, [i] Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. 41. Likewise also the chief priests, mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, 42. He saved others; himself he cannot save. [k] If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. 43. [l] He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, [m] I am the Son of God. 44. [n] The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. 45. ¶ Now [o] from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 46. And about the ninth hour [p] Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 47. Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, [q] This *man* calleth for Elias. 48. And straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, [r] and filled *it* with vinegar,* and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. 49. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

i Ch. 26. 61. John 2. 19. ch. 4. 3, 6. & 20. 63, 64.

k Ver. 40. ch. 12. 38, 39. & 16. 1. John 4. 48. Luke 4. 12. Heb. 4. 15. & 2. 18.

l Ps. 22. 8. & 18. 1, 2, 19.

m Ch. 26. 64. John 3. 16. & 5. 17—29. & 10. 30.

n Ps. 35. 15. Luke 23. 39—43. It seems that at first they both railed at him.

o Amos 8. 9. Is. 50. 3.

p Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Heb. 5. 7. Mark 15. 33—36. Luke 23. 44—46.

q Ps. 56. 5. with Mal. 4. 5. ch. 11. 14. & 17. 11—13.

r Ps. 69. 21. Mark 15. 36. Luke 23. 36. John 19. 29.

* Vinegar was at that time the beverage of the Roman soldiers, and it was probably offered to Christ by one of them more humane than the rest.—*Mann.*

Verses 33—49. We have here an account of the crucifixion of Jesus.

1. The place where he suffered was called *Golgotha*, signifying the place of a skull; either from the form of the hill, or because the malefactors executed there, were buried on the spot. Where Death therefore erected his trophies, there Christ, who tasted death for every man, erected his cross, that he might in triumph look down upon his vanquished foe, as it was said, O Death, I will be thy destruction.

2. Before they nailed him to the tree, they offered him a bitter cup of vinegar mingled with gall, instead of the potion usually given to malefactors to stupify their sense of pain; striving thus by every malicious contrivance to sharpen his sufferings, and make his death peculiarly bitter. He tasted it, but refused to drink. He wanted not to prolong his life, nor would do aught to discompose his mind, prepared to feel every misery before him, and desiring not to be excused the sensation of any one painful pang he must endure. The gall of that cup our sins supplied: had he not atoned for them, we must eternally have drank to the dregs the cup of bitterness and trembling.

3. *They crucified him*; which was done by stretching the arms on the wood as it lay upon the ground, and nailing them; when they fastened the feet to a piece of wood fixed to the body of the cross, and lifting it up, stuck it fast in a hole prepared to receive it, the shock of which dislocated the bones of the criminal; and there hanging upon the nails, in convulsions and torments inexpressible, he expired. Thus did the Son of God humble himself to death, even the death of the cross. Whilst angels with wonder and amaze behold him, what sentiments of transcendent admiration and love should glow in our bosom, when we see him dying on the accursed tree for us men and for our salvation!

4. As he was hung up naked to bear our shame, who by sin had lost the robe of innocence, the executioners divided his garments as their fee; and whilst they sat down and watched him, that no rescue might be attempted, should the people now relent, they cast lots for his outer garment, which was without seam, and must have been spoiled if cut to pieces; thus in the most exact manner fulfilling the prophetic word, Ps. xxii. 18. *They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*

5. On the cross a tablet was hung, importing the crime for which he suffered, as was usual on these occasions. But this bespoke his honour rather than reproach: *This is Jesus the King of the Jews.* Such indeed he really was; and whatever intention they had who wrote it, God designed even here that a testimony should be borne to his Messiah.

6. Two thieves were crucified with him, and he placed in the midst, as if to stamp the most indelible infamy upon him, as the vilest of all malefactors. *Thus was he numbered with transgressors and with the wicked in his death.* Though he had done no violence, yet, bearing the sins of many; Divine Justice treated him as a criminal, and he died under the curse of our iniquities.

7. On the cross he endured the greatest contradiction of sinners against himself.

[1.] From the common people and passengers who went by as he hung on the tree. Unmoved at his sufferings, unaffected with the astonishing patience wherewith he bore them, they vented their blasphemies against him, wagging their heads, as insulting over his miseries, (Ps. xxii. 8.) and triumphing in his torments; upbraiding him with his pretended ability of destroying the temple, and raising it in three days; and bidding him now put forth some of that power of which he boasted, in coming down from the cross to which he was nailed, and thus at least prove the truth of the high pretensions he made, as being the Son of God. *Note*, (1.) When a man is run down, and cast out by the great and the rulers, every one is ready to join in the cry. (2.) If Christ was thus reviled and ridiculed, let us not think it strange if the mouth of the ungodly be opened upon us in bitter words.

[2.] *From the chief priests, scribes, and elders.* They came to feast their eyes with this sight of misery, and, instead of being at their devotions in the temple, (Lev. xxiii. 7.) meanly mixed with the rabble around the cross, to gratify their malice and spit their venom; mocking at him, and saying, *He saved others: himself he cannot save.* His present state they suggest evidently proved the delusion of the miracles to which he pretended, and the impossibility of his being the Saviour of the world: whereas in fact, the very reason why he cannot save himself, is because it would not then be possible for him to save others: since on his sufferings their salvation depended. As he assumed the honour of Israel's King, they upbraid him with his arrogance, and bid him exert his authority, and loose himself from the cross; then they profess they will believe in him, though, after what he had done, this was a mere subterfuge for their infidelity. Had he complied with their proposals, they would instantly have found new objections, and would suppose some trick had been played, that he had never been nailed to the tree, as they afterwards evaded the evidence of his resurrection, by the absurd pretence that his disciples stole away the body by night. Because Jesus had professed such unshaken confidence in God, and claimed so near a relation to the Most High, they now bid him put it to the proof; intimating, that God's not delivering him in his distress showed him a deceiver; and whilst they thus vilified him in the eyes of the people, they hurled a fiery arrow against the faith of the Redeemer, to terrify his innocent soul, as if there was no hope for him in his God, (Ps. xxii. 8.) Unmoved, the Saviour heard in silence their blasphemies, and persisted patiently in accomplishing his own glorious work. *Note*, (1.) Jesus became a king by suffering the cross; he went from thence to reign,

Let us not forget then the way to his kingdom; if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. (2.) Many pretend want of evidence as a reason for their unbelief; but were Christ to indulge them with the grant of what themselves propose, they would be as far from faith in him as ever. The fault is in the heart: they who believe not Moses and the prophets, will be proof against every other method of conviction.

[3.] From the thieves who were crucified with him. Some suppose that only one of them reviled him, (see Luke xxiii. 39.) and say this is a Hebrew way of speaking, as if they were afraid of ascribing too much to the sovereign grace of God herein displayed. But I own I see no reason for doubting, that both at first joined in the same blasphemy and abuse; though one of them, struck with the behaviour of Jesus, and convinced of his own wickedness in this, as well as all his former conduct, afterwards casts his eyes of faith on the expiring Saviour: and if so, this tended only to make the triumphs of boundless mercy, and the riches of the redemption of Jesus, appear the more illustrious in his salvation.

8. A dreadful darkness now came on over all the land. The sun miraculously withdrew his light, as if terrified to behold his Maker's agony, and testifying his abhorrence of such transcendently atrocious wickedness; affording an emblem of that judicial blindness to which this devoted people were now abandoned. It might be intended also to represent the dreadful conflict with the rulers of the darkness of this world, which Jesus maintained on the cross, when by dying he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. And this eclipse of the great luminary of heaven was also but a faint image of the darker eclipse in the Redeemer's soul, when every cheering beam of consolation was withdrawn, the light of his Father's countenance withheld, and a sense of this dereliction, arising from the wrath of an offended God, completed the measure of his sufferings. Three such hours had never passed since *darkness was upon the face of the deep.*

9. After a long and silent conflict, about the ninth hour, his agony being now at the summit, with a loud but lamentable voice, Jesus cried, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Strange accents from him whom God had repeatedly owned for his beloved Son, and in whom he had testified himself so well pleased! We never hear one complaint from these sacred lips of all his inhuman treatment, or bodily torment; what he then felt was infinitely more insupportable, and extorted this exceeding bitter cry. Not that the hypostatic union was dissolved, or that there was any real abatement of the Father's love towards him; never did he as Mediator appear more amiable than now, when by the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot unto God. But since he took upon himself all the sins of his people, he was given for a while into the enemy's hands, and all the powers of hell let loose upon him; every divine support was withdrawn, and the terrors of wrath due from an offended God seized on his soul, and sunk him in the lowest deeps. Despair excepted, I question much whether the spirits of the damned have felt the wrath of God in this its utmost depth of bitterness: yet, though forsaken, firm and unshaken Jesus hangs fast on God, and in this deepest dereliction still can say, *My* God.

Lastly, The by-standers, whether wilfully or ignorantly mistaking his words, said he *called for Elias*, as if he wanted his help, and that it was too late for him to cry now. And hereupon one ran and filled a sponge with vinegar, and with a cane lifted it to his lips, which might be a suggestion of compassion, since his pains must have created intolerable thirst; though usually it is supposed to be done to mock and tease him, and add to his anguish; whilst the rest deriding said, *Let be*, let him alone; *let us see whether Elias will come to save him*, since he is to be the forerunner of the Messiah; but no such help they presume will be afforded him, alike abandoned by heaven and earth.

50. [s] Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. 51. ¶ [t] And, behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; [u] and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; 52. And the graves were opened; [x] and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53. And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. 54. [y] Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they [z] feared greatly, saying, [a] Truly this was the Son of God. 55. [b] And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: 56. Among which was [c] Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

[s] Mark 15. 37, 38. Luke 23. 46. John 19. 30. Heb. 5. 7. Ps. 22. 14, 15. Dan. 9. 26. Is. 53. 10. John 10. 11, 15, 18. Heb. 9. 14.
[t] Mark 15. 38. Luke 23. 47. Exod. 26. 31. 2 Chr. 3. 14. 2 Cor. 3. 12—16. Heb. 6. 19. & 10. 19. Eph. 2. 15.
[u] Ps. 18. 7. Exod. 19. 18. Hab. 3. 10, 13.
[x] Ps. 68. 20. Is. 26. 19. Hos. 13. 14. John 5. 21, 28, 29. & xi.
[y] Ver. 36. Mark 15. 39. Luke 23. 47. Is. 11. 10. ch. 8. 5—11.
[z] Exod. 20. 18, 19. Ps. 48. 6. Acts 2. 37. & 16. 29.
[a] Ch. 8. 27. & 14. 33. & 16. 16. John 1. 49. & 6. 69. Acts 8. 37. Nah. 1. 6. Ps. 18. 7. ver. 40.
[b] Luke 8. 2, 3. Mark 15. 40, 41. Luke 23. 48, 49, 55. John 19. 25.
[c] Luke 7. 37—50. Mark 16. 1, 9. John 20. 1—18. Mark 6. 3. ch. 20. 20, 21. ver. 61. & 13. 35. Mark 15. 40.

Verses 50—56. The conflict is now over, the victory complete, sin atoned for, Satan's head bruised, justice satisfied, death vanquished, hell shut up, the kingdom of heaven opened for all believers, and all this by the death of Jesus here recorded; concerning which we are told,

1. The manner in which he expired. Having finished the work the Father had given him to do, *he cried*, not as a dying man, exhausted and spent, but *with a loud voice*, the shout of victory over all his conquered foes, and thus in his full strength *yielded up the ghost;* freely resigned his soul unto his Father's hands, and his body to death, the threatened wages of sin, which he had consented to bear. Thus fell the spiritual Samson, *spoiling principalities and powers, and triumphing over them* on his cross. Thus died the great Redeemer, just at the time when the evening sacrifice of the lamb was slain, the figure of him who in the evening of the world appeared to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

2. The miracles which attended his death.

[1.] *Behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain*, which separated the holy of holies from the outer tabernacle, where the table of incense stood, and the golden candlestick: and this at the very time probably when the priests were there ministering, and burning the sacred incense before it. Whereby was signified, (1.) The abolition of the Mosaical services, the darkness of that dispensation being now removed, and its mysteries unveiled; so that with open face we now behold the glory of the Lord. (2.) The demolition of the partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles, who were alike called into the fellowship of the gospel, and partakers of the same privileges. (3.) The free access which every sinner hath to God; so that they may now come boldly to a throne of grace, and, when death shall rend the veil of flesh, to a throne of glory, *by that new and living way which Jesus hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh*, Heb. iv. 16. x. 19, 20.

[2.] *The earth did quake, and the rocks were rent* by it; marks of God's wrath against these murderers, and of that fury he would pour out upon them, when their rocky hearts should be broken in pieces. Hereby also was signified the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and the wondrous changes now about to be wrought in the world, when the most stout-hearted sinners

should tremble before the Lord, and feel their souls rent with deepest conviction when led to look up to a crucified Jesus.

[3.] *The graves were opened,* immediately by the earthquake, *and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many:* a glorious proof of Christ's victory over death and the grave, and an assurance to all his saints of a joyful resurrection.

Who these saints were, whether the patriarchs, or such as had seen Christ in the flesh; whether they kept their bodies, and ascended with their Lord into glory, or afterwards returned into the state of the dead; to whom they appeared; what they said or did; these and the like inquiries, being matters of mere curiosity, the Holy Ghost hath not thought fit to reveal to us. All that is needful for us to know, is told us, and therein we should thankfully acquiesce, not coveting *to be wise above what is written.*

3. The effect which the death of Christ, and subsequent miracles, had on the centurion and soldiers who kept guard at the place of execution. Though soldiers, savage and cruel; heathens, and strangers to the true God, yea, the very persons who had treated Jesus with such indignity; had dragged him to that place, and nailed him to the tree; these strange sights, the darkness, earthquake, and expiring cry of the Redeemer, filled them with consternation. Their stout hearts trembled for fear, lest they should be swallowed up in righteous vengeance; and these amazing effects of divine power and interposition extorted from them that noble testimony to the Saviour's divine mission and character, *Truly this was the Son of God.*

4. To the honour of the weaker sex, mention is made of several women, and three of their names are recorded, who, though the disciples in general had forsaken their Master, and fled, continued their attendance in his last moments; and having followed Jesus out of Galilee, and ministered to him of their substance, now stood afar off, perhaps not daring to approach nearer, and with broken hearts and floods of tears beheld and lamented their dying Lord, unable to minister to him either help or comfort. *Note,* (1.) The longer and the farther we have followed Christ, the more should it engage us to cleave to him, even to the end. (2.) They who love the Lord Jesus in their hearts, will be happy to employ their substance in his service.

d Mark 15. 42—47. Luke 23. 50—56. John 19. 38—42. Ps. 22. 29.

57. ¶ [d] When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, * named Joseph, who also himself was

* This is supposed to be the same place where Samuel was born, called by the Hebrews Ramathaim-zophim.—*Hammond.*

Jesus' disciple: 58. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. 59. And when Joseph had taken

e Is. 53. 9. Ps. 22. 15. Hos. 13. 14. So it could not be said another had risen.

the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60. And laid it [e] in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the

† So called from her being of the town of Magdala.

door of the sepulchre, and departed. 61. And there was Mary Magdalene, † and

f Ch. 26. 17. John 19. 14. Mark 15. 42.

the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre. 62. ¶ Now the next day,

g Ps. 2. 1—6. Acts 4. 27, 28. ch. 26. 3, 4.

that followed the [f] day of the preparation, [h] the chief priests and Pharisees came to-

h John 7. 12. Luke 23. 2. 2 Cor. 6. 8.

gether unto Pilate, 63. Saying, Sir, we remember that [h] that deceiver said, while

i Ch. 12. 40. & 16. 21. & 17. 23. & 20. 19. John 2. 19. Luke 9. 22. & 18. 33. & 24. 6.

he was yet alive, [i] After three days I will rise again. 64. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: ‡ so the last error shall be worse than the first. 65. Pilate said unto them, Ye have [k] a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can. 66. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, [l] sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

‡ If this is believed, it will be worse than all that hath happened.

k Roman soldiers ready at your service. Acts 4. 1.

l Dan. 6. 17. Their stone, seal, and guard, but concurred to render Christ's resurrection the more illustrious and remarkable.

Verses 57—66. It was foretold, that the Messiah should make his *grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death;* and we here see it fulfilled in the honourable interment given him by Joseph of Arimathea, after he had died as a malefactor, and suffered in our stead the wages of sin. Several circumstances concerning his burial are here taken notice of.

1. The time. The evening of the day on which he suffered, which was Friday, some time before the Jewish sabbath commenced.

2. The person who charged himself with the care of the burial. Joseph of Arimathea, a man of wealth and distinction, one of the Sanhedrim, and a secret disciple of Jesus, though through fear he had not publicly avowed it; but now, when Christ seemed deserted of all, he dared step forth, boldly went in to Pilate, and begged the corpse that he might inter it with due respect, which was granted immediately, and an order sent to deliver the body to him. *Note,* (1.) There are more secret disciples than we are often aware of. (2.) The possession of worldly wealth and honour is usually a grievous check to the faithful and open profession of Jesus and his cause. (3.) In times of trial when the boldest are ready to shrink, we sometimes see those who were scarce numbered among disciples before, come forth with unexpected courage and fidelity, and make a noble confession before many witnesses.

3. The manner of it. He took down the body from the cross, and wrapped it in clean linen, according to the custom of the Jews: and he himself attended, and performed these last kind offices to his dear Master.

4. The place where Joseph laid the corpse. *In his own new tomb, hewn out in a rock,* and closed with *a great stone* at the mouth; which when Joseph had done, he departed in silent sorrow to bewail his loss. So Divine providence ordered the circumstances, that none having lain there before, there could be no doubt when Christ arose, concerning the person; and the solid rock out of which the sepulchre was hewn, prevented the possibility of suspicion of any secret access to the body, except by the entrance, and that was sufficiently guarded. *Note,* (1.) He who when alive had not a house to cover his head, when dead, wanted a grave: so destitute was the Lord of glory; who then after him dares complain? (2.) Since Jesus hath lain in the grave, he hath perfumed the noisome abode; and in this bed of dust, as the phœnix in her fabled nest, we now lie down only to rise in brighter array, and take our flight to mansions of eternal glory.

5. The care Christ's enemies took to have the sepulchre secured. The chief priests and Pharisees who were such scrupulous observers of the sabbath, had not patience to wait the evening till it was over, but assembled and went in a body to Pilate, to petition him for a guard, in order to secure the body against the following day, because they suggest, that Jesus, *that deceiver,* (so do they call him who is the truth itself,) had *said, while he was yet alive,* so that they admit he was now certainly dead, *After three days I will rise again.* We find not indeed he had ever expressly said so to them; and if they founded their suggestion upon what they had heard, John ii. 19. then their own barefaced wickedness was yet more evident, since on this very

passage, which they applied to the temple, they formed great part of their accusation against him. Pretending therefore to fear *lest his disciples should come by night, and steal him away, and say he is risen*, they desire to be furnished with a band of soldiers, to prevent all such attempts; lest, if such a trick should be played, the consequences of *this last error*, in not properly guarding the sepulchre, *should be worse than the first*, in suffering him to preach and live so long; for should this be once believed, the character of Jesus would then be established, and his doctrines spread with greater rapidity than ever. Pilate readily gratified them in granting their request, though no doubt he regarded their fears as absurd and ridiculous, and presumed they had little now to apprehend from a dead man. They had a body of soldiers in the tower of Antonia, for the service of the temple, and he permits them to detach what number they pleased to guard the sepulchre, and to use every other method to make the place as sure as they could. Nor did they fail to take every step to prevent the possibility of an imposture; setting a guard of soldiers, in whom they could confide, to watch the body that night, and *sealing the stone* with the public seal, either of Pilate or the Sanhedrim, that none might presume to enter, till the next day they should return themselves, and producing the dead corpse undeceive the people, and detect the impostor. Thus by the gracious providence of God was every circumstance so ordered, respecting the resurrection of Jesus, that our faith in that great event might have the most unshaken grounds of evidence indisputable, and be more strongly confirmed by all the methods his enemies took to guard the body from the possibility of being clandestinely removed. Indeed it can scarcely be supposed, that his disciples, who all so basely forsook him and fled when he was alive, would ever return to steal him away when he was dead: and they could have no end to answer by it: for to endeavour, by saying he was risen, to impose on the people, would be inconceivable madness and folly in them, since they must thereby expose themselves to every suffering for their testimony, and be of all men the most miserable in this world; conscious of dying with a lie in their right hand, and having no hope in the next. But had they desired or designed to execute such a scheme, they must have been now effectually prevented. In the face of a body of armed soldiers, placed as sentinels on the sepulchre, and whose lives depended upon their watchfulness, to suppose they would ever have attempted to break the public seal, roll back a ponderous stone, descend into the tomb, and carry off the body by stealth, is an absurdity too glaring to be conceived. So far as human, as diabolical power could go, Christ's enemies went; but counsel and might are alike in vain against the Lord. They who oppose his kingdom, will find their attempts not only baffled, but turned to their own confusion; their guilt but the more aggravated, and their eternal ruin more dreadful.

CHAP. XXVIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

We left the Lord of life the prisoner of death. The third day arrives; death's bands are loosed, he leads his captivity captive, The Lord is risen indeed. *We have here some of the evidences of that signal event.* 1. *The testimony of the angel,* ver. 1—8. 2. *His appearance himself to the women,* ver. 9, 10. 3. *The confession of the adversaries that were upon the guard,* ver. 11—15. 4. *Christ's appearance to the disciples in Galilee, and the commission he gave them,* ver. 16—20.

a Mark 16. 1, 2. Luke 24. 1. John 20. 1. ch. 27. 56.

b Or *had been.* Mark 16. 4. Luke 24. 2. John 20. 1.

1. IN the [a] end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. 2. And, behold, there [b] was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 3. [c] His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4. And [d] for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*. 5. And the angel answered and said unto the women, [e] Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was [f] crucified. 6. He is not here: [f] for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7. And [g] go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: [h] lo, I have told you. 8. [h] And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring [i] his disciples word. 9. ¶ [k] And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail! And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10. Then said Jesus unto [l] them, [k] Be not afraid: [l] go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

c Dan. 10. 5, 6. ch. 17. 2. Mark 16. 5. Luke 24. 4. John 20. 12. Luke 1. 11, 12. & 9. 2, 9. Rev. 18. 1.

d Ch. 27. 65, 66. Ps. 144. 6. & 48. 6. Dan. 8. 27. & 10. 7. Is. 33. 14.

e Mark 16. 6. Luke 24. 5. Is. 41. 10, 14. Rev. 1. 17, 18. Mark 5. 66.

f John 2. 19. ch. 12. 40. & 16. 21. & 17. 24. & 20. 19.

g Ch. 26. 32. ver. 10. Mark 14. 28. & 16. 7. John 21. 1. Acts 1. 3. & 10. 41. & 13. 31. 1 Cor. 15. 5. ch. 4. 15. & 8. 11, 12.

h Eccl. 9. 10. Rom. 12. 11. Ezra 3. 12, 13. John 16. 20, 22. & 20. 20. Ps. 2. 11.

i Is. 64. 5. Ps. 19. 11. Mark 16. 9. John 20. 14, 16. Song 3. 4.

k Is. 41. 10, 14. & 35. 3, 4. Rev. 1. 17, 18. Mark 5. 36.

l Judg. 10. 16. Hos. 11. 8. Ps. 103. 8—13. Heb. 2. 11, 12. ch. 12. 49, 50. John 20. 17. see on ver. 7.

Verses 1—10. The resurrection of Jesus being the grand hinge on which our hope of salvation turns, it must afford the most singular satisfaction to observe the amazing force of evidence wherewith this glorious event is attested. Had he still lain in the grave, and had death maintained his dominion over him, our faith had been vain, and we must have perished in our sins: but glory be to God, he hath raised up Jesus from the dead, and hath thereby begotten us to a new and lively hope. Some testimonies of this fact are here produced; many more will be found in the other evangelists. We have,

1. The visit made to the sepulchre by those holy women who had attended Jesus to the cross and to the grave, even Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James; and they came now to see the sepulchre, if it was as they left it, bringing spices to embalm the body; this was *in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week.* Christ had lain in the grave part of our Friday, all Saturday, which was the Jewish Sabbath, and on the Sabbath morning, the third day, very early, probably about four o'clock, he arose, after dwelling among the dead about six and thirty hours; long enough to show his death real, yet not so long as that his body should see corruption, Ps. xvi. 10.

2. As they went, and talked about the difficulty of removing the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, which seems to have been more ponderous than they could roll away, *Behold!* to their astonishment, *there was a great earthquake*, which, had the guards indeed slept, must needs have roused them; *for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven*, as the officer of the Most High, sent to release from the arrests of death the body of the Redeemer: the immense debt of our sins being now paid and cancelled, and the justice of God satisfied, the surety by right became entitled to his discharge. Therefore he *came and rolled back the stone from the door*, thus opening the prison, whilst Jesus, as our representative, arose for our justification, as he had been delivered

for our offences; *and* the angel *sat upon it*, defying all the powers of earth or hell to roll it on again; waiting there to welcome the poor women who were on their way, and striking terror and dismay into the stout-hearted soldiers. *His countenance was* bright *as the lightning, and his raiment white as snow*, the emblem of purity and victory. Trembling in every limb, the guards shook like the earth which rocked under their feet, and pale as death, with haste fled from the presence of this angelic minister.

The other evangelists mention two angels; one sat on the stone without, and invited and led the women into the sepulchre, where they found another; the one of which stood at the feet, and the other at the head of the grave where the body had lain.

3. The women being come to the sepulchre, were at first affrighted at the sight, Mark xvi. 5. but the angel kindly accosting them, endeavoured to silence their fears. *Fear not ye*; whatever terrors seize the sinners in Zion, the redeemed of the Lord need not tremble; *for I know that ye seek Jesus that was crucified*, and they who seek a crucified Jesus, have nothing to fear; have every thing to hope: none ever sought his face in vain. *He is not here*, that you should any longer bedew his corpse with tears: no, *he is risen* for your everlasting comfort, *as he said* he should, on the third day. Then graciously inviting them to *come and see the place where the Lord lay*, that they might be convinced he was not there, he probably led the way into the sepulchre, whither they followed him, and saw the other angel, mentioned John xx. 12. And hereupon the angel dismisses them with a message to the disconsolate disciples; *Go quickly*, and be the messengers of this glad news; *tell his disciples*, now dejected and despairing, *he is risen from the dead*, to their surprise and joy; *and, behold*, for the confirmation of your faith and theirs, *he goeth before you into Galilee*, where you and they must follow him, and *there shall ye see him*, converse with him, and receive the fullest assurance of his resurrection. *Lo! I have told you*; remember to deliver these tidings, and be assured of the truth of what I have spoken.

4. Agitated with surprise and joy at what they had seen and heard, and eager to communicate the glad news, they ran to the disciples: and in the way Jesus himself met them, and with kindest salutation accosted them, *All hail*, all peace, happiness, and joy be with you! With lowliest reverence they cast themselves instantly at his feet, and in a transport of love embraced him, adoring him as their risen Lord and Saviour. Then Jesus, further to confirm their hearts, and remove every fear, bids them *not be afraid*; they need apprehend neither danger nor delusion, but must deliver the message his angel had put into their mouths, *Go tell my brethren*; by such an endearing name was he pleased to distinguish his disciples; *that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me. Note*, (1.) Christ is not ashamed to call his servants brethren: yea, though their unfaithfulness had made them unworthy of such a relation, he will not disown them. (2.) Faith in a risen Redeemer effectually silences a sinner's fears: in him we see the great salvation accomplished, and are filled with joy and peace in believing.

* Being terrified by the earthquake.

m Ps. 2. 1—6. & 94. 2. ch. 26. 3, 4.

† They would not have made this acknowledgment without previous assurance of protection.

n John 3. 19, 20. Acts 12. 19.

11. ¶ Now, when they were going, behold, * some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. 12. And [m] when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, 13. Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, † and stole him *away* while we slept. 14. [n] And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. 15. So [o] they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

o Ch. 26. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 10. Prov. 1. 10—16. & 28. 21.

Verses 11—15. The resurrection of Jesus is proved by a cloud of unexceptionable witnesses, among whom his very enemies held a distinguished place.

1. The guard who had fled, had just reached the city as the women were on their return thither; and some of them, probably the officers who commanded the detachment, went directly to the chief priest; and to their astonishment related all that had passed; the earthquake, the descent of the angel, the removal of the stone, and the rising of Jesus; and if any thing could ever have shocked their obdurate hearts, one should conceive the report of such incontestable eye-witnesses of the fact would have convinced them of their wickedness, and turned them to the Lord. But they were determined in impenitence and unbelief, and therefore given up to a reprobate mind. Hereupon,

2. The chief priests and elders consulted together, and resolved to support what they had done at all events, and therefore to invent the most plausible pretext to evade the evidence of the resurrection of Jesus, knowing the powerful effects of money, and how ready men are to sell the truth, nay, their very souls for it, they bribed high all the guard to tell a lie as absurd as wicked, that *his disciples came by night, and stole him away while they slept.* And as the men might justly apprehend such a confessed criminal neglect in them, as sleeping upon guard, might be attended with rigorous punishment if it came to the governor's ears, the rulers engage to interpose their influence, and to save them harmless. But the whole contrivance was so barefaced a sham, that it carried its own confutation, except to such as chose their own delusions. Can it be conceived, that where the trust was so important, and death the penalty of neglect, that a sentinel would sleep? But if one man may be supposed to be overtaken, would a whole band of men be all asleep at once? If they had been so, would those timid disciples, who had fled at the first approach of danger, when their Master was alive, now dare rush into the jaws of death, to rescue his corpse? Could such a number of them as was requisite to roll away the stone, and remove the body, have been able to accomplish such a thing without waking one of the numerous host that lay around the tomb? and if they slept, how could they possibly know that his disciples came and stole him away? Nay, their very living to support the falsehood, was a full proof against them; for, had they slept as they pretended, these very priests had been the first to have had them put to death for their neglect, instead of interesting themselves to screen them from punishment.

3. The bribe extorted from the heathen soldiers an easy compliance; *they took the money*, and said, *and did as they were taught.* And this senseless story being industriously propagated by the priests, was readily believed by those who wished to be deceived, and continued long after to be commonly reported among the Jews, to render the disciples odious, and prevent the effects of their ministry. *Note*, (1.) Money is the grand bait for the grossest crimes: the raging love of that once rooted in the heart, swallows up every consideration of truth, honesty, and justice. (2.) No outward evidence is sufficient to overcome the infidelity of the heart, without the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost. Were we to choose what proofs we would, greater could not be given than these men beheld, and yet not one of them was converted. No signs or wonders will convince those who reject the gospel. (3.) A malicious lie once raised, in its consequences is often fatally extensive; but wo to the author!

16. ¶ [p] Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17. And when they saw him, they [q] worshipped him: but some † doubted. 18. ¶ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, [r] All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19. [s] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, [t] I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

p Ch. 26. 32. ver. 7, 10. Mark 16. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 5.
q Ps. 45. 11. & 2. 12. John 5. 23. Rev. 5. 9. Heb. 1. 6.
† Or *had doubted.*
r Dan. 7. 13, 14. Ps. 89. 27. Is. 52. 13. & 53. 12. & 9. 6, 7. ch. 11. 27. & 16. 28. Luke 1. 32. John 3. 35. & 13. 3. & 17. 2. Acts 2. 36. & 5. 31. & 10. 36, 38, 42. Rom. 14. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 24. Eph. 1. 10, 20. Phil. 2. 9—11. Col. 1. 16—18. Heb. 1. 2, 3. & 2. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Rev. 1. 13, 16, 18, 20. & 17. 14. & 19. 16.
s Mark 16. 15, 16. Luke 24. 47. Rom. 10. 18. Acts 2. 38. & 8. 12. 1 Cor. 1. 13, 15. & 10. 2. 1 Pet. 3. 21. Col. 1. 23, 28. Acts 20. 27. 1 Cor. 11. 2, 23. Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32.
t Josh. 1. 5, 9. Is. 41. 10, 14. & 46. 4. ch. 18. 20.

Verses 16—20. According to the directions of their Master, the eleven apostles went into Galilee to the mountain appointed, having summoned a general meeting of all the disciples; whose number amounted to above five hundred. There Jesus again appeared unto them, and, fully convinced now of his being the Son of God, they paid him divine adoration. But *some* among them still *doubted*, weak and wavering, and scarce able to credit the testimony of their senses; so very slow of heart were they to believe, and so little disposed to be credulous in a matter of such infinite importance. But Jesus soon removed all their doubts, conversing familiarly with them, and giving them the most indubitable proofs of the identity of his person, and the certainty of his resurrection. Hereupon, as he was now about to take his farewell of earth, he invests them with his authority, sends them out under his influence, directs them in their work, and assures them of his blessing on their labours.

1. He asserts the authority with which he is invested, and in virtue of which he puts them in trust with his gospel. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* As Mediator, he had received the universal sovereignty; angels, principalities, and powers above were made subject unto him; and on earth all things and persons were put under his government: which was a most encouraging consideration to them who were about to go forth in his name, since his support would make them more than conquerors. *Note*, When we are discouraged with the view of our own weakness and insufficiency, we should look by faith to the all-sufficiency of Jesus, and be comforted.

2. He gives them a commission out of the plenitude of his power. *Go ye, therefore, and* all who shall in succeeding ages be put in trust with the same gospel, *teach all nations;* for all respect of persons and people is now at an end; the salvation purchased is a common salvation, and whosoever will, let him come. They are to carry the glad tidings into all lands, and make disciples every where; *baptizing them*, and their household who should be converted by their ministry, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, admitting them by this rite into the visible communion of the church, on the profession of their faith in the eternal Father, Son, and Spirit, the one God, to whose worship and service they are hereby dedicated: *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;* declaring to them the riches of the grace, and the extent of the privileges of the gospel; with all the mighty obligations to obedience, resulting from faith, which worketh by love: enjoining the word of Jesus as the only rule of duty, to which nothing is to be added, and from whence nothing must be diminished; and urging the disciples to adorn the doctrines they profess by that conscientious observance of all those moral duties and positive ordinances which may prove the truth of the grace which is in them, bring glory to God, and credit to their holy religion.

3. He assures them of his constant spiritual presence, to teach, comfort, and prosper them in all their labours of love. *Lo! I am with you;* be assured of it, as the most undoubted truth, though my bodily presence be removed my Spirit shall abundantly supply that loss; in all difficulties and dangers I will support you: in all emergencies I will direct you; I will give you success in all your labours, and consolation in all your sufferings; and that *alway, even to the end of the world.* Not only all your days shall *you* find me near to help you, but to the end of time your successors in the ministry shall experience my continual support and blessing, in the preaching that gospel you deliver unto them. *Amen.* Verily I say unto you who am the faithful and true witness, I will fulfil my promises. Or this may be the evangelist's word, expressing his own, and the church's faith and prayer, that so it *may* be, and so we believe it *shall* be. What Christ hath promised, we may confidently expect to receive, only pray in faith, nothing doubting.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT UPON THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

ST MARK.

Introduction.

WE have heard the evidence given in by the first witness to the doctrine and miracles of our Lord Jesus; and now here is another produced, who calls for our attention. The second *living creature* saith, *Come and see,* Rev. vi. 3. The author of this Epistle is Mark; whether the same person mentioned Acts xv. 37, 38. or him whom Peter calls his son, 1 Pet. v. 13. is uncertain. He was not of the number of the apostles, but might probably be one of the seventy. His gospel is shorter than that of Matthew, containing much the same matter, with many additional circumstances. Thus out of the mouth of two or three witnesses is every word established.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 27.

Mark's narrative takes not rise so early as those of Matthew and Luke do, from the birth of our Saviour, but from John's baptism, from which he presently passeth to Christ's public ministry. Accordingly, in this chapter we have, 1. *The office of John Baptist illustrated by the prophecy of him,* ver. 1—3. *and the history of him,* ver. 4—8. 2. *Christ's baptism, and his being owned from heaven,* ver. 9—11. 3. *His temptation,* ver. 12, 13. 4. *His preaching,* ver. 14, 15, 21, 22, 38, 39. 5. *His calling disciples,* ver. 16—20. 6. *His praying,* ver. 35. 7. *His working miracles.* (1.) *His rebuking an unclean spirit,* ver. 23—28. (2.) *His curing Peter's mother-in-law that was ill of a fever,* ver. 29—31. (3.) *His healing all that came to him,* ver. 32, 34, 35. (4.) *His cleansing a leper,* ver. 40—45.

1. THE [a] beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, [b] the Son of God; 2. As it is written in the prophets, [c] Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 3. [d] The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4. [e] John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance * for the remission of sins. 5. [f] And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. 6. And John was [g] clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; 7. And preached, saying, [h] There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. 8. [i] I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

a Mat. 11. 12. Luke 2. 10, 11. Is. 40. 1—11. Mat. 3. 2. & 17. 11.

b Ps. 2. 7. Mat. 3. 17. & 16. 16. & 17. 5. & 26. 63, 64. John 1. 49. & 6. 69. & 10. 30, 35. & 3. 16. & 1. 14. Rom. 8. 3.

c Mal. 3. 1. Mat. 11. 10. Luke 7. 27.

d Is. 40. 3. Luke 3. 4. & 1. 76. John 1. 15, 23. Mat. 3. 3.

e Mat. 3. 1, 2. & 11. 10. Luke 3. 3. John 1. 31. Mal. 4. 5. Acts 19. 4. & 2. 38.

e Or *unto.*

f Mat. 3. 5. Luke 1. 17, 76. John 3. 22. & 5. 35. Acts 2. 38. & 19. 18. Jer. 3. 13.

g Mat. 3. 4. 2 Kin. 1. 8. Zech. 13. 4. Lev. 11. 22.

h Mat. 3. 11. Luke 3. 16. John 1. 17, 27. & 3. 28—31. Mat. 3. 14.

i Mat. 3. 11. Luke 3. 16. with Is. 44. 3, 4. Joel 2. 28. Acts 1. 5. & 2. 4, 17. & 10. 45. & 11. 15, 16. & 19. 4. 1 Cor. 12. 13.

Verses 1—8. St Mark commences his history with the account of John's baptism, the messenger sent before the Messiah, according to the ancient prophecies, to prepare his way. Isaiah and Malachi had both spoken of him, Isa. xl. 3. Mal. iii. 1. and agreeable thereunto John commenced his ministry in the wilderness, calling the people to repentance and faith in the promised Messiah, in order that they might obtain remission of their sins.

1. John's preaching *was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.* Not that the gospel then began first to be published; for it had been the subject of the ministry of all the prophets, and in the promise of the Seed of the woman had been preached to the first man immediately after his fall; but the gospel dispensation, in opposition to the law, began more immediately from the baptism of John, whose office it was particularly to point the people to the Lamb of God, now made manifest in the flesh to take away the sin of the world. This was the glad news John declared, *the gospel of Jesus Christ,* who is both the *Author* and *Subject* of it; and as *the Son of God,* endued with all-sufficiency for the great work of man's salvation, which he came to accomplish. To him the Baptist bore witness, acknowledged his surpassing dignity, and confessed his own unworthiness to be employed in the meanest offices by his Lord and whilst, in consequence of his preaching, and the people's profession of repentance, he admitted them to baptism in token of the forgiveness of their sins, he bade them expect a more efficacious baptism than this of water, even of the Holy Ghost, which the Messiah, to whom he directed them, should shed on them abundantly, to cleanse them from all their iniquities.

2. His appearance was singular, as that of the ancient prophets, and his dress and diet bespoke his mortified spirit and deadness to the world. A rough camel's hair garment, tied with a leathern girdle, defended him from the cold; and locusts and wild honey, such as the wilderness afforded, satisfied his hunger. *Note,* They who preach the gospel must learn to endure hardness, and be ready, whenever duty calls, to forego any of the

delights of sense for the sake of the service in which they are engaged.

3. Multitudes attended him, and appeared deeply affected with John's discourses, confessing their sins, and desiring to be admitted to his baptism. The word of the gospel is powerful. The doctrines of repentance and faith, when urged upon the heart, awaken the conscience: and all who truly preach Jesus Christ will assuredly see the success of their ministrations. They who have never known themselves instrumental to the convincing and converting one sinner, have demonstrative evidence before them, that they are not the messengers of Christ, and do not preach his truth.

9. ¶ [l] And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. 10. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens * opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: 11. And [m] there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 12. ¶ [n] And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. 13. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was [o] with the wild beasts; and the angels [p] ministered unto him.

l Mat. 3. 13—17. Luke 3. 21—23. John 1. 32—34.

*Or, cloven, or rent.

m Ps. 2. 7. Is. 42. 1, 21. & 49. 3. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. ch. 9. 7. Col. 1. 13. John 10. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 17.

n Mat. 4. 1—11. Luke 4. 1—13. Heb. 2. 17, 18. & 4. 15. with Deut. 9. 18, 25. 1 Kin. 19. 8.

o Ps. 22. 6. & 102. 6. Job 30. 29. Mat. 8. 20.

p 1 Kin. 19. 7. Mat. 26. 53. 1 Tim. 3. 16. cir. 30.

Verses 9—13. The account of Christ's ministry and temptations Matthew hath recorded more at large, chap. iii. iv.

1. He was baptized of John in Jordan. Not that he had any sins to confess though in *the likeness of sinful flesh*; but he would comply with every instituted ordinance of God: and now also he was eminently to be pointed out as the Messiah, and to enter upon his mission. Accordingly the heavens were opened, the Holy Ghost visibly descended upon him, and God himself by an audible voice, bore testimony to him as his Son, and declared his perfect satisfaction in the undertaking in which he was engaged. *Note*, (1.) If God is ever well pleased with us, it can only be in and through his dear Son. (2.) Whenever we are truly baptized into Christ, the Spirit of God will as really be communicated to us as it visibly descended upon him.

2. He immediately entered upon his temptation, led by the Holy Spirit from the brink of Jordan into the howling wilderness, to make his abode with beasts, while Satan sharpened every poisoned arrow in his quiver against him; but, to his bitter disappointment, though in this lonely desert, he found all his arts foiled by this second Adam, which even in Eden he had practised with such success upon the first. Thus, forty days Christ bore with all the tempter's malice, and baffled all his wiles; till Satan, despairing, at last quitted the field, unable to make the least impression: and then the angelic hosts, who had with admiration beheld the dreadful conflict, appeared to congratulate the Saviour's victory, and to minister to his hunger. *Note*, (1.) Every converted soul must prepare for temptation. (2.) Solitude often proves a dangerous snare. (3.) Christ knows what sore temptations mean. He tenderly compassionates his suffering people, and is near to succour and defend them. (4.) The angels minister to the heirs of salvation; yea, the Lord upon their right hand is their defence, and keepeth them, that the wicked one toucheth them not.

14. ¶ Now, after that [q] John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching [r] the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15. And saying, [s] The time is fulfilled, [t] and the kingdom of God is at hand: [u] repent ye, and believe the gospel. 16. ¶ [x] Now, as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 17. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become [y] fishers of men. 18. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. 19. And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. 20. And straightway he called them: and they [z] left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him. 21. [a] And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath-day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 22. [b] And they were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

q Mat. 4. 12. & 11. 2. & 14. 3. Luke 3. 19. John 3. 30.

r Mat. 4. 17, 23. Heb. 2. 3. Luke 4. 14—22, 45, 46. Acts 10. 36—38. Is. 61. 1—3. Eph. 2. 17. Luke 2. 10, 11. & 8. 1.

s Gal. 4. 4. Ps. 110. 3. Dan. 2. 44. Eph. 1. 10.

t See Mat. 4. 17. & xiii. & 3. 2. & 10. 7.

u Is. 55. 1—7. Acts 1. 38, 39. & 20. 21.

x Mat. 4. 18—22. Luke 5. 1—11. John 1. 35—44.

y Mat. 4. 19. Luke 5. 10 Heb. 2. 3. Eph. 2. 20. Acts 2. 4—42. & 4. 4, &c.

z Mat. 10. 37. ch. 10. 28. cir. 30.

a Mat. 4. 13, 23. Luke 4. 16, 31. & 13. 10. Acts 13 14, 27, 44. & 15. 21. & 57. 2. & 18. 4.

b Mat. 7. 28, 29. & 13. 54. & 21. 23. ch. 11. 28. Luke 4. 36. & 7. 16. & 20. 2.

Verses 14—22. When John's ministry was finished by his imprisonment, Christ came into Galilee, and there,

1. He preached *the gospel of the kingdom of God*, inviting all his countrymen to come and partake of the inestimable blessings of that dispensation of grace which he was commissioned to publish; *the time* being *fulfilled* which had been marked out for the appearing of the Messiah by the prophets, and decreed in the counsels of God: and therefore, as his kingdom was immediately to be erected, he exhorted all his hearers to *repent and believe the gospel*; to discover, acknowledge, and bewail their offences against God's holy law; to renounce their vain confidence in themselves; to change their mistaken sentiments concerning the nature of the Messiah's kingdom: and instantly turning to him to receive the glad tidings he brought of the salvation he came to procure for them, even pardon, peace, righteousness, and eternal life, the gift of God through the sacrifice and obedience to death of his Son. *Note*, (1.) The gospel will be glad tidings to none who do not see and feel their misery and guilt; and, instead of flattering themselves in their own eyes, now change their minds, and stand convinced of their lost estate. (2.) Faith in the gospel word entitles us to claim the fulfilment of all the promises: nor is it any presumption, rejecting all confidence in ourselves, to be confident of the Saviour's love and faithfulness.

(2.) He called four of his disciples to a more constant attendance upon him, that they might be better qualified for the work in which he designed to employ them. (1.) They were *fishers*; for the kingdom of Jesus was not to be erected by the wisdom of men, but by the power of God. (2.) He found them at *their vocation*. Honest industry in his sight is highly commendable. (3.) They were two pair of *brethren*: and that is an additional happiness, when they, who were so near to each other in blood, are united together in one Lord. (4.) They *left all* to follow Christ. When he calls, we must count nothing too dear to part with for his sake.

3. With these disciples, his attendants, he entered into Capernaum, and on the Sabbath preached in the synagogue, to the

astonishment of the auditory; such a divine power and authority attended his teaching, as the people had never found under their Scribes and Rabbies. *Note*, The gospel word is mighty and powerful. No marvel then if the preachers of it are distinguished from the insipid doctors of moral virtue, philosophical disquisitions, or empty formality.

c Luke 4. 33—37. 1 John 5. 19.

23. ¶ [c] And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and

d Luke 4. 41. Mat. 8. 29. ver. 34. ch. 5. 7.

he cried out, 24. Saying, [d] Let *us* alone: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, [e] the

e Ps. 16. 10. Acts 2 31. & 4. 27. Dan. 9. 24. Luke 1. 35.

Holy One of God. 25. And Jesus [f] rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and

f Ver. 34. Luke 4. 41. ch. 3. 11, 12. Ps. 50. 16.

come out of him. 26. [g] And when the unclean spirit had torn him, * and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

g Ch. 9. 20, 26. Luke 9. 39, 42. & 11. 22.

* Had shaken or convulsed him. It appears from Luke 4. 35. that he hurt him not. —*Pearce.*

27. [h] And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. 28. [i] And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

h Mat. 12. 23. & 9. 33. ch. 7. 37. & 9. 25.

i Mic. 5. 4. Is. 52. 13. Song 1. 3. Mat. 4. 23. & 9. 31. Luke 4. 15, 37.

Verses 23—28. Christ confirmed his mission by his miracles. And to give the greater weight to his discourse, we find him here,

1. Casting out a devil from one possessed. He is called *an unclean spirit;* for he is such in his own nature; by his suggestions he defiles the consciences of men, and, by the temptations he presents before them, seduces them into all impurity of body and soul. Dreading the presence and power of Jesus, *he cried out*, using the man's organs of speech, *saying, let us alone, what have we to do with thee?* They knew themselves unable to contend, and therefore tremble at the thought of being dispossessed of their prey: but to do him all the mischief in their power, this fiend seems in reproach to call him *Jesus of Nazareth:* and though he adds, *I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God*, there was probably the most malicious design couched under that fair confession, even to raise a suspicion of confederacy between Jesus and Satan. Christ therefore silences him, disdaining to receive a testimony from him, and disappointing his malicious designs: with a sharp rebuke he bids him instantly quit his prey, and leave the body which he had possessed; and, though furious at being dispossessed, with a fearful outcry, as if he would have rent the man in pieces, or designing to terrify the spectators, he departs; compelled, though with reluctance, to yield to the commanding voice of Jesus. *Note*, (1.) Though such possessions may not now be found, how many, under the influence of *an unclean spirit*, are still led captive by the devil at his will! (2.) The grace of Jesus is still the same, and he can and doth subdue the strongest powers of Satan in the sinner's heart. (3.) Many a poor soul, when Christ first approaches him with the gospel word, is grievously harassed, and cries out, as if his misery was now greater than ever before; but these terrors are the forerunners of peace and joy in believing.

2. The people were all amazed at what they heard and saw, and could not help saying one to another, *What thing is this?* Never was such astonishing power before exerted! *What new doctrine is this?* delivered with such majesty, and confirmed by such miracles. He acts not as exorcists, by charms and invocations; but *with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they obey him*, unable to make the least resistance. Hereupon the fame of his preaching and miracles began to be exceedingly spread through all the region round about Galilee. *Note*, Christ's doctrine was not new, but the old doctrine which had been from the beginning; but had for a long time been so forgotten and neglected, that it appeared now quite uncommon. As in these days, the doctrines of the gospel are by many called new doctrines, because, alas! we have for a long season in general so grievously departed from them.

29. ¶ [k] And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, [l] with James and John. 30. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. 31. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; [l] and immediately the fever [n] left her, and she [m] ministered unto them. 32. ¶ And [n] at even, when the sun did set, † they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. 33. And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; [o] and suffered not the devils ‡ to speak, because they knew him. 35. ¶ And [p] in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. 36. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. 37. And when they had found him, they said unto him, [q] All *men* seek for thee. 38. And he said unto them, [r] Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. 39. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and [s] cast out devils.

k Mat. 8. 14, 15. Luke 4. 38, 39.

l Exod. 15. 26. Rev. 16. 9. Ps. 103. 3. & 147. 3.

m Ps. 103. 1, 2. & 116. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 14. Luke 8. 3.

n Ver. 21. ch. 3. 2 & 14. 1. Mat. 8. 16, 17. Luke 4. 40, 41. Gen. 49. 10. Is. 53. 4, 5.

† The sabbath was then past, and no objection could be made to their bringing them to be healed.—*Pearce.*

o Ch. 3. 12. ver. 25. Ps. 50. 16. Acts 16. 17, 18.

‡ Or *to say that they knew him.*

p Luke 4. 42—45. Eccl. 9. 10. John 4. 34. Heb. 5. 7. Ps. 109. 4.

q Ver. 5. John 3. 26. & 12. 19. Mat. 4. 25. Zech. 11. 11.

r Luke 4. 43. John 16. 28. Is. 61. 1—3. & 42. 1—7. & 49. 1—6. & 50. 4.

s 1 John 3. 8. Gen. 3. 15. ver. 26. ch. 5. 9. & 7. 30.

Verses 29—39. Wherever Jesus went he left the glorious marks of his power and grace.

1. Soon after he had retired from the synagogue to Simon's house to take some refreshment, some of the company informed him of the illness of Peter's mother, confined to her bed with a fever. Immediately he arose, went to her bedside, lifted her up, and instantly the fever left her. The cure was perfect; not so much as any weakness remained; but she immediately rose and waited on Jesus and the guests. *Note*, When we have experienced the Redeemer's healing grace, it becomes us to show our gratitude by immediately employing the strength he hath given us in his service.

2. A multitude of other cures were wrought by him the same day. For no sooner was the Sabbath ended (before which they might scruple to carry the sick to him) than the door was crowded with patients, and not one went away without a cure; and many devils were ejected by his word, whom he permitted not *to say that they knew him* (as the words may be best rendered) not choosing to have them speak aught concerning him, lest it should give occasion to suggest there was a confederacy between him and them.

3. After some needful repose, very early in the morning, long before break of day, he retired to a solitary place, that he might, uninterrupted, enjoy sweet communion with his Father in secret, and pour out his soul in prayer before him. *Note*, (1.) Early rising is as profitable to the soul as the body; whilst sloth is alike hurtful to both. (2.) When our spirits are most fresh and vigorous, it is then the properest time to retire for prayer and communion with God.

4. Peter and his companions no sooner missed him in the morning than they sought him out, and desired him to return to Capernaum, there being so great inquiries made after him. But Christ could not confine himself there; the rest of the country must share his ministrations, being sent for this purpose to go about preaching and working miracles through the whole land: and accordingly he did so, his disciples attending him on his travels, hearing his divine teaching, and beholding the wonders of his power and love.

40. ¶ [t] And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, [u] If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 41. And Jesus, [x] moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. 42. And as soon as he had spoken, [y] immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. 43. And he straightly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; 44. And saith unto him, [z] See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. 45. [a] But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly * enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

t Mat. 8. 1—4. Luke 5. 12—15. Mat. 11. 5. & 7. 7. Luke 18. 1—13.

u Gen. 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17. Is. 63. 1. Lev. 13. 46.

x Mat. 9. 36. Heb. 4. 15. & 2. 17. Hos. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 18—20.

y Ver. 31. ch. 5. 29. Mat. 15. 28. John 4. 50, 53. Luke 17. 12—14.

z Mat. 8. 4. Lev. xiii, xiv. with ch. 5. 43. Mat. 17. 9. Luke 17. 14.

a Luke 5. 15. Mat. 4. 24. & 9. 26. & 14. 35. & 17. 14.

* Did not think it proper to enter openly any more into the city, Capernaum, called "his own city" by Matthew, ch. 9. 1.—*Pearce.*

Verses 40—45. This miracle was before recorded, Matt. vii. 2. We are taught by it,

1. What we are: poor, defiled, loathsome sinners, under the incurable disease of a corrupted nature and desperate, unless the great Physician of souls exert his healing power on our behalf.

2. Whither we must go: to Jesus; bowed down under the sense of our vileness and unworthiness to approach him; yet casting ourselves at his feet as alone able to relieve us from our misery, and with a humble persuasion he will not spurn us from him, but that he is willing as well as able to help and heal us.

3. Christ never rejects the souls of the miserable that fly to him; his bowels of compassion yearn over them; the hand of his grace is sure to be stretched out towards them. And though we often come trembling between fear and hope, whether he will receive, pardon, help, and save us, he is pleased to remove our doubts, and saith to our souls, *I will*, and power instantly accompanies his promise.

4. To those whom Christ cures he gives a strict charge; and they must carefully obey his injunctions, and especially beware not to return unto folly, lest a worse thing happen unto them; but daily they are called to present themselves, body, soul, and spirit, before the great High Priest of their profession, that he, who hath made them clean, may keep them clean.

5. They who have tasted the love of Jesus delight to spread the savour of his name, and to testify their gratitude towards him, both with their lips and in their lives.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's healing a man that was sick of a palsy,* ver. 1—12. 2. *His calling Matthew from the receipt of custom, and his eating upon that occasion with publicans and sinners, and justifying himself in so doing,* ver. 13—17. 3. *His justifying his disciples in not fasting so much as those of the Pharisees did,* ver. 18—21. 4. *His justifying them in plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath-day,* ver. 23—28. *All which passages we had before,* Matt. ix. *and* xii.

1. AND [a] again he entered into Capernaum after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house. 2. [b] And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and [c] he preached the word unto them. 3. ¶ And they come unto him, bringing one [d] sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. 4. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the [e] roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. 5. When Jesus [f] saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, [g] Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. 6. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, 7. [h] Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? [i] who can forgive sins but God only? 8. And immediately, when Jesus [k] perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? 9. Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? 10. But that ye may know that [l] the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) 11. [m] I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. 12. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; [n] insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

cir. 31.

a Mat. 9. 1—8. Luke 5. 18—26. Deut. 9. 11. & 15. 1. Acts 24. 17.

b Gen. 49. 10. Is. 45. 23. ch. 1. 33, 45.

c Ch. 1. 14. Luke 8. 1. Eph. 2. 17. Heb. 2. 3. Mat. 11. 5. Is. 61. 1—3. John 8. 12. & 12. 35.

d Deut. 28. 15, 22. ver. 10. John 5. 14. 1 Cor. 11. 30. Jam. 5. 15. John 9. 2, 3.

e Flat roof. Deut. 22. 8. 2 Sam. 11. 2. Jer. 19. 13. Mat. 10. 27. Acts 10. 9. Luke 5. 19.

f Gen. 22. 12. John 2. 25. & 21. 17. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23. Jer. 17. 10.

g Mat. 9. 2. Acts 5. 31. Is. 53. 11. John 5. 14. Ps. 103. 3. Is. 19. 22. & 38. 17.

h Mat. 9. 3. & 26. 65. John 5. 18. & 10. 33, 36.

i Job 14. 4. Is. 43. 25. & 44. 22. Ps. 130. 4. Rom. 8. 23.

k Ver. 5. 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chr. 29. 17. Ps. 7. 9. & 139. 1—4. Jer. 17. 10. John 2. 24, 25. & 21. 17. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23. John 6. 64.

l Dan. 7. 13. Ps. 80. 17. Zech. 13. 7. Mat. 16. 13. Rev. 1. 13. 1 Tim. 2. 5. & 3. 16. John 17. 2. & 5. 22, 23. Is. 53. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16.

m Gen. 1. 3. ch. 1. 41. Ps. 33. 9. John 6. 63. & 5. 8.

n Mat. 9. 8, 33. & 12. 23. ch. 1. 27. Ps. 8. 1—3. Luke 5. 26. & 7. 16.

Verses 1—12. No sooner had our Lord returned to Capernaum from his journey through the villages of Galilee, than the rumour of it quickly spread through the place; and, eager to improve the precious opportunity of his presence, such multitudes assembled at the house, that there was no coming even to the door, so thick was the crowd. And a blessed sight it is to behold such numbers flocking to the Saviour.

1. He preached unto them. Some might have thought the time, the place, improper for a sermon. There were synagogues; what need of preaching in a house, or at the window? Perhaps to teach us, that no time or place is improper to speak a word for God and for immortal souls.

2. During Christ's preaching, or in some interval of his discourses, the friends of a poor paralytic man, solicitous to present his pitiable case before him, would fain have pressed through the crowd; but, finding the attempt impracticable, they carried him up to the top of the house where Jesus was, and breaking up a part of the flat roof, let down the sick man on his bed before him. *Note*, They who truly seek the Lord, will be discouraged by no difficulties from coming to him.

3. Struck with such an instance of their faith, the compassionate Jesus kindly accosts the afflicted patient, and seals the pardon of his sins as the introduction to his cure. This being the cause of every sickness and disease, the bitterness of them is past, when the sin that occasioned them is forgiven.

4. The Scribes and Pharisees who were present, regarded it as arrant blasphemy in a mere man, as they regarded Jesus, to assume the incommunicable prerogative of God, in thus by his own authority presuming to forgive sin. He knew their secret reasonings, and in his answer gave them a proof of his divinity as the searcher of hearts. To show them therefore, he possessed the power he assumed, he bids the man arise and walk, and appeals to themselves for the conclusion, whether he who could thus sovereignly, in an instant, remove the effects of sin, could not as easily remit the guilt of it. *Note*, *The man* Christ Jesus is also *very God*, able to forgive and to save to the uttermost every poor sinner that comes to him.

5. The paralytic man received his cure the moment Jesus commanded him to arise; and to the astonishment of all, he was so perfectly restored to health and strength as to carry home the bed on which he had been brought. Such unprecedented cures extorted acknowledgments from every beholder, that the like was never seen before in Israel.

13. ¶ And he went forth again by the sea side; and all [o] the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. 14. [p] And as he passed by,* he saw Levi the *son* of Alpheus sitting †at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. 15. ¶ And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, [q] many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. 16. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, [r] How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? 17. When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, [s] They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

o John 7. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 26. Prov. 1. 20—22. Mat. 22. 9. Zech. 11. 7, 11.

p Luke 5. 27—32. Mat. 9. 9—13.

* There were places for collecting toll on the principal roads, and on the lakes, rivers, &c.—*Lightfoot.*

† Or *at the place where the custom was received.*

q Luke 7. 29, 30. & xv. Mat. 21, 31. 32. & 8. 11, 12.

r Mat. 18. 17. Luke 5. 29. & 15. 1, 2. & 19. 7. & 18. 9—14. Is. 65. 5. Acts 10. 28.

s Mat. 9. 12, 13. Luke 5. 31, 32. Is. 55. 7. & 1. 18. Hos. 13. 9. Mat. 1. 21. & 18. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16. Rom. 5. 6, 8.

Verses 13—17. Having departed from the house to the sea-side, thither the multitude followed him, and he preached to them the gospel. After which,

1. He called Levi, or Matthew, a publican, who was sitting in his office receiving the customs; and such power accompanied his word, that instantly he left his gainful profession, and followed Jesus as his disciple. *Note.* (1.) Nothing is too difficult for Almighty grace; they who seem most deeply involved in the world, and sunk in guilt and corruption, are often snatched in sovereign love, as brands from the burning. (2.) If Christ did not first seek us, we should never have sought him.

2. Levi, in tender regard for his brother publicans, longed to make them acquainted with Jesus, whose grace he himself had so richly tasted, and therefore invited them to his house, where Jesus disdained not to sit among them: infamous in general as their characters were, he joined them, not as an associate, but as the great physician of souls, visited them as diseased patients. *Note*, They who have tasted the grace of the Redeemer themselves, cannot but be solicitous that their friends and neighbours should partake with them.

3. Christ vindicates his conduct from the censorious cavils of the Pharisees. He despised not the poor sinners' souls: but as this was the very end of his coming to call such to repentance, he was unaffected with the reviling of those who conceited themselves righteous, and yet were much farther from the kingdom of heaven, than the very sinners whom they despised. *Note*, (1.) The best deeds are often most basely misrepresented by the envenomed tongue of malice. (2.) None have aught to do with Christ but sin-sick souls, who feel themselves lost without him; the proud and self-righteous are left to perish in the delusions they have chosen.

18. ¶ [t] And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, [u] Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? 19. And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the [x] bride-chamber fast while the [y] bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20. But the days will come, when the bridegroom [z] shall be taken away from them, and then [a] shall they fast in those days. 21. [b] No man also seweth a piece of ‡new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. 22. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles. 23. ¶ [c] And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath-day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck§ the ears of corn. 24. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, [d] why do they

t Mat. 9. 14—17. Luke 5. 33—39.

u Rom. 10. 3. Luke 18. 12. Mat. 6. 16.

x Song 1. 4, 17. Is. 26. 20. Mat. 25. 10.

y Messiah. Mat. 25. 1—10. John 3. 29. Rev. 19. 7, 9. Song 1. 4. & 2. 3—5. & 3. 4, 11. & 7. 5. & 8. 5, 6.

z Zech. 13. 7. John 7. 33, 34. & 12. 8, 32. & 13. 33. & 14. 2, 12. & 16. 7. & 17. 11, 13. Acts 1. 9. & 3. 21.

a Acts 1. 14. & 13. 3. & 14. 23. 1 Cor. 7. 5. 2 Cor. 11. 20. Zech. 12. 10—14.

b Deut. 33. 25. 1 Cor. 10. 14. Ps. 103. 9—13.

‡ Or *raw*, or *unwrought.*

c Mat. 12. 1—8. Luke 6. 1—5. Deut. 23. 25.

§ A Hebrew form of speech for *plucked.*

d Mat. 23. 23, 24. & 7. 5. with Exod. 20. 10. & 31. 15. & 35. 2. Num. 15. 32—36.

on the sabbath-day that which is not lawful? 25. And he said unto them, Have ye never read [c] what David did, when he had need, and was an hungered, he, and they that were with him? 26. How he went into the house of God, in the days of [f] Abiathar * the high priest, and did eat the shew-bread, [g] which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? 27. And he said unto them, [h] The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: 28. [i] Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

c 1 Sam. 21. 3—6.
f 1 Sam. 21. 1. & 22. 20. 2 Sam. 20. 25. 1 Kin. 1. 7. & 2. 26, 27.
* Abiathar is here mentioned instead of Ahimelech, his father, he being the most celebrated person of the two.
g Exod. 25. 30. & 29. 32, 33. Lev. 8. 12. & 24. 5—9.
h 1 Cor. 3. 22. Exod. 23. 12. Deut. 5. 14. ver. 23.
i Christ may permit it to be used for their good. Ch. 3. 4. Luke 13. 16. John 5. 9. & 9. 14.

Verses 18—28. Christ having justified his own conduct from the censure of Pharisaical pride, justifies also his disciples for not observing unnecessary austerities; and vindicates them for plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath-day to satisfy their hunger.

1. The disciples of John, who, after their master's example, fasted often; and the Pharisees, who placed great dependance on his bodily exercise, express their wonder that Jesus enjoined no such rigid rules on his disciples as they practised. So ready are those who fancy their own strictness meritorious, to censure all who come short of their standard of excellence. Christ answers their question, and vindicates his disciples; they were but beginners, and it was improper to put them on the more difficult exercises of self-denial, lest they should be discouraged thereby, and contract a disgust to the service. Besides, during his presence with them, like a newly married bride, it became them to rejoice; it would be time enough when he should be taken from them, to mourn and fast. Thus should we learn not to exact too much from young converts, and the lambs of the flock; and especially in fasting we should consider the great end and use of it, and that of itself, it is no farther good, than these are obtained.

2. The Pharisees soon seized another occasion of offence, from the disciples plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, as they passed through the fields. Rigidly scrupulous, as many others like them still are, about the form of godliness, and severe in judging all who do not coincide with them; yet blind to the deep rooted evil and abominations of their hearts. Christ vindicates them by a precedent the Pharisees will not dispute, and reasons with them by arguments they cannot disprove. David had done what seemed a much more exceptionable thing in eating the shew-bread; and Abiathar, who succeeded his father soon after as high priest, had consented to it, because ceremonial observances must give way to the great law of charity and self-preservation. Besides, the very institution of the sabbath was designed for man's benefit, to give rest to his body, and time to spend in the immediate service of God, and caring for his soul; and therefore doth not require him to abstain from what is more immediately necessary for the support and preservation of his life; the provision for which was a law of nature, and subsisted previous to the institution of the sabbath. The Messiah, therefore, who can best interpret his own laws, and is Lord of the sabbath, has an undoubted right to permit this liberty to his disciples, as such refreshment of their bodies will enable them more effectually to discharge the duties of the holy day. *Note*, (1.) Our sabbaths should be our delight; and therefore must not, by unreasonable strictness, be made a burden. (2.) Though we are allowed to eat and drink, as shall best enable us for the service of the sabbath, it is a gross violation of the day, by indulging our appetite to stupify our faculties, and render body and soul utterly unfit for the exercises of devotion.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's healing a man that had a withered hand on the sabbath-day, and the combination of his enemies against him for it,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The universal resort of people to him from all parts to be healed, and the relief they all found with him,* ver. 7—12. 3. *His ordaining his twelve apostles to be attendants on him, and the preachers of his gospel,* ver. 13—21. 4. *His answer to the blasphemous cavil of the scribes, who imputed his power to cast out devils, to a confederacy with the prince of the devils,* ver. 22—30. 5. *His owning his disciples for his nearest and dearest relations,* ver. 31—35.

1. AND [a] he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. 2. [b] And they watched him whether he would heal him on the sabbath-day; that they might accuse him. 3. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, [d] Stand forth. 4. And he saith unto them, [d] Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. 5. And when he had looked round about on them with [e] anger, being grieved for the [f] hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, [g] Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. 6. ¶ [h] And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took council with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him. 7. But [i] Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from [k] Galilee followed him, and from [l] Judea, 8. And from Jerusalem, and *from* [m] Idumea, and [n] *from* beyond Jordan; and they about [o] Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him. 9. And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him [p] because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. 10. For he had healed many; insomuch that they * pressed upon him for [q] to touch him, as many as had [r] plagues. 11. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, [s] fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. 12. And [t] he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

a Mat. 12. 9—14. Luke 6. 6—11.
b Ps. 37. 32. & 38. 12. Luke 13. 14. John 9. 16. Luke 11. 53, 54. & 20. 20. & 14. 1.
c Dan. 6. 10. Phil. 1. 14.
d Ch. 2. 27, 28. Luke 13. 14—17. & 14. 3—6.
e Ps. 69. 9. Eph. 4. 26. Deut. 32. 21. Judg. 10. 16.
f Or *blindness.* Is. 6. 9, 10. & 42. 18—20. & 48. 4. Zech. 7. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
g 1 Kin. 13. 6. Ps. 33. 9.
h Mat. 12. 13, 14. & 22. 16. Eccl. 4. 4. Prov. 27. 4. Ps. 109. 4. John 10. 32.
i Mat. 10. 23. & 12. 15. & 4 25. Gen. 49. 10. Exod. 1. 12.
k Mat. 4. 12—16. Josh. 13. 29—31. & 19. 10—39.
l Josh. xv. & 18. 28.
m Gen. 36. 8, 31 Num. 34. 3. Ezek. xxxv.
n Num. 32. 33—38 Josh. 13. 8—27.
o Josh. 19. 28, 29. Is. xxiii. Ezek. xxvi—xxviii. Ps. 45. 12. & 87. 4.
p Is. 42. 2. John 6. 15.
* Or *rushed.*
q Mat. 8. 15. & 9. 21. Acts 5. 15. & 19. 12.
r Or *scourges.* Heb. 12. 6. Meaning diseases of a grievous kind.
s Ch. 1. 24. & 5. 7. Luke 4. 41 Acts 16. 17.
t Ps. 50. 16. Acts 16. 18. ch. 1. 25, 34. Luke 4. 41. Mat. 12. 16.

Verses 1—12. We see here Christ dispensing his miraculous cures.

1. In the synagogue on the sabbath-day, he healed a man who

had a withered hand. He knew the malignity of his enemies, and that from such a deed of mercy they would seek to raise an accusation against him as a sabbath-breaker. He therefore first put a question to them for their determination, whether it was lawful on the sabbath-day to do an act of mercy, or to do evil, by neglecting it; to contribute to man's health and ease, or to let him languish, perhaps die, for want of assistance? The question answered itself; but they resolved not to admit the conviction, and in sullen silence held their peace. With indignation looking round upon them, grieved and displeased at their wilful obstinacy and hardness of heart, Jesus will not suffer their malevolence to prevent his works of grace; therefore in the face of the congregation he bids the lame man stretch out his hand, and instantly it was restored to perfect strength and soundness. *Note*, (1.) Deeds of mercy and charity are ever pleasing to God, and no day unseasonable for them. (2.) They who are obstinate in error and unbelief, will be convinced by no arguments. (3.) Jesus looks still with indignation upon the hard-hearted sinner; and if he doth not now tremble under his frowns, he must quickly be consumed under his wrath. (4.) It is a grief to the Saviour, and all who are his people, when they behold men wilfully sinning against their own mercies. (5.) If people will be offended at our well-doing, we must not be concerned about their censures. (6.) He who bids us stretch out the arms of faith and prayer, must himself minister the ability. In vain are gospel calls, without the effectual power of gospel grace.

2. By the sea side, whither he withdrew to shelter himself from the malice of his exasperated foes, who were now consulting his destruction, he liberally dispensed his cures to the multitudes, who resorted to him for healing from all the regions round about; till at last he was constrained to go into a boat, and put off a little from the shore: such crowds of diseased persons thronging upon him, in the confidence that could they but touch him, it would be sufficient to heal them of the most inveterate plagues. Even the devils, who dwelt in many, whose bodies they had possessed, no sooner saw him, than they were forced to prostrate themselves before him, confessing his divine power and Godhead, and owning him as the Messiah. But, to avoid the least appearance of receiving a testimony from them of his mission and character, lest his enemies should suggest there was a confederacy between him and them, he sealed up their lips in silence, and left his own works to speak his glory, enjoining the same silence on all whom he had healed. *Note*, (1.) It is grievous to think, that men should ever deny that divinity of our Lord, which even devils confessed. (2.) We never should seek the applause of men; it is enough that our works testify for us.

13. ¶ [u] And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him. 14. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, 15. And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: 16. And [x] Simon he surnamed Peter; 17. And [y] James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, [z] The sons of thunder: 18. And [a] Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and [b] Matthew, and [c] Thomas, and [d] James the *son* of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and [f] Simon the Canaanite,

u Mat. 10. 1—4. ch. 6. 7. Luke 6. 12—16. & 9. 1. John 15. 16. Acts 1. 24. & 14. 23. Gal. 1. 1. This calling was prior to their mission, mentioned Mat. x.
x Mat. 16. 18. John 1. 42.
y Ch. 1. 19, 20. & 5. 37. & 9. 2. & 10. 35. & 14. 33.
z Is. 58. 1. Hos. 8. 1.
a John 1. 40, 43, 45. & 6. 5, 8. & 14. 8.
b Mat. 9. 9. ch. 2. 14. Luke 5. 27.
c John 11. 16. & 20. 26—29. & 21. 2. Acts 13. 1.
d Ch. 6. 3. Acts 15. 13. & 21. 18. Gal. 1. 19. & 2. 9. Jam. 1. 1.
e Mat. 10. 3. Luke 6. 16. John 14. 22. Acts 1. 13. Jude 1
f Mat. 10. 4. Luke 6. 15. Acts 1. 13.

19. And [g] Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went † into an house. 20. ¶ And the multitude cometh together again, so that [h] they could not so much as eat bread. 21. And when his [i] friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, [k] He is beside himself.

g Luke 6. 16. ch. 14. 10, 11, 42—45. Mat. 26. 14—16, 46—50. & 27. 3—5. John 6. 70, 71. & 12. 4—6. & 13. 18—30. & 18. 1—12. Acts 1. 16—20.
† Or *home*.
h Ch. 6. 31. John 4. 34.
i Or *kinsmen*. John 7. 3—10.
k John 10. 20. Acts 26. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 13. 2 Kin. 9. 11.

Verses 13—21. We have here,

1. The ordination of the twelve apostles. Going up into a mountain, he called to him, as the sovereign dispenser of his own gifts, whom he would from among his professed disciples, and they immediately came to him. Twelve of them he selected to be his constant attendants, to be witnesses of his doctrine, life, and miracles, and to preach his gospel. Their names we had before; but the title given to the sons of Zebedee, Mark particularly mentions: they were called *Boanerges*, sons of thunder; either from the loudness of their voice, the vehemence of their address, or the powerful energy which should accompany their preaching. John, whose epistles breathe nothing but love, was one of them; and it would seem thereby to be intimated, that nothing acts so powerfully and forcibly upon the sinner's heart, as the doctrines of the rich love and free grace of God in Jesus Christ. These twelve the Lord was pleased to invest with miraculous powers, to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils, in confirmation of the doctrines they were to teach. And having thus appointed them their office, Christ retired with them into a house for refreshment; and they henceforward attended him as his peculiar family, and continued in the greatest intimacy with him during his abode upon earth. *Note*, The Saviour's choice is sovereign, and none but those whom he particularly calls, can be empowered to go forth in his name.

2. No sooner was he known to be in the house at Capernaum, than the multitude assembled, eager to hear him; and though he and his disciples had scarce time for necessary refreshment, yet he is ready to instruct them. Such incessant labours, without respite, excited the concern of some of his friends, who could not help thinking his zeal carried him too far, and that he would *faint* with fatigue and want of repose. They came therefore to persuade him to desist for a while, lest he should impair his health by such uninterrupted toils. Perhaps some might think his intellects disturbed, and would fain constrain him to come in and rest himself. *Note*, (1.) Faithful ministers will sometimes find as great trials from the mistaken affection of their friends, as from the avowed opposition of their enemies. (2.) Fervent zeal is often branded with madness by those who never felt the love of immortal souls; *but if we be beside ourselves, it is to God*, 2 Cor. v. 13.

22. ¶ And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, [l] He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. 23. And he called them unto *him*, and said unto them in [m] parables, [n] How can Satan cast out Satan? 24. And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. 26. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. 27. No man can [o] enter

l Mat. 9. 34. & 10. 25. & 12. 24. Luke 11. 15. John 7. 20. & 8. 48, 52. & 10. 20 Ps. 22. 6. & 69. 20.
m Ps. 49. 4. Mat. 13. 3. 10—53, &c.
n Mat. 12. 25—30. Luke 11. 17—23. What tends to ruin Satan's kingdom, can never be from him as the author.
o Is. 49. 24—26. Mat. 12. 29. Luke 11. 21. Eph. 6. 12. John 16. 11. 1 John 3. 8. Gen. 3. 15.

into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. 28. [p] Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: 29. But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: 30. [q] Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

p Mat. 12. 31, 32. Luke 12. 10. 1 Sam. 2. 25. Mat. 11. 19. & 13. 55. John 7. 12, 15. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 1 John 5. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 9.

q Ver. 22. Mat. 9. 34. & 10. 25. & 12. 24. Luke 11. 15. John 7. 20. & 8. 48, 52. & 10. 20.

Verses 22—30 That he did cast out devils from them that were possessed, was evident. To evade the force of the miracles therefore, we have here,

1. The cavil raised by the Scribes and Pharisees who came down from Jerusalem. They pretended he was in compact with Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, and derived this power from him.

2. Christ confutes their suggestion, and solemnly warns them of the unpardonable guilt they brought hereby upon their souls. It was as absurd and self-contradictory to suppose that Satan would cast out Satan, to confirm doctrines directly tending to destroy his power over the souls of men, as to suppose that a kingdom or a house, divided against itself, can stand, or be established by intestine factions and civil wars. The power which Jesus exerted over the fiends of darkness, was like that which the conqueror exercises over the vanquished, when he enters the fortress, binds the prisoner, and spoils his substance: Satan never would quit his hold, unless compelled. Evident therefore it was, that Christ came not as his associate, but as his destroyer. To impute, therefore, his miracles to diabolical agency, was such wilful obstinacy and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, by whose powerful operations these miracles were wrought, that though all other sin might be forgiven, this was eternally unpardonable, and would expose them to everlasting destruction, as no other means of conviction or recovery would be ever afforded them.

31. ¶ [r] There came then his brethren and his mother, and standing without, sent unto him, calling him. 32. And the multitude sat about him; and they said unto him, Behold, [s] thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. 33. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? 34. And he looked round about on them who sat about him, and said, [t] Behold my mother and my brethren! 35. For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.*

r Mat. 12. 46—50. Luke 8. 19—21.

s Mat. 13. 55. ch. 6. 3. John 7. 3, 5. with Deut. 33. 9.

t Luke 8. 21. Mat. 12. 49, 50. Song 3. 11. & 4. 8—10. & 5. 2. Ps. 22. 22. Heb. 2. 11, 12. Rom. 8. 29. Mat. 25. 40, 45. John 15. 14.

* This is doubtless prophetically intended as a scriptural protest against the worship paid by many to the Virgin Mary.

Verses 31—35. Perhaps these were the friends, ver. 20, 21. who wanted to lay hold on him, or they got his mother and brethren to join them; and perceiving him still go on discoursing, made another effort to call him off. Though the crowd sat so thick around him that they could not come near him, they conveyed to him, however, by some of the multitude, their desire to speak with him; but he was too well employed to be diverted from it; and therefore instead of paying any regard to his mother or brethren in this case, he turned to those around him professing a regard for them like that due to a mother or brethren, and declaring those to be his nearest and dearest relations who truly believed, and heartily obeyed the revealed will of God. *Note*, (1.) How great is the folly, as well as idolatry of the Romish church in worshipping the virgin, as if she could command her Son now he is in heaven, when even in the days of his flesh she was judged so unfit to advise him? (2.) When we are engaged in the work of Jesus, and in the way of duty, nothing must divert us from the service.

CHAP. IV.—anno domini, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The parable of the seed, and the four sorts of ground,* ver. 1—9. *with the exposition of it,* ver. 10—20. *and the application of it,* ver. 21—25. 2. *The parable of the seed growing gradually, but insensibly,* ver. 26—29. 3. *The parable of the grain of mustard-seed, and a general account of Christ's parables,* ver. 30—34. 4. *The miracle of Christ's sudden stilling a storm at sea,* ver. 35—41.

1. AND [a] he began again to teach by the sea-side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he [b] entered into a ship, and sat in the sea: and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. 2. And he taught them many things [c] by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine, 3. Hearken; Behold, there went out † a sower to sow: 4. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some † fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. 5. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: 6. But, when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. 7. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. 8. And other fell on good ground, [d] and did yield fruit that sprang up, and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. 9. And he said unto them, [d] He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. 10. ¶ And [e] when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. 11. And he said unto them, [f] Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them [g] that are without, all *these* things are done in parables: 12. [h] That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them. 13. And he said unto them, [i] Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? 14. ¶ [k] The sower soweth the word. 15.

a Mat. 13. 11—23. Luke 8. 4—15.

b Luke 5. 3. Mat. 13. 2.

c Mat. xiii. & 12. 43—45. & 18. 23—34. & 20. 1—15. & 21. 28—44. & 22. 1—14. & 24. 43—51. & 25. 1—30. Luke xiii—xix.

† Christ is the sower; his gospel truths the seed; careless hearers the way-side; Satan and his agents the fowls; professors affected, but not changed, in heart, the stony ground; trouble and persecution the scorching sun; carnal cares the thorns; renewed hearts the good ground: their different degrees of grace and good works, their fruit.

d Mat. 11. 15. & 13. 9. Luke 8. 8. & 9. 44. Is. 55. 3. Ps. 50. 7. Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29. & 3. 6, 13, 22.

e Mat. 13. 10. Luke 9. 18. Prov. 4. 7. & 2. 1—7. & 13. 20.

f Mat. 13. 11. & 11. 25. & 16. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 18—31. & 2. 10—16.

g 1 Cor. 5. 12. Col. 4. 5. 1 Thes. 4. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 7.

h Mat. 13. 14, 15. Luke 8. 10. John 12. 37—41. Acts 28. 25—27. Rom. 11. 8. with Is. 6. 9, 10. Jer. 5. 21. Is. 44. 18.

i 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. Heb. 5. 12, 13. Mat. 15. 16. & 16. 8, 9. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

k Mat. 13. 37. ch. 1. 14. Luke 8. 1 Eph. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 1 23, 25.

And these are [l] they by the way-side, where the word is sown; but, when they have heard, [m] Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. 16. And these are [n] they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17. And [o] have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended. 18. And [p] these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, 19. And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. 20. And [q] these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, some thirty fold some sixty, and some an hundred.

l Is. 6. 9, 10. & 53. 1. Luke 8. 12. Mat. 20. 16. & 22. 14.

m Job 1. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 2. 11. & 4. 3, 4.

n Mat. 13. 20, 21. Luke 8. 13. Is. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31, 32. ch. 6. 20. John 5. 35. Acts 8. 13.

o Ver. 5. John 15. 2—5. Job 27. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 10. Gal. 6. 12. Mat. 11. 6. Song 1. 5, 6. with Job 19. 28.

p Mat. 13. 22. Luke 8. 14. Mat. 19. 23. Luke 21. 34. Prov. 23. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10, 17. Jer. 4. 3.

q Luke 8. 15. John 15. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Rom. 7. 4. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. Col. 1. 6—11. & 2. 2. with Gen. 26. 12

Verses 1—20. For the convenience of being heard by the vast multitudes who attended him, our Lord again returns to the sea-shore; and, entering into a boat, sat down and taught this great and attentive congregation. Preaching to them the doctrines of truth under parables drawn from familiar objects. We have,

1. The parable of the sower, which represents the different effects of the gospel word upon the hearts of men, Mat. xiii. 3. He demands attention, ver. 3. for all who would understand must give diligence, and well consider what they hear. The parable itself was plain, but even the twelve were dull of apprehension, and understood it not; but when they were retired with the rest of the disciples, they desired of Jesus the explanation of it: to which he graciously condescends, informing them of the distinguished grace bestowed on them whilst others were left to the blindness of their hearts; yet wondering withal at their wanting an explanation of what was so plain, ver. 13. *Note*, (1.) The human understanding is strangely dark in spiritual concerns: the plainest truths of God's word to the natural man are utterly unintelligible. (2.) It is a distinguishing act of grace when God is pleased to remove the veil from the heart, and opens the understanding to understand the Scriptures. (3.) The more we are acquainted with our own stupid ignorance in the things of God, the more thankful we shall be for divine teaching.

2. The explication Christ gives is this. *The seed* is *the word of God;* himself, and all his faithful labourers, are the sowers. The hearers are the soil; to many of them the word preached doth not profit, not being mixed with faith; but few, comparatively speaking, effectually receive it, so as to profit thereby. Some are careless and inattentive: the seed sown doth not at all abide upon their hearts; Satan, by some vanity, amusement, or avocation, instantly snatches it away. Others for a moment hear it with joy, their passions are affected, but their hearts are unchanged, therefore, no sooner is the impression worn off, than they are like blasted corn which withereth away. Some are so engrossed with the riches and cares of the world, the eager pursuits of its honours, pleasures, or esteem, that these, by degrees, eat out the life of their profession, carnalize their souls, and make them earthly, sensual. Thus, for the perishing trifles of time, they lose all the glories of eternity. A few, amidst the general apostasy, with patient perseverance endure; bring forth the gracious fruits of faith and holiness, in measure according as God is pleased to dispense to every man his gifts.

21. ¶ [r] And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? 22. [s] For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. 23. [t] If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. 24. And he saith unto them, [u] Take heed what ye hear: [x] with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more be given. 25. [y] For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. 26. ¶ And he said, So is the [z] kingdom of God, as if a man should cast [a] seed into the ground; 27. And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should [b] spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. 28. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. 29. But [c] when the fruit is † brought forth, immediately [d] he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. 30. ¶ And he said, [e] Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? 31. *It is* like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: 32. But when it is sown, it [f] groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it. 33. [g] And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*. 34. But [h] without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

r Mat. 5. 15. Luke 8. 16. & 11. 33. & 19. 13. 1 Cor. 12. 7.

s Mat. 10. 26, 27. Luke 12. 2, 3. Acts 4. 20. 1 John 1. 1—3. Job 12. 22. & 6. 10. Ps. 40. 9, 10.

t Deut. 29. 4. see ver. 9.

u Acts 17. 11. 1 John 4. 1. Luke 9. 44. Prov. 19. 27.

x Mat. 7. 2. Luke 6. 38. 2 Cor. 9. 6.

y Mat. 13. 12. & 25. 29. Luke 8. 18. & 19. 26. John 15. 2. Rev. 22. 12. Ezek. 46. 16, 17

z Mat. 3. 2. & 4. 17. & 13. 24—52.

a Ch. 1. 14. Luke 8. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 23, 25. ver. 14. or 1 John 3. 9. & 5. 18.

b Ps. 1. 3. & 92. 13, 14. Prov. 4. 18. Job 17. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 18. & 4. 16.

c Eph. 4. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

† Or *ripe.*

d Mat. 13. 30, 39. Is. 57. 1, 2. & 51. 11.

e Mat. 13. 31, 32. Is. 2. 2, 3. Mic. 4. 1, 2. Luke 13 18, 19. Ps. 72. 16—19. & 22. 27—31. & lxxii, lxvii, lxxxvii, xlv, xlvii.

f Gen. 22. 17, 18. Is. xxxv, xlix, liv, lv, lx, lxi. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20—23. & xiv. Mal. 1. 11. Mat. 8. 11. & 28. 18, 20. ch. 16. 15. Acts ii—xix. Rom. xi. Rev. 11. 15. Ps. 80. 8—11.

g Mat. 13. 34, 35. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. Heb. 5. 11, 12. John 16. 12.

h See ver. 11. Luke 24. 27, 45.

Verses 21—34. Our Lord proceeds to teach them under other parabolic representations.

1. By the use we make of a candle when lighted up, Christ informs them what he justly expected of them, even to shine as lights in the world; communicating to others the truths they in secret learned of him, and keeping back nothing of the whole counsel of God. Whatever gifts of nature or grace we enjoy, they are to be employed for God's glory and the good of mankind; and not through love of ease, or false shame, concealed or neglected. It is not enough that we walk in the light ourselves, we must let our light also shine before men.

2. He warns them of the danger of negligence in improving

the means and mercies they enjoyed. They are called upon to hear, and to take heed what they hear, that they may not let the word slip, nor be deluded; but by a careful use of their measure of the gift of grace to increase their store, God being ready to communicate more abundant knowledge, to such attentive hearers, and to give farther assistances of spiritual light and strength to those who employ aright in the service of Christ and immortal souls the portion they have received, whilst he punishes the negligent and inattentive, by withdrawing from them the privileges wherewith he had favoured them.

3. He describes the progress of his gospel in the world, and of the seed of divine grace in the heart by the growth of corn, which, though unseen for a while, and covered with earth, shoots up, increases insensibly till the harvest, and then produces the ripe ear. Thus the ministry of Jesus at first was scarce perceived, but the seed he sowed afterwards sprang up, continues through his word and Spirit still to grow, and shall shortly fill the face of the whole world with fruit. And so also in every heart, where the seed of eternal life is sown by any minister of God, it grows without his care, when perhaps he is removed far away, or sleeps in death; it is watered with the dew of heavenly influences; and, though the manner of the Spirit's operation in the divine change which is wrought is mysterious, as the manner how the corn vegetates, yet the effects are visible, the soul is renewed day by day; the seed of grace, from small beginnings, shoots insensibly upwards till the time of harvest, when the ripe corn is gathered in, and perfected in holiness the saints of God enter their eternal rest. Lord, quicken this seed sown in our souls day by day!

4. Much to the same purpose as the former, is the parable of the grain of mustard seed, and represents, (1.) The progress of the gospel; which, from the smallest beginnings of the ministry of twelve poor fishermen, hath spread through the earth, and shall in due time reach from pole to pole, when all the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ. (2.) The work of grace upon the heart. At first, like a grain of mustard-seed, it is scarce perceptible; but increasing with the increase of God, the herb grows into a tree, and meet to be transplanted among the cedars of glorified saints in the paradise of God.

5. He added many other like parables, that by line upon line, in this familiar manner, he might communicate spiritual truths under material objects; and without a parable spoke he not unto them. They who desired to understand might easily do it; and where difficulties arose, he was always ready, when alone, to explain them to the disciples; whilst those who superficially heard, neglected, and forgot the word preached, were justly left in their native blindness and ignorance.

35. ¶ [i] And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. 36. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him ‡ even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37. [k] And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, [l] asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, [m] Master, carest thou not that we perish? 39. And he arose, and [n] rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40. And he said unto them, [o] Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 41. And they [p] feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

i Mat. 8. 18, 23. Luke 8. 22. ch. 3. 9. Is. 42. 4.

‡ In the ship from which he had taught.

k Mat. 8. 24—27. Luke 8. 23—25.

l John 11. 14, 15. Ps. 44. 22, 23. & 10. 1. & 22. 2. Is. 45. 15.

m Mat. 23. 8—10. John 20. 17. 2 Chr. 14. 11. & 20. 12. Ps. 6. 3, 4. & 69. 1, 2. & 130. 1, 2. Is. 63. 15.

n Ps. 29. 10. & 93. 4. & 104. 7. & 107. 28, 29. & 102. 13. Exod. 14. 21.

o Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 1, 2. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7.

p Ch. 5. 33. Luke 8. 25. Mat. 8. 27. Ps. 89. 9. & 65. 7. & 107. 20.

Verses 35—41. No sooner had Christ finished his discourse, and dismissed the people, than he bids the disciples cross the lake, having work that called him to the other side. Jesus was never weary in well-doing, neither should we.

1. The disciples, without hesitation, obey; ready to follow their Master wherever he led them; and accordingly they set sail in the same vessel which had been his pulpit, and a number of other boats accompanied them. For though the multitude departed, those whose hearts were affected with what they had heard, chose to cleave to the Lord and follow him whithersoever he went, by land or by water, *Note*, (1.) They who are Christ's disciples indeed, will never leave nor forsake him, whatever dangers may threaten. (2.) If Christ be with us, we may boldly launch forth; his presence and blessing will be our support and comfort.

2. A dreadful and sudden storm brought them into the most imminent danger; and, covered with waves, and full almost of water, the boat was ready to founder. *Note*, The church and every faithful soul in it, hath at times been brought into the most perilous circumstances: nothing hath kept either from sinking but this, that Christ was there.

3. He slept securely in the stern on a pillow, tired with the labours of the day: the storm that drove the disciples to their wits' end, seemed but to rock him faster to repose. *Note*, When we are in our deepest distresses, Christ sometimes appears to disregard our danger, as if he slept, inattentive to our cries; but he sees, he hears, and will be found a very present help in trouble.

4. The disciples in a fright awake him with their cries; *Master, carest thou not that we perish?* art thou indifferent about our danger; and wilt thou suffer us to be drowned? Their application to him bespoke their faith, but their address breathed the language of impatience and dishonourable fear. Such a mixture of grace and corruption often appears in the best of men.

5. The Lord, whom winds and waves obey, arose; and at his commanding word, *Peace, be still*, the billows in a moment ceased to roar, the swelling sea subsided, the winds were hushed, not a breath of air dimpled the ocean, not a whisper broke the solemn silence. When our unruly passions are like *the troubled sea which cannot rest*, Isa. lvii. 20. the voice of Jesus, heard by faith, subdues their violence, and calms their rage. Under deep afflictions and temptations, when we are ready to abandon ourselves to despair, he silences our fears, and stills our griefs; speaking that inward peace to the conscience, that in the midst of sorrows can make us rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

6. He rebukes their unbelieving fears. *Why are ye so fearful?* so unnecessarily, so inordinately fearful? *How is it that ye have no faith?* not in exercise at least: though they had faith in him in general, in this particular their fears prevailed. How often do we under our trials deserve the same rebuke?

7. The miracle filled the mariners with most reverential fear of the majesty in which Jesus now appeared, and with amazement they observed to each other, that he must be surely more than man, whom stormy winds and raging waves so instantly obey.

CHAP V.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's casting the legion of devils out of the man possessed, and suffering them to enter into the swine,*

ver. 1—20. *Christ's healing the woman with the bloody issue in the way as he was going to raise Jairus' daughter to life,* ver. 21—43. *These three miracles we had the story of before,* Mat. viii. 28, &c. ix. 18, &c. *but more fully related here.*

1. AND [z] they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. 2. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there [b] met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,* 3. Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: 4. [c] Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him. 5. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and [d] cutting himself with stones. 6. But when he saw Jesus afar off, [e] he ran and worshipped him, 7. And cried with a loud voice, and said, [f] What have I do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? [g] I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. 8. For he said unto him, [h] Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit. 9. And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* † Legion: for we are many. 10. And ‡ he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. 11. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of [i] swine feeding. 12. [k] And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. 13. And forthwith Jesus [l] gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine; and the herd [m] ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea. 14. [n] And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. 15. And they come to Jesus, and see him [o] that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 16. And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine. 17. ¶ [p] And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. 18. And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil [q] prayed him that he might be with him. 19. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, [r] Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. 20. And he departed, and began to publish in ‖ Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

Verses 1—20. What a miserable creature is man, when left to the power of the devil! What a mercy that Jesus is come to destroy the works of the devil, and to take the prey from the mighty. An eminent instance of this here appears. We have,

1. The wretched case of a poor demoniac, driven by an unclean spirit to dwell among the tombs: a terror to himself, and to all who approached him; so raging that none could sooth him; so strong no fetters could bind him. Though it had been often attempted, he broke the bands in sunder, and fled; living in the mountains, and in the tombs; uttering horrid yellings, and cutting himself with the sharp stones, till the blood gushed out. *Note,* (1.) We have here a lively emblem of the natural man; his mind and conscience are defiled; his passions drive him furiously on, and will be restrained by no fetters of God's law; under the power of Satan he is hurried to the excess of riot, madly wounding his own soul by sin, and dangerous to all around him; insensible to every fearful consequence, and wilful in disobedience. (2.) Solitude gives peculiar advantage to the temptations of *an unclean spirit.*

2. No sooner was Jesus disembarked, than the man in whom the devil was, ran and worshipped him; the wicked spirit being awed by his presence, or his power was now suspended. Matthew says they were two; perhaps Mark mentions one only, as being the more fierce, and to him the Lord directed his discourse.

3. On beholding so pitiable an object, Jesus bid the unclean spirit depart, nor could his expostulation or entreaty prevail; though in the greatest dread and horror the devil addressed him, acknowledging his divine power and glory; importunately begging, since he could have no interest in him, he might have nothing to do with him; and that he would not send him into the place of torment, and compel him to retire from the world to the prison of hell before the day of final judgment. *Note,* (1.) The confession of the devil was orthodox, but it is not a form of sound words, but the work of the Holy Ghost upon the heart that can avail to our salvation. (2.) When Christ comes to visit our souls, he casts out the unclean spirit, gives a new heart, and puts a right spirit within us.

4. To show his own power over the fiends of darkness, Christ demanded the name of this evil spirit, and was answered, *My name is Legion, for we are many.* A legion of Roman soldiers some reckon at six thousand, whilst others increase it to more than twelve: and this intimates the immense numbers of these fallen spirits which war against the souls of men; their vast power, regular order, and unanimity: what need then have we, who wrestle with these principalities and powers, to put on the whole armour of God, and to be continually looking up for the strength of our God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day.

5. Since they must quit their present hold, the devils earnestly besought him not to expel them from that heathen country, if he dispossessed them from Judea. And there being a herd of swine feeding near the place, they desired permission to enter those unclean animals; hoping by destroying them, to prejudice

a Mat. 8. 28—34. Luke 8. 26—40.

b 1 John 3. 8. Rom. 16. 20. ch. 3. 27. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6. Rev. 20. 1, 2.

*St Matthew mentions two persons possessed with devils. It is probable that one of them was of greater note in the country, or was more remarkable for the effects of his possession by the unclean spirit (ver. 4.) than the other; on which account St Mark and St Luke speak only of one, and wholly omit the mention of the other.—*Whitby.*

c Luke 8. 29. ch. 9. 18, 20, 22.

d 1 Kin. 18. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44.

e Phil. 2. 10, 11. Ps. 72. 9. Acts 16. 17.

f Mat. 8. 29. Luke 8. 28. ch. 1. 24.

g 1 Kin. 22. 16. Mat. 26. 63. Acts 19. 13.

h Ch. 1. 25. & 9. 25.

† About 6000 or 7000.

‡ The chief devil.

i Luke 8. 32. Mat. 8. 30. Lev. 11. 7. Deut. 14. 8. Is. 65. 4. & 66. 3.

k Rev. 12. 12. & 20. 1, 2. Job 1. 11. & 2. 5.

l Mat. 8. 32. Luke 8. 32, 33. 1 Kin. 22. 22. Job 1. 12. & 2. 6. Rev. 20. 7.

m John 8. 44. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

n Mat. 8. 33. Luke 8. 34—36 John 10. 12, 13.

o Is. 49. 24—26. 1 John 3. 8. Rom. 16. 20. Luke 8. 35, 36. Mat. 8. 34.

p Deut. 5. 25. Luke 8. 37. Mat. 8. 34. 1 Kin. 17. 18. Luke 5. 8. Gen. 25. 34. Acts 16. 39. Job 21. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. with ver. 7. ch. 1. 24.

q Luke 8. 38, 39. & 23. 42. Ps. 110. 12. & 16. 1. & 22. 19—22.

r Ps. 50. 14. John 4. 29. Ps. ciii—cviii, xviii, cxvi, cxlv. Is. 63. 7—13. & 38. 9—20. Jon. 2. 1—10.

‖ A country on the east of the sea of Galilee.

the people against Jesus, and to gratify their own delight in mischief; and for wise and just reasons Christ permitted their request; when instantly the devils seized the whole herd, about two thousand; and, filling them with madness, hurried them down a precipice into the lake, where they perished in the waters.

6. The keepers, who fled affrighted, spread through all the country the amazing story of the cure of the demoniac, and the destruction of the swine. On which a vast concourse of people assembled to see this strange sight; and, to their great surprise, found the man who had been possessed, and a terror to the country, now peaceably sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in the perfect exercise of his reason; and they who had been eye-witnesses of the cure reported all the circumstances concerning the recovery of the man, and the destruction of the swine. Hereupon afraid lest Jesus should punish them yet more condignly if he tarried there, and more concerned for their temporal than eternal interests, they entreated him to depart out of the country. And since they thus sinned against their own mercies, Jesus abandons them to the delusions they had chosen.

7. Though his countrymen rejected Christ, the poor man who was cured, would fain have followed him; but Jesus bid him rather return, and bear testimony to the miracle of grace he had experienced, and awaken thereby the concern of his friends to seek after the Lord, who had done so great things for him. Accordingly the man obeyed his command; and, transported with gratitude, published every where in that country what Jesus had done for him, to the great astonishment of all who heard the story. *Note*, (1.) They who know the blessing of Christ's presence, long to be ever near him, and cannot but lament if their lot be cast among the tents of Kedar, where his gospel hath no place. (2.) They who are restored by Jesus to their right mind, from that moment begin to live to his glory, and to speak his praises. (3.) What the Lord doth for the sinful soul are great things indeed, for which we can never enough adore and thank him.

21. ¶ And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, [s] much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea. 22. [t] And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, 23. And besought him greatly, saying, [u] My little daughter lieth at the point of death:* [x] *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. 24. And *Jesus* went with him; [y] and much people followed him, and thronged him. 25. ¶ And a certain woman, which had an [z] issue of blood twelve years, 26. And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was [a] nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, 27. When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and [b] touched his garment. 28. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. 29. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

s Mat. 9. 1. Luke 8. 40. ch. 1. 45. Gen. 49 10.

t Mat. 9. 18—25. Luke 8. 41—56. & 13. 14. Acts 13. 15.

u Ezek. 18. 4. Job 30. 23. Heb. 9. 27.

* Is at the last extremity.

x Mat. 8. 15. John 4. 47, 49, 50. ch. 6. 5, 6.

y With John 4. 50. & 11. 6, 7. Mat. 8. 13. & 15. 28. Mat. 4. 23—25. & 8. 1. & 12. 13. & 15. 30.

z Lev. 15. 25. John 5. 5. Luke 8. 43—48.

a Jon. 1. 13. Ps. 108. 12.

b Exod. 15. 26. Ps. 147. 3. Mal. 4. 2. 2 Kin. 13. 21. ch. 6. 56. Acts 5. 15. & 19. 12. with John 14. 12.

30. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that [c] virtue had gone out of him,† turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? 31. And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 32. And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. 33. But the woman [d] fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. 34. And he said unto her, [e] Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

c Luke 6. 19. & 5. 15. John 1. 16.

† The cures wrought by Christ are ascribed to the divine virtue dwelling in him; whence he so often declares, that the Father dwelling in him did the works. — *Whitby.*

d Ch. 4. 41. Luke 8. 47. Ps. 89. 7. Josh. 7. 19. Ps. 116. 12. & 66. 16. & 103. 2—5.

e Mat. 15. 28. & 9. 22. Luke 7. 47—50. & 17. 19. & 18. 42. & 8. 48. Mark 9. 23. & 10. 52.

Verses 21—34. Since the Gadarenes rejected him, Christ crosses the lake to Capernaum, where he expected a more welcome reception. Hereupon,

1. A ruler of the synagogue, with deepest respect, made his application to him, in behalf of his little daughter who lay a dying when he came out from his house, and was even then dead; yet such was his faith in the power of Jesus, that he was persuaded, desperate as the case appeared, he could still restore her to life and health. *Note*, The state of the sinner dead in trespasses and sins, is to human view irrecoverably desperate, but nothing is impossible with God.

2. As Jesus went with the ruler, a poor diseased woman stole a cure. Her malady discouraged her from making an open application to Jesus, and her faith persuaded her it was needless: the very touch of his garments being, in her apprehension, sufficient for her cure: even though her disorder had baffled the physicians' skill, and under their hands her pockets had not only been emptied, but her complaints aggravated. Nor was she mistaken; for no sooner had she through the crowd got near enough to touch his garments, than immediately on so doing, her disease was removed, she felt her health perfectly restored, and was retiring with wonder and thankfulness. But Jesus, who perceived the virtue which had gone out of him, for the manifestation of his own glory, and the confirmation of the poor patient's faith, turning himself, demanded who touched him? which the disciples answered with a kind of surprise and rudeness, as if, considering the crowd, such a question was very strange. But Jesus overlooked their forwardness, and casting his eyes round to discover the person he meant, the poor woman, conscious of what had passed, and trembling lest the Lord should be displeased at the manner in which she had surreptitiously obtained her cure, came and fell at his feet, declaring all that had passed. Whereupon, far from being angry, Jesus encouraged and comforted her, making honourable mention of her faith; and dismissed her not only with a cure, but with his peace and benediction, which was infinitely better. *Note*, (1.) We are generally driven to Christ by mere necessity, having in vain tried all other methods, and convinced at last that he must save us freely or we must perish. (2.) All our spiritual diseases can only be removed by the touch of faith; till virtue come out of Christ, we can have no health in ourselves. (3.) Where he works, a universal blessed change appears in all the tempers of the mind, and in the whole outward conduct and conversation. (4.) When we are discouraged with fear, at the feet of Jesus we should lay our burdens, and he will speak peace to our troubled souls.

35. ¶ [f] While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's

f Luke 8. 49—56. Mat. 9. 23—26.

house certain which said, thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? 36. As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, [g] Be not afraid, only believe. 37. And he suffered no man to follow him, save [h] Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. 38. And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and [i] them that wept and wailed greatly. 39. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? [k] the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. 40. And they [l] laughed him to scorn. But when he had [m] put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him,* and entereth in where the damsel was lying. 41. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, [n] Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. 42. [o] And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were [p] astonished with a great astonishment. 43. [q] And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

g Mat. 17. 20. ver. 23, 34. ch. 9. 23. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Is. 50. 10. Rom. 4. 17—20. John 11. 25.

h Ch. 3. 16, 17. & 9. 2. & 14. 33.

i 2 Chr. 35. 25. Jer. 9. 17. Acts 9. 39.

k John 11. 4, 11, 13. Acts 20. 10.

l Acts 17. 32. Gen. 19. 14.

m Mat. 7. 6. 1 Kin. 17. 19. 2 Kin. 4. 33. Acts 9. 40.

* That is, Peter, James and John, ver. 37. Our Saviour takes with him no more witnesses than were sufficient to confirm the fact, lest he should seem to be desirous of vain-glory.

n John 6. 63. Rom. 4. 17.

o Mal. 4. 2. Rom. 4. 17. John 5. 21. & 6. 63. Ps. 33. 9.

p Ch. 1. 27. & 4. 41. & 6. 51. & 7. 37.

q Ch. 1. 44. & 7. 36. Is. 42. 4. John 5. 41. see Mat. 8. 4. & 9. 30. Luke 5. 14.

Verses 35—43. A discouraging message met the afflicted Jairus as Jesus was now on the way with him. Tidings were brought that his daughter was dead, and his friends conclude that it was in vain to trouble Christ any further; supposing that though he cured the sick, to raise the dead was beyond his power. But,

1. Our Lord encourages the distressed parent, bids him not to give way to despondence, but *only believe*, and he should still see that death, as well as disease, was under his control. *Note*, Faith is the great preservative from all our fears; when those who are nearest and dearest to us are removed, we have a ground of abiding consolation, that we shall meet them at the resurrection of the just.

2. When he came to the house, he suffered none to enter with him but Peter, James, and John, enough to be witnesses of the miracle, with the father and mother of the child; and rebuking the excessive lamentations of those who were within, he assured them there was no real cause for them, as the damsel was not irrecoverable, as they apprehended; but though sleeping in the arms of death, he would awake her. But they, fully assured of her death, treated with derision this suggestion. Unworthy, therefore, to be witnesses of his wondrous power and grace, he put them all out, and permitting only his three disciples, and the parents of the damsel, to be with him, he went in where the child lay, took her by the hand, and bid her *rise;* when instantly her spirit returned, she arose, being about twelve years old, and, to the exceeding amazement of her parents, walked about in perfect health; and to show she still retained her former animal life, and that her appetite was restored with her health, he bid them give her something to eat. *Note*, (1.) We are dead in trespasses and sins, as this child, till, by the gospel-word awakened, Jesus imparts the effectual power, and enables us to arise at his command to newness of life. (2.) When Christ gives spiritual life, it must be daily fed in the use of those means of grace, whereby he continues to minister strength and nourishment to the soul.

3. He gave them all a strict charge not to divulge this miracle. He knew how his growing fame would exasperate his enemies, and as his hour was not yet come, he used every prudent means to preserve his life, till he had finished the work which was given him to do.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

Here is, 1. *Christ contemned by his countrymen,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The power he gave his apostles over unclean spirits,* ver. 7—13. 3. *A strange notion which Herod and others had of Christ, upon which occasion, we have the story of the martyrdom of John Baptist,* ver. 14—29. 4. *Christ's retirement into a desert place with his disciples; the crowds that followed him thither to receive instruction from him, and his feeding five thousand of them with five loaves and two fishes,* ver. 30—44. 5. *Christ's walking upon the sea to his disciples, and the abundance of cures he wrought on the other side the water,* ver. 45—56.

1. AND [a] he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. 2. And [b] when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? 3. [c] Is not this the carpenter, * the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. 4. But Jesus said unto them, [d] A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. 5. [e] And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them.* 6. And [f] he marvelled because of their unbelief. [g] And he went round about the villages, teaching.

a Mat. 13, 54—58. Luke 4. 16—30.

b Mat. 7. 28. ch. 1. 22. Luke 4. 32. John 6. 30, 42, 52. & 7. 15.

c Is. 53. 2, 3. & 49. 7. Ps. 22. 6. Mat. 11. 6. & 13. 55, 56. & 12. 46. Luke 2. 34. & 4. 22. John 6. 42, 60. Gal. 1. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 23.

* We should observe here the strict impartiality of the evangelist; and his consciousness that nothing could derogate from the dignity of his Master.—*Newcombe.*

d John 4. 44. Luke 4. 24. Mat. 13. 57. Jer. 11. 21. & 12. 6.

e Mat. 13. 58. & 17. 17, 20. ch. 9. 23. Gen. 19. 22. Is. 59. 1, 2. Heb. 4. 2. & 3. 19.

f Is. 59. 16. ch. 3. 5. Heb. 3. 18, 19.

g Mat. 4. 23. & 9. 35. Luke 4. 31, 44. & 13. 22. John 4. 43. Is. 61. 1—3. & 48. 17. Eph. 2. 17.

Verses 1—6. From Capernaum our Lord visited the place of his education, Nazareth, accompanied by his disciples. And there, as was his custom,

1. On the sabbath-day he entered into the synagogue; and from the law and the prophets preached the things concerning himself with such dignity and elocution, as quite amazed his countrymen. He had been bred among them, a carpenter by trade, without any education; his family and relations were all persons of mean and low circumstances; how he should be able to discourse with such readiness, and perform such miraculous works, they could not conceive; and yet their prejudices against him, on account of his low birth and education, prevailed over their admiration; and notwithstanding all the wonders they beheld, they disdained to be followers of a person so mean and despicable in their account. *Note*, (1.) The humiliation of Je-

sus, at which they were offended, should make him the dearer to us. (2.) If the Lord, in our nature, submitted to earn with the labour of his hands the bread he eat, let it teach us how commendable is industry, and never to despise any man because he is poor.

2. To rebuke their folly, and punish their unbelief, he reminds them how they verified that proverbial saying, *A prophet is not without honour but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house;* people ordinarily paying more respect to strangers and persons unknown, than to those with whom having been indulged in familiarity, they are ready to treat with contempt. Therefore, except healing a few sick folk, he refused to exercise his power and grace among them. Their unbelief bound up, as it were, the hands of his omnipotence; and marvelling at it, he left them, in just judgment, to the perverseness and impenitence of their hearts, carrying the glad tidings of salvation from them to the other villages of Galilee, where greater respect would be paid to his person and ministry.

7. ¶ [h] And he calleth *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by [i] two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; 8. And commanded them that they [k] should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no * money in *their* purse: 9. But *be* shod with [l] sandals; and not put on two coats. 10. And he said unto them, [m] In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. 11. [n] And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. [o] Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city. 12. And they went out and preached [p] that men should repent. 13. [q] And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

h Mat. 10. 1—13. ch. 3. 13—19. Luke 6. 13—16. & 9. 1—6.

i Exod. 4. 14. Rev. 11. 3. Mat. 18. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 1. Eccl. 4. 9, 10.

k Mat. 10. 9, 10. Luke 9. 3. & 10. 4. & 22. 35. 2 Tim. 2. 4.

* Gr. *brass money.*

l Soles buckled on the feet. Acts 12. 8.

m Mat. 10. 11—13. Luke 9. 4.

n Mat. 10. 14, 15. Luke 9. 5. & 10. 10—12. Acts 13. 51. & 18. 16. Neh. 5. 13.

o Ezek. 16. 48, 51. Luke 10. 12—15. Mat. 11. 20—24. John 15. 22—24. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31.

p Ch. 1. 4, 15. Acts 2. 38. & 3. 19. & 20. 21. Mat. 10. 7, 27. Luke 9. 2, 6. ver. 30.

q Ver. 7. Jam. 5. 14.

Verses 7—13. The twelve, having now for a while attended their Master, are here,

1. Sent forth to preach what they had learned of him; and endued with power to work miracles, and cast out devils, in confirmation of the doctrine they taught. For their mutual comfort and support they were joined in pairs, and forbid to cumber themselves with clothes or provisions; but must set off just as they were, with only their stick in their hand, the clothes on their backs, and the sandals on their feet, trusting upon divine providence for a supply of their wants during their travels. Their message would deserve and procure them a welcome. Wherever therefore they came, and were received into a house, there they must fix their quarters till they removed to another city or village. But if in any place they were refused a hospitable entertainment, and no attention was paid to their preaching, they are commanded immediately to depart, shaking off the dust of their feet, in testimony of abhorrence of their wickedness and infidelity; and not Sodom or Gomorrha, in the day of judgment, will meet so severe a doom as that city. *Note,* (1.) They who reject the calls of the gospel, perish under the most accumulated guilt. (2.) The ministers of Christ are worthy of their maintenance; and since they have renounced the world for the service of men's souls, it becomes those to whom they minister liberally to supply their wants, that they may be wholly without care, to give themselves up to the word of God and to prayer.

2. The apostles went in obedience to their Master's orders, preaching the doctrine of repentance, and calling men to turn unto the Lord, and receive his Messiah, whose kingdom was ready to appear. And in confirmation of their divine authority, they cast out devils, and miraculously healed the sick, by anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord, in token of their being restored to health. *Note,* The great end of the ministry is the conversion of men's souls. They who have not this in view, and do not see any fruit of their labours, may justly suspect they run without being sent

14. ¶ [r] And king Herod * heard *of him;* (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. 15. [s] Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. 16. [t] But when Herod heard *thereof,* he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead. 17. ¶ [u] For Herod himself had sent forth, and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. 18. For John had said unto Herod, [x] It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. 19. Therefore [y] Herodias had † a quarrel against him, and would have killed him: but she could not: 20. For Herod [z] feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and ‡ observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. 21. And when [z] [a] a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birth-day made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee; 22. And when [b] the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee. 23. And he sware unto her, [c] Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom. 24. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, [d] The head of John the Baptist. 25. And she came in straightway [e] with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of

cir. 32.

r Mat. 14. 1—12. Luke 9. 7—9. 1 Thes. 1. 8.

* Thus his courtiers and flatterers called him, though only a tetrarch, or governor of Galilee under the Romans; being a fourth part of his father's kingdom: see marg. ref.

s Mat. 16. 14. & 17. 10. ch. 8. 28. John 1. 21. Luke 9. 19.

t Luke 3. 19. & 9. 7. Mat. 14. 2. Ps. 14. 5.

cir. 30.

u Mat. 14. 3—12. & 4. 12. & 11. 2 Luke 3. 19, 20.

x Lev. 18. 6, 16. & 20. 21. Heb. 13. 4. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

y Gen. 49. 23. & 39. 12—20.

† Or *an inward grudge.*

z Ch. 11. 18. Mat. 14. 5. & 21. 26. & 13. 20. Luke 20. 6. 2 Chr. 24. 2. & 26. 5. John 5. 35. Ezek. 33. 32.

‡ Or *kept him,* or *saved him.*

cir. 32.

a Gen. 27. 41. & 40. 20. Rev. 11. 10. Mat. 14. 16. Esth. 1. 3. & 2. 18. Acts 12. 21.

b Gen. xxxiv. Num. xxv. Judg. xix. Eccl. 7. 26. Prov. ii, v, vii.

c Esth. 5. 3, 6. & 7. 3. Mat. 4. 9. Prov. 6. 2. Eccl. 5. 6.

d Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. & 12. 10. & 27. 4.

e Rom. 3. 15. Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16.

John the Baptist. 26. And the king [f] was exceeding sorry: [g] *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. 27. And [h] immediately the king sent * an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, 28. And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. 29. And when his disciples heard *of it*, [i] they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

[f] 1 Sam. 15. 30. & 26. 21. Mat. 27. 4. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

[g] Luke 7. 30. & 10. 16. John 12. 48. Prov. 29. 12.

[h] Rom. 3. 15. Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. Mat. 14. 10.

* Or *one of his guard.*

[i] 1 Kin. 13. 29 Acts 8. 2. Mat. 27. 58—61. & 14. 12. Is. 57. 2.

Verses 14—29. The fame of Jesus had by this time reached the ears of Herod. His guilty conscience suggested to him that John, whom he had murdered, was now risen from the dead, and invested with greater powers than before, perhaps to avenge his blood upon the head of his murderer. Others thought him to be Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah; others one of the ancient prophets revived; others a new prophet sent of God, like those of old; but all mistook his true character, and knew him not as the Saviour of the world. Herod, haunted with the ghosts of his injustice and cruelty, persisted in the conviction, that this was surely John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded. The narrative of which bloody transaction is related in nearly the same words as before, Mat. xiv. To what was there said, we may here farther observe,

1. How far a man may go in his convictions, without being ever effectually wrought upon. Herod was in his conscience persuaded that John was a *just man and a holy*; his whole demeanour showed the Baptist to be such, and commanded veneration. And so far many go, as to be convinced of the integrity of God's ministers, and reverence their character; to *observe* them, to attend their ministry with seriousness and constancy, to do many things that are right through their preaching; yea, to take delight in their discourses, and to feel a transient joy whilst sitting under them: and yet, like Herod, may never be divorced from their darling sins, nor their hearts at all effectually changed.

2. How commendable is fidelity! All the respect and kindness of Herod did not make John the least indulgent to his sins; he told him plainly, though a king, the guilt and danger of his state, and charged upon his conscience his lewdness, adultery, and incest in marrying his brother's wife; and such should we be, imitating this holy plainness and simplicity, neither moved by caresses, nor deterred by fear; but approving ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3. They who will be thus faithful may expect to be often severely treated. The hearts of sinners will be exasperated, and malice will drive them, like Herodias, to contrive some mischief against their reprovers, and thus to revenge the honest rebukes, which they regard as premeditated affronts.

30. ¶ [k] And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. 31. And he said unto them, [l] Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. 32. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. 33. And the people saw them departing; [m] and many knew them, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them,† and came together unto him. 34. ¶ [n] And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and [o] he began to teach them many things. 35. [p] And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed: 36. Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. 37. He answered and said unto them, [q] Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, [r] Shall we go and buy two hundred [s] pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat? 38. He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. 39. And he commanded them to make all sit down ‡ [t] by companies upon the green grass. 40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties. 41. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, [u] he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. 42. [x] And they did all eat, and were filled. 43. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes. 44. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

[k] Luke 9. 10. & 10. 17.

cir. 32.

[l] Ch. 1. 45. & 3. 7, 20. Mat. 14. 13—21. John 6. 15 Is. 42. 2. Luke 9. 10—17.

[m] Jam. 1. 19. John 6. 2. ch. 1. 45. & 2. 2. & 3. 7, 20. & 4. 1. & 5. 24. ver. 54, 55. Mat. 4. 25. & 14. 13—21. Luke 9. 10—17.

† The people were at the place before Jesus and his disciples landed.

[n] Mat. 9. 36. & 14. 14. & 15. 32. Heb. 4. 15. & 5. 2. & 2. 17. Num. 27. 17. 1 Kin. 22. 17. Jer. 23. 1. & 50. 6. Ezek. 34. 2. Zech. 10. 2.

[o] Is. 48. 17. & 54. 13. & 61. 1—3.

[p] Mat. 14. 15—21. Luke 9. 12—17. John 6. 5—21.

[q] 2 Kin. 4. 42, 43. Luke 9. 13. John 6. 6—10. Mat. 6. 33.

[r] Num. 11. 22. 2 Kin. 7. 2 & 4. 43. Mat. 15. 33. John 6. 7.

[s] The Roman penny is sevenpence halfpenny; as Mat. 18. 28. It was the value of a day's labour in harvest. Mat. 20. 2.

‡ Gr. *banquets, banquets.*

[t] 1 Cor. 14. 33, 40. 1 Kin. 10. 5.

[u] Mat. 14. 19. & 15. 36. & 26. 26. 1 Sam. 9. 15. Deut. 8. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. Luke 9. 16. John 6. 11. Rom. 14. 6. with Mat. 24. 45.

[x] Ps. 37. 16. & 23. 1. & 145. 18. Prov. 13. 25. & 6. 6. Mat. 16. 9. & 14. 20, 21. Luke 9. 17. John 6. 12—14.

Verses 30—44. The apostles having executed the commission with which their master had intrusted them, return to give him an account of their ministry and success. And blessed and happy are they who can give up this account to him with joy!

Satisfied in their report, and well pleased with their service, our Lord,

1. Testifies his tenderness and regard for them, by calling them into a retirement, where they might repose themselves awhile after their labours. For where they were, such crowds were perpetually coming and going, desirous to hear, or wanting to be healed, that they had not leisure even to eat their necessary food. *Note*, (1.) In these frail bodies at present, the most ardent spirits must yield to some repose and relaxation; it is reserved for the felicity of a better world, to serve God day and night without ceasing. (2.) Our rest must be but *for a while*, just enough to strengthen us to return with fresh vigour to the work of the Lord.

2. He shows his compassions to the multitude who followed them. For though they withdrew privately, and coasted the lake in a boat, to a desert place near the city of Bethsaida, yet

many watched the course they steered, and were so eager after the company and teaching of Jesus, that they ran faster than the boat went, and were on the spot when he arrived, ready to receive him. Jesus, on disembarking, beheld them with compassion, knowing how destitute they were of faithful guides, and neglected as sheep without a shepherd: and therefore well pleased to be interrupted and deprived of his purposed retirement, he instantly set himself to instruct them in the things pertaining to his kingdom, and their own everlasting peace, in which delightful work, and in healing their sick, he continued till evening drew on. *Note*, (1.) They who have a true relish for the gospel of Jesus, will take many a weary step for the sake of attending that ministry, where it is dispensed with power. (2.) It is a peculiar pleasure to preach to those who appear athirst for the word of truth.

3. He not only fed their souls with the heavenly manna of his doctrine, but their bodies by miraculous food. The disciples, as the day drew to a close, reminded him how far the people were from any inhabited place, and that the night would soon come on; it would be necessary, therefore, they suggest, to dismiss the multitude, that they might get some refreshment after fasting so long. But He, to prove their faith, bid them provide for them the necessary repast. In a surprise they look not to his power, but to their own inability: Where should they get bread, or money to buy it, when two hundred pennyworth would not be sufficient to give a morsel to each! Perceiving they had no notion whence the supply should come, he inquired what store of provision they had with them? they told him only five barley loaves and two fishes, a quantity utterly insufficient to satisfy such a multitude. Commanding them to be brought, Jesus took the loaves, and having disposed the people in ranks, a hundred in depth, and fifty in length, he gave thanks, brake, and gave to his disciples, who waited on the guests; and far from want, there appeared enough and to spare: they not only made a hearty meal, but left fragments sufficient to fill twelve baskets, which Christ commanded to be collected with care, not only to supply their future wants, but to make the miracle appear more illustrious. *Note*, (1.) They who love the word, will for the sake of it sometimes forego their necessary food. (2.) Barley loaves, with Christ's blessing, afford a sweeter feast than the richest delicacies without it. (3.) Christ's disciples must be content with, and thankful for, coarse fare. (4.) Waste, even of crumbs of barley bread, is sinful: no fragments are to be lost, when there are so many who want them.

45. ¶ And [y] straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before * unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. 46. And when he had sent them away, he departed [z] into a mountain to pray. 47. [a] And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. 48. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them? and [b] about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and [c] would have passed by them. 49. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they [d] supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: 50. For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, [e] Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. 51. [f] And he went up unto them into the ship, and the wind ceased: and they were [g] sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. 52. [h] For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves; for their heart was hardened. 53. ¶ [i] And when they had passed over, they came into the land of [k] Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. 54. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him, 55. And [l] ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. 56. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might [m] touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched † him were made whole.

y Ver. 31. John 6. 15—21. Mat. 14. 32, 33. Is. 42. 2.

* Or *over against Bethsaida.*

z John 6. 15. Mat. 14. 23. Luke 6. 12. ch. 3. 7, 13. Acts 1. 12. & 19. 9.

a Mat. 14. 23. John 6. 15, 17. Is. 54. 11.

b Gen. 22. 14. Job 9. 8. Ps. 46. 1. & 93. 4. & 29. 10.

c Luke 24. 28. Gen. 32. 26.

d Job 4. 14, 15. Ps. 88. 15.

e Is. 41. 10. & 43. 1, 2. Ps. 46. 1—5. Rom. 8. 31. Gen. 22. 11—14. Mat. 14. 27.

f Ps. 29. 10. & 93. 4. & 107. 28—30. Mat. 14. 32. & 8. 26.

g Ch. 1. 27. & 2. 12. & 4. 41. & 5. 42. & 7. 37. Is. 8. 18.

h Ch. 8. 17. Mat. 16. 9, 10. John 6. 26. Luke 24. 14. ch. 3. 5. & 8. 17. & 16. 14. Heb. 3. 8, 13.

i Mat. 14. 34—36.

k A city on the west of the sea of Galilee. John 6. 24.

l John 4. 28. Mat. 4. 24, 25. ch. 3. 7—10. Gen. 49. 10. Zech. 8. 20—23. Is. 52. 13.

m Ch. 1. 31. & 3. 10. & 5. 27—29. Luke 6. 19. Acts 5. 15. & 19. 12.

† Or *it.*

Verses 45—56. The entertainment being finished, Christ bid his disciples first embark, and cross the lake, which they did with reluctance, thinking this a good opportunity for him to declare himself, and set up, as they expected, his temporal kingdom. But he, dismissing the multitude, retired into a mountain, as he was wont, to spend some time in prayer, to teach us the necessity of keeping up private communion with God, as the best mean of enabling us to go comfortably through our public ministrations. Meantime we are told,

1. The distress of the disciples. The wind was tempestuous and directly ahead, so that though they pulled hard, they got no way, and had advanced in many hours not above thirty furlongs. We may expect in Christ's service to meet with difficulties, but if we patiently persevere, all will be well.

2. After exercising their faith and patience till the morning watch, at last Christ came to them, walking upon the waters, and seemed as though he would have passed them; but they all discovered something walking on the water, and supposing it an apparition, shrieked out, exceedingly affrighted; till his well known voice stilled their fears, saying, *Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid;* and entering the boat, instantly the wind and waves subsided, to the exceeding astonishment of the apostles, who, forgetting the miracle of the loaves which they had just seen, were so dull and stupid in their hearts, as to be surprised at this new manifestation of their Master's divine power, though they were daily eye-witnesses to his stupendous miracles. *Note*, (1.) If Christ's people toil hard through a night of temptations or desertion, the morning will come, a little faith and patience shall bring them to the light of peace and joy. (2.) Our fancies raise a thousand unnecessary fears; and in our distress we often suspect that Christ is passing from us, when he is really coming to us. (3.) It is then comfortable with the troubled soul when Jesus reveals himself, and saith with the voice of love, *It is I, be of good cheer.* Lord, speak thou to my soul, and it shall rest from all its fears!

3. No sooner had they reached the shore, near Capernaum, than immediately the rumour of his arrival spread on every side, and vast multitudes crowded around him, bringing the sick and diseased, in every city, town, or village that he passed, they were laid on beds in the streets, and besought him, that they might touch, if but the border of his garment; and as many as

touched him were perfectly cured, whatever was their malady. O Jesus, enable me to touch thee with my trembling hand of faith, and heal thou my sin-sick soul!

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's dispute with the Scribes and Pharisees about eating meat with unwashen hands,* ver. 1—13. *The needful instructions he gave to the people upon that occasion, and these further explained to his disciples,* ver. 14—23. 2. *His curing the woman of Canaan's daughter that was possessed,* ver. 24—30. 3. *The relief of a man that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech,* ver. 31—37.

1. THEN [a] came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the Scribes, which came from Jerusalem. 2. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with * defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, [b] they found fault. 3. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands † oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. 4. And *when they come* from the market, except they [c] wash, they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and ‡ pots, brazen vessels, and of ‖ tables. 5. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, [d] Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? 6. He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you [e] hypocrites, as it is written, [f] This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me. 7. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. 8. For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. 9. And he said unto them, [g] Full well ye * reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. 10. For Moses said, [h] Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: 11. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* [i] Corban, † that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.* 12. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; 13. [k] Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye. 14. ¶ [l] And when he had called all the people unto *him,* he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you,* and understand: 15. [m] There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. 16. [n] If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. 17. [o] And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. 18. And he saith unto them, [p] Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him; 19. [q] Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? 20. And he said, [r] That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. 21. [s] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts adulteries, fornications, murders, 22. Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

[a] Mat. 15. 1—9. Luke 5. 17. & 11. 53, 54. & 14. 1. & 15. 2.

* Or *common.*

[b] Mat. 23. 23, 24. & 7. 3—5. Gal. 1. 14.

† Or *diligently,* or *with the fist,* or *up to the elbow.* (All interpretations imply diligent and accurate care in washing. — *Leigh.*)

[c] Mat. 20. 25. Luke 11. 39. Job 9. 30, 31.

‡ Sextarius, containing 33 solid inches.

‖ Or *beds.*

[d] Mat. 9. 11, 14. & 12. 21. & 23. 23, 24. Col. 2. 8, 18. Luke 11. 42.

[e] Mat. 23. 13—29.

[f] Is. 29. 13. & 1. 11—15. Mat. 15. 8, 9. Ezek. 33. 31. Col. 2. 18—22. Tit. 1. 14, 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 6, 7.

[g] Is. 24. 5. Jer. 7. 32. & 44. 16, 17. 2 Thes. 2. 4. Dan. 7. 25. Prov. 1. 25.

* Or *frustrate.*

[h] Exod. 20. 12. & 21. 17. Lev. 19. 3. & 20. 9. Deut. 5. 16. & 21. 18. & 27. 16, 17. Prov. 20. 20. & 23. 22. & 30. 17.

[i] Mat. 15. 5. Lev. xxvii. All that I could spare is dedicated to God. with 1 Tim. 5. 8.

† Corban is a Hebrew word, very often used in the Old Testament for various kinds of oblations.

[k] Prov. 1. 25. Hos. 8. 12. Is. 24. 5. Jer. 44. 16, 17 Gal. 1. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 6, 7. Tit. 1. 14.

[l] Mat. 15. 10—20. & 11. 15. & 16. 9—11. & 22. 29. Ps. 94. 8. ch. 4. 9, 23

[m] Acts 10. 14, 15. Rom. 14. 17. 1 Cor. 8. 8. & 10. 25. 1 Tim. 4. 4. Tit. 1. 15. Jam. 3. 6.

[n] See ver. 14. ch. 4. 9.

[o] Mat. 13. 36. & 15. 15. Acts 8. 30, 31.

[p] Mat. 15. 16, 17. & 16. 9—11. Heb. 5. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 2. Deut. 29. 29. Is. 28. 9, 10. see ver. 14.

[q] 1 Cor. 6. 13. Col. 2. 21, 22.

[r] Jam. 3. 6. Mat. 12. 34—37. Ps. 39. 1.

[s] Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Mat. 15. 19. & 20. 15. Prov. 6. 14—19. Jer. 17. 9. & 4. 14. & 6. 7. Gal. 5. 19—21. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Rom. 13. 13. Acts 8. 22. Tit. 3. 2, 3. Jam. 4. 11.

Verses 1—23. The Scribes and Pharisees could not bear to see the poor people follow Jesus though to be cured; yet they could take a long journey purely to cavil with him.

1. They found fault with his disciples for eating with unwashen hands, contrary to the tradition of the elders, and complained to Christ of their criminal neglect; for so they esteemed it, being superstitiously scrupulous to wash before they sat down to meat, when they returned from market, and on a variety of other occasions; pretending great carefulness to avoid defilement. And for the same purpose they washed also their pots, cups, brazen vessels, and tables, or beds; lest by the touch of any impure person they should have contracted pollution; and fancying much religion consisted in these absurd traditions, they were ready to condemn every deviation from them with greater severity, than even the breaches of God's written law.

2. Christ vindicates his disciples, and reproves the hypocrisy and wickedness of their accusers. They truly fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah; apostate in heart from God, whilst they pretended to honour him with the lip and the knee in much apparent devotion. They stamped human traditions with divine authority; imposed them as obligatory on men's consciences; and not only laid great stress upon the observance of these superstitious washings, but really subverted the plainest and weightiest commands of the law, when they stood in competition with their traditions. A more flagrant evidence of which cannot be conceived, than our Lord here produces against them. The tradition of the elders had established it as a rule, that if a man swore by *Corban,* by the gold of the temple, or that he would devote such a thing to the treasury of the temple, or would regard it as a devoted thing, and not part with it on any occasion, he was bound to fulfil his vow. And though the commandment of God had so expressly provided for the honour and support of parents, laying

an awful curse upon the undutiful son that spoke or acted contemptuously against them; yet they held he was bound by his vow, and dispensed with from observing the evident commands of God, and the plainest dictates of duty and gratitude; so that he might safely withhold the least relief from his parents, however indigent, infirm, or aged; yea, was conscientiously obliged to do so; a tradition so iniquitous and shocking, as most directly violated the word of God, and made it of no effect. Yet that, and many other things as impious, did the Pharisees impose on their disciples; and, under the mask of pretended sanctity, and reverence for the temple, sapped the very foundations of true religion.

2. To prevent the people from being imposed upon by these blind guides, he demands their attention to his discourse, as being a matter of the highest importance; for if their principles were right, a correspondent practice would follow. This great axiom therefore Christ lays down, that nothing without a man, which he touches or eats, any farther than it hath a bad influence upon his heart, can render him in God's sight morally unclean; but that all impurity comes from within: and the evil thoughts and desires which are expressed in words and actions, these are what defile the man, and render him odious in the sight of God; and this he bids them carefully remark and remember. The disciples, far from being yet emancipated from the vulgar opinions concerning the things by which a person was defiled, when they were alone, desired our Lord to explain his last observation to them, which appeared to them hard to be understood. With an air of surprise at their dulness, our Lord reproves their stupidity: if others were in the dark, they at least should have understood him. However, he is pleased to explain his meaning, so as to prevent the possibility of mistake. Two things he lays down, and supports with the clearest arguments. (1.) That whatever meats a man may eat, as they do not enter into his heart, which is the source of all moral purity, or pollution, but merely pass through the body, therefore without intemperance they can communicate no defilement before God. (2.) That the origin of all evil, and the cause of all uncleanness, is from within; whence preceeds all that train of evils before observed, Matt. xv. 19. to which others are here added, *covetousness*, the unsatisfied cravings of the heart after worldly things; *wickednesses*, the contrivances of malice, and delight in mischief; *deceit*, in words or deeds, to conceal the designs of iniquity; *lasciviousness*, the impure imaginations, dalliance, or discourse, which the lewd indulge, though deterred from grosser acts of impurity; *an evil eye*, envying the enjoyment of others, or coveting what they possess: *pride*, the high conceit, the lofty look, the contemptuous or insolent carriage of the swelling heart: *foolishness*, the boasts of vanity, the ebullitions of folly, the rashness of inconsiderate censure, and the hastiness of imprudence. These, and these alone, are the defiling things that spring from the fountain head of evil in the fallen spirit, and render the soul vile in itself, and abominable in the eyes of God.

24. ¶ [t] And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and [u] entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*: but he could not be hid. 25. For [x] a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet: 26. The woman was a [y] Greek, a Syro-phenician by nation; and [z] she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. 27. But Jesus said unto her, [a] Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs. 28. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: [b] yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. 29. And he said unto her, [c] For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. 30. And [d] when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

t Mat. 15. 21—28. see ch. 3. 8.
u Is. 42. 2. ch. 1. 45. & 2. 1. & 3. 7. & 6. 31—33. John 5. 41. & 7. 18.
x Gen. 49. 10. Ps. 45. 12. & 87. 4.
y Or *Gentile*. Is. 11. 10. & 49. 12. & 60. 3, 5, 11.
z Ch. 10. 14. Jer. 49. 11. 1 John 3. 8. Mat. 15. 22. & 4. 23—25. & 8. 16. ch. 1. 32.
a Mat. 7. 6. & 10. 5. 6. Rom. 15. 8. & 9. 4. with Eph. 2. 12.
b Mat. 5. 45. Is. 49. 6. & 42. 6, 7. & 45. 22. & 11. 10. & 55. 6, 7. Acts 13. 46. Rom. 1. 16.
c Is. 57. 16. Mat. 15. 28. & 8. 10, 13. John 4. 50—52.
d Ch. 9. 23. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Eph. 3. 20. 1 John 3. 8. Ps. 12. 6, 2 Cor. 1. 20

Verses 24—30. We have here one short excursion of the divine Redeemer into the coasts of the Gentiles; an earnest of the gracious designs he had in store for them: but, that he might not offend the Jews to whom he was particularly sent, he chose not to appear in public, and therefore entered into a house: but, though he would have no man know it, his fame was too much spread abroad to admit of his concealment. And we have,

1. The application of a poor Gentile to him in behalf of her daughter who was possessed. Falling at his feet, she earnestly importuned him to cast out the devil from her child. At first her address met with such discouragement as Jesus was very unused to give to poor petitioners. Compared with the chosen people of Israel, he speaks as if the Gentiles were but as dogs, to whom the children's meat (the miracles he wrought) must not be thrown, at least, not till the children first be filled. Far from desisting on such a repulse, she wonderfully turns the apparent refusal into an argument for granting the favour she asked, and desired, as a dog, only to have one crumb, one miracle, among the multitudes that every day were so abundantly dispensed to the Jewish children. *Note*, (1.) They who have children possessed with unclean spirits, cannot but earnestly present their sad case before the Lord, who alone can cure them. (2.) A poor supplicant at the feet of Jesus, may confidently hope amidst every discouragement, for an answer of peace at the last. If Jesus delays it is to exercise their faith, and prove their perseverance.

2. The cure is wrought. Pleased with the poor Gentile's address, and admiring her faith, he grants her request: *The devil is gone out of thy daughter;* as she found to her unspeakable comfort, when, depending on the accomplishment of the word of Jesus, she returned to her house. So sure is the prayer of faith to prevail.

31. ¶ [e] And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of † Decapolis. 32. And [f] they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. 33. And he took him [g] aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; 34. And, [h] looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. 35. And [i] straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. 36. And [k] he charged them that they should tell no man: but

e Mat. 15. 29—31.
† A country of ten cities in east Galilee.
f Mat. 9. 32. Luke 11. 14. Mat. 19. 15. ch. 8. 22.
g Ch. 8. 23. & 5. 40. Is. 42. 2. Mat. 7. 6. 1 Kin. 17. 19. 2 Kin. 4. 33. Acts 9. 40. John 9. 6.
h John 11. 33, 38, 41. & 17. 1. Heb. 4. 15.
i Ch. 1. 27, 31, 42. & 2. 12. & 3. 5. & 5. 30. 42. & 8. 25. & 10. 52. Ps. 33. 9. Is. 35. 6.
k Ch. 1. 45. & 3. 12. & 5. 43. & 8. 26. & 10. 48. Is. 42. 2. John 5. 41. & 7. 18.

the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it;* 37. [l] And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He [m] hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

l Ch. 1. 27. & 2. 12. & 4. 41. & 5. 42. & 6. 51.

m Ch. 1. 31. Is. 35. 5, 6. Mat. 11. 5.

Verses 31—37. Jesus was never weary of the delightful work of going about doing good. On his return from the Gentile coast into the region of Decapolis, a new object of mercy is presented before him.

1. The case was afflictive; the poor patient was deaf, and either quite dumb, or not able to speak without much difficulty: the emblem of the miserable sinner, whose ears are closed to all the sweet sounds of gospel grace, and unaffected with the thunders of Sinai; his lips sealed up, unable to speak the language of prayer or praise, or to communicate in conversation grace to the hearers.

2. The cure was singular; not by a word merely, as Jesus usually wrought his miracles; but taking the poor man aside, he *put his fingers into his ears, and spit, and touched his tongue;* not as causes that could contribute to his cure, but to show he was not bound to any method of procedure. Then, *looking up to heaven, he sighed,* in compassion to the human miseries, or grieved for the hardness of their hearts, who, after so many miracles, believed not on him; *and* then *saith unto him, Ephphatha;* that is in the Chaldee dialect, *Be opened;* and instantly the cure was wrought, he heard distinctly and spoke plainly. And thus by the commanding voice of his Spirit he saith to the spiritually deaf and dumb, Be opened; and the ears are unstopped, the tongue is loosed, they know the joyful sound of gospel grace, and speak aloud the praises of their Redeemer.

3. To avoid all appearances of vain-glory, and not to exasperate his malicious enemies, he gave the people a charge to conceal the miracle; but they could not be silent; nay, rather the more they published it, that such modest excellence might be known; and all with astonishment heard the report, and from such repeated instances were compelled to acknowledge to his honour, that all his works bespoke the glory of his character, full of power and grace, without the least tincture of ostentation, *He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.* Is not this then the Christ? See Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's miraculous feeding four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes,* ver. 1—9. 2. *His refusing to give the Pharisees a sign from heaven,* ver. 10—13. 3. *His cautioning his disciples to take heed of the leaven of Pharisaism and Herodianism,* ver 14—21. 4. *His giving sight to a blind man at Bethsaida,* ver. 22—26. 5. *Peter's confession of him,* ver. 27—30. 6. *The notice he gave his disciples of his own approaching sufferings,* ver. 31—33. *and the warning he gave them to prepare for sufferings likewise,* ver. 34—38.

a Mat. 15. 32—39.

1. IN those days [a] the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples *unto him,* and saith unto them, 2. [b] I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: 3. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far. 4. And his disciples answered him, [c] From whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness? 5. And he asked them, [d] How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. 6. And he commanded the people [e] to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and [f] gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them;* and they did set *them* before the people. 7. And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them.* 8. So [g] they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets. 9. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

b Mat. 9. 36. & 14. 14. Ps. 103. 13. & 145. 8, 9, 16. & 146. 9. & 34. 10. & 23. 1, 5. Heb. 4. 14. & 2. 17. Is. 63. 7, 15.

c Mat. 15. 33. 2 Kin. 4. 42, 43. & 7. 2. Num. 11. 21, 22. ch. 6. 52. John 6. 7—9.

d Num. 11. 22. Mat. 14. 15. & 15. 34.

e Ch. 6. 39, 40. 1 Cor. 14. 33, 40. 1 Kin. 19. 5. Ps. 46. 10. Phil. 4. 19.

f Ch. 6. 41. & 14. 22. Rom. 14. 6. 1 Sam. 9. 15. Deut. 8. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. Mat. 26. 26. & 24. 45.

g Ps. 37. 16. & 23. 1. & 68. 10. & 145. 18. Prov. 13. 25. ver. 19, 20. Mat. 15. 37, 38. & 16. 10.

Verses 1—9. The compassions of Jesus flow without ceasing towards the wretched and indigent. Vast multitudes followed him; and, so eager were the people to attend him, that neither toil nor hunger discouraged them. He therefore who graciously fed their souls with his heavenly doctrine, here again is pleased by a miracle to feed their famished bodies. We have seen it recorded in nearly the same words, Matt. xv. 32. and may learn, (1.) To count nothing hard in the way of duty, whilst we are following Christ. (2.) To trust him with our bodies as well as souls, and verily we shall be fed. (3.) Not to be discouraged if we do not sometimes see any immediate prospect of relief under our difficulties: the Lord can open an unexpected door of deliverance for us.

10. ¶ [h] And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha. 11. [i] And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. 12. And he [k] sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? [l] Verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. 13. And he [m] left them; and, entering into the ship again, departed to the other side. 14. ¶ [n] Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. 15. And he charged them, saying, [o] Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and *of* the leaven of Herod. 16. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* [p] because we have no bread. 17. And when Jesus [q] knew *it*, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? [r] perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? 18. Having eyes, see ye

h Mat. 15. 39.

i Mat. 16. 1—4. & 12. 38. & 22. 23, 24. Acts 5. 17, 34. & 23. 6—8. John 7. 48. Luke 12. 54—57. & 11. 16. Mat. 12. 38. & 19. 3. & 22. 18. 1 Cor. 1. 22. John 4. 48. & 6. 30.

k Ch. 3. 5. & 9. 19.

l Mat. 12. 39, 40. & 16. 4. Jon. 1. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 4.

m Ps. 81. 12. Hos. 4. 17. Mat. 7. 6. & 15. 26.

n Mat. 16. 5—12. Ps. 37. 16.

o Mat. 16. 6. Luke 12. 1. 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. ch. 12. 13. Mat. xxiii.

p Mat. 16. 7.

q Mat. 9. 4. & 12. 15, 25. ch. 2. 8 Jer. 17. 10. John 2. 24, 25. Heb. 4. 12, 13. Rev. 2. 23. Ps. 139. 1—4.

r Deut. 29. 4. Ps. 69. 23. & 94. 8. Is. 6. 9, 10. & 42. 18—20. & 63. 17. ch. 3. 5. & 6. 52. & 9.

not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember, 19. When [s] I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. 20. And [t] when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. 21. And he said unto them, [u] How is it that ye do not understand?

s Ch. 6. 34—44. Mat. 14. 17—21. Luke 9. 12—17. John 6. 2—13.

t Ver. 1—9. Mat. 15. 34—38. Prov. 11. 24, 25.

u Mat. 16. 11, 12. Heb. 5. 12. Ps. 94. 8. 1 Cor. 3. 2. John 14. 9.

Verses 10—21. Dalmanutha was a place not far from Magdala, Mat. xv. 39. thither our Lord bent his course.

1. The Pharisees there met him, and cavilling as usual, demanded a sign from heaven, as if all his other miracles did not sufficiently prove his divine mission: not that they desired to be convinced, but sought a pretence for their infidelity. Therefore,

2. Christ refused to grant their request. Not that he could not work the miracle they sought, but because he knew the wickedness of their intentions in asking it; and therefore *sighing deeply*, as grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he expostulates with them on the unreasonableness of their infidelity, when such amazing signs had been given them for their conviction already; and denying their request, he abandons them to their ruin. *Note*, They who will not submit to the evidence of the Scriptures, are justly given up to the blindness of their minds, and left to perish in their unbelief.

3. On this he took occasion, as they were crossing the lake, to caution his disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod; which they, having forgotten to take scarce any bread with them, interpreted literally as a rebuke for their carelessness, and an admonition not to apply to the Pharisees for relief, or to eat of their bread. And whilst they were casting the blame of their negligence upon each other, Jesus, who perceived their folly and stupidity, sharply rebuked them for their uneasiness in this matter, as arguing great unbelief of his power, which they had seen so wonderfully and lately exerted, whereof he reminds them; and therefore it was strange they should be so senseless, and their hearts so hardened, as not to perceive that he meant not his discourse concerning bread literally, which he could so easily supply, but of the doctrines of the Pharisees and Herod, which were to be shunned as dangerously pernicious. *Note*, (1.) It is amazing to think of the hardness of our hearts, that, after multiplied experience of God's goodness, we are apt again to distrust his care the moment new difficulties arise. (2.) The more we know and understand what Christ is, and hath done for his people, the more will our hearts be engaged to trust him in every emergence.

22. ¶ And he cometh to [x] Bethsaida; and they [y] bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. 23. [z] And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. 24. And he looked up, and said, I [a] see men as trees, walking. 25. After that he put *his* hands [b] again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. 26. And he sent him away to his house, saying, [c] Neither go into the town, nor tell *it* to any in the town.

x Mat. 11. 21. John 1. 44.

y Ch. 2. 3. & 5. 23, 29. & 6. 56.

z Ch. 7. 32, 33. 1 Kin. 17. 19. 2 Kin. 4. 33. Is. 42. 2, 6, 7. John 5. 41. & 7. 18. & 9. 6. Rev. 3. 18.

a 1 Cor. 13. 11, 12. Prov. 4. 18. Job 17. 9. Hos. 6. 8.

b Mat. 13. 12. & 25. 29. Phil. 1. 6. Prov. 4. 18. Job 17. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 18. Dan. 12. 4.

c Mat. 9. 30. & 12. 16. & 16. 20. & 17. 9. & 8. 4. ch. 7. 36. Is. 62. 2. John 5. 41. & 7. 18.

Verses 22—26. This miracle is related by Mark alone, and is probably selected from the innumerable multitude of others, because some circumstances in it are singular.

1. The application was made to Jesus by this poor blind man's friends, who led him to the Saviour, desiring that he would touch him, persuaded that this would effectually work the cure. *Note*, In our prayers we should not cease to pray for poor blind souls, entreating the Lord to open the eyes of their mind.

2. He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town, choosing to heal him secretly, and perhaps in just judgment upon the place, where so many miracles had been wrought, and yet they continued in their infidelity.

3. He healed him; and this he did not by a word, but in an unusual manner, and gradually. He spat on his eyes, and asking what he saw, some glimmerings of light broke in upon him, and he beheld *men as trees walking*, his vision being yet indistinct and confused; but when Jesus had put his hands upon his eyes, and bid him look up again, then he saw every object clearly. Thus often is he pleased to work in the heart: at first the light, like the dawning day, breaks upon the soul, and some glimmerings of spiritual things are perceived; of the danger and guilt of sin; the necessity of caring for the soul; the want of a Redeemer, &c. Afterwards our views enlarge; we gain deeper discoveries of our own corruption, and Christ's all-sufficiency; till at last we come to the perfect day in glory, and know even as we are known.

4. He charges the man not to return to Bethsaida, nor acquaint any one there with his cure; their obstinate impenitence under the miracles they had seen, rendered them unworthy of any more of those mighty works. They who slight their own mercies, justly forfeit them.

27. ¶ [d] And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cesarea Philippi; and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? 28. And they answered, [e] John the Baptist: but some *say*, Elias; and others, One of the [f] prophets. 29. And he saith unto them, But [g] whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, [h] Thou art the Christ. 30. And [i] he charged them that they should tell no man of him. 31. ¶ [k] And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and *of* the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32. And he [l] spake that saying openly. And Peter [m] took him, and began to rebuke him. 33. But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, [m] he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for [n] thou [o] savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. 34. ¶ And when he had called the people unto *him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, [o] Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 35. [p] For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but

d Mat. 16. 13—23. Luke 9. 18—22.

e Ch. 6. 14. Mal. 4. 5. Luke 9. 7—9, 19.

f i. e. risen from the dead, Luke 9. 8, 19.

g Ch. 4. 11. John 14. 9.

h John 1. 41, 49. & 6. 69. & 11. 27. & 4. 42. 1 John 4. 15. & 5. 5. Acts 8. 37. & 9. 20.

i Ch. 9. 9. ver. 26. ch. 7. 36. Luke 9. 21, 22. 1 Cor. 2. 8.

k Mat. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 17, 18. ch. 9. 31. & 10. 33. Luke 9. 22. & 18. 31. & 24. 7, 26. Is. 53. 2—10. Ps. 118. 22. John 16. 1, 7. 2 Cor. 15. 4.

l John 16. 25, 29. & 2. 19. & 3. 14. & 6. 51.

m 2 Sam. 19. 22. Prov. 29. 27. John 6. 70 & 8. 44. Acts 13. 10

n Rom. 8. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 2 Cor. 2. 16. Jam. 3. 15.

o Mat. 16. 24—28. Luke 9. 23—27. Mar. 10. 32—39. Gal. 5. 24. & 6. 14. Acts 14. 22. Col. 1. 24. Esth. 4. 16. 1 Thes. 3. 8. 2 Tim. 3. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 18. Phil. 3. 7, 8. Heb. 11. 24.

p Mat. 10. 39. Luke 17. 33. John 12. 25. Gal. 6. 12. Rev. 12. 11. Heb. 11. 35.

whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. 36. For [q] what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? 37. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 38. [r] Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in [s] this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the [t] Son of man be ashamed, when he [u] cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

q Job 2. 4. Mat. 16. 26. Luke 9. 25. & 12. 19, 20. Ps. 49. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

r Mat. 10. 33. Luke 12. 8, 9. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 1 John 2. 23.

s Mat. 16. 4. & 3. 7.

t Dan. 7. 13. Ps. 80. 17. Zech. 13. 7. John 1. 14. Mat. 16. 13.

u Mat. 24. 30. & 25. 31. & 26. 64. Zech. 14. 5. Jude 14. Job 19. 25. Dan. 7. 10.

Verses 27—38. In their journey to the towns of Cesarea-Philippi, we are told,

1. The inquiry of Christ concerning the opinion which the people entertained of him, and what were the sentiments of the apostles in particular. They inform him of the general veneration in which he was held, though men's opinions concerning him were divided; some supposing him the Baptist risen from the dead; others, Elias; others, one of the former prophets returned. With regard to themselves, Peter, in the name of the rest, professes his faith in him as a much greater character, even that of the divine Messiah. Hereupon Jesus commanded them to keep this for the present secret, the time being not yet come for declaring in such express terms his pretensions, lest the people, prepossessed with the notions of a temporal Messiah, should be excited to an insurrection, or his enemies be exasperated to cut him off immediately, before he had finished his work. For, though nothing happens but by the divine decree, in time and manner as fixed from eternity, and no man dies before his appointed hour, yet he who hath ordained the end, hath ordained the means most proper to accomplish the counsels of his own will.

2. Christ hereupon informs them more freely and openly than he had done before, concerning the sufferings he must endure, to wean them from those vain imaginations concerning the temporal kingdom they expected, and to prepare them for so afflictive an event. Peter's heart fired at the mention; he could not bear to hear of his Master's death, when he had just entertained the most sanguine hopes of his greatness; and therefore taking him aside, expressed his astonishment that he should talk in such a manner: for which Peter got a severe and just rebuke before his fellow-disciples, to check their aspiring views, as well as his own. Christ tells him he acted as his bitterest enemy in opposing his sufferings; Satan could do no worse: and he showed an utter want of discernment concerning the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, and the great ends which God designed to accomplish by that death he was about to undergo. In truth, Peter's eyes were so fixed on temporal grandeur, that he could relish nothing which seemed to contradict his aspiring views. *Note*, (1.) In true disciples there may be found what calls for sharp rebuke. (2.) The cross is ever displeasing to our fallen nature, and we are too apt, like Peter, to be seeking for ourselves ease or greatness: hence in suffering times so many are offended.

3. He takes occasion hereupon to declare the terms of discipleship, and to suggest arguments to engage his faithful followers to meet courageously the persecutions they must expect in his service. Self-denial, readiness to take up the cross, and conformity to the pattern of a suffering Saviour, are absolutely required of every follower of Jesus; nor must we count our lives dear to us, when his service requires us to part with them. Not that our sufferings, or even death itself, will be our loss; no: they will prove our greatest gain, and we shall find in life eternal an abundant recompense. Whilst if through fear or dread of suffering in this world, we save our lives by base compliances, our loss will be irreparable and eternal; we shall perish without remedy, and the gain of ten thousand worlds will never countervail the loss of an immortal soul: and as sure as ever we are ashamed of the cause of Jesus, and disown him by our unfaithfulness, so surely may we expect to be disowned by him in the great day of his appearing and glory: let us therefore count the cost, and with full purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's transfiguration upon the mount,* ver. 1—13. 2. *His casting the devil out of a child, when the disciples could not do it,* ver. 14—29. 3. *His predictions of his own sufferings and death,* ver. 30—32. 4. *The check he gave to his disciples for disputing who should be greatest,* ver. 33—37. *And to John, for rebuking one who cast out devils in Christ's name, and did not follow with them,* ver. 38—41. 5. *Christ's discourse with his disciples of the danger of offending one of his little ones,* ver. 42. *and of indulging that in ourselves which is an offence, and an occasion of sin to us,* ver. 43—50. *most of which passages we had before,* Matt. xvii. *and* xviii.

1. AND he said unto them, [a] Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the [b] kingdom of God come with power. 2. ¶ [b] And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* [c] Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain [d] apart by themselves: and he was [e] transfigured before them. 3. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. 4. And [f] there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. 5. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is [g] good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 6. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. 7. [h] And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, [i] This is my beloved Son: [k] hear him. 8. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. 9. And as they came down from the mountain, [l] he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. 10. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what [m] the rising from the dead should mean. 11. ¶ And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that [n] Elias must first come? 12. And he answered and told them, [o] Elias verily cometh first,

a Mat. 16. 28. & 26. 64. Luke 9. 27. & 22. 18. Heb. 2. 8, 9. & 12. 28.

b Mat. 17. 1—13. Luke 9. 28—36.

c Ch. 5. 37. & 14. 33.

d Ch. 6. 31, 32. Song 7. 11.

e Exod. 34. 29, 35. Is. 33. 17. John 1. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17. Mat. 28. 3. Dan. 7. 9.

f Ch. 4. 11. Acts 10. 43. Rom. 3. 21. Luke 24. 27 44. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11.

g Ps. 30. 6.

h 2 Pet. 1. 17. Exod. 40. 34. 1 Kin. 8. 10. Ps. 97. 2. Rev. 15. 8.

i 2 Pet. 1. 17. Mat. 17. 5. & 3. 17. Is. 42. 1. Ps. 2. 7. John 1. 14. & 3. 16. & 1. 34. Col. 1. 13.

k Exod. 23. 21. Deut. 18. 15—18. Acts 3. 22. Heb. 2. 3. & 1. 1. & 12. 25, 26.

l Ver. 30. ch. 1. 45. & 5. 43. & 7. 36. & 8. 30. Mat. 11. 29. Luke 9. 36. Is. 42. 2. John 5. 41. & 7. 18.

m John 2. 19. ch. 8. 31. ver. 31. & 10. 34. & xvi. Mat. xxviii. Luke xxiv. John xx.

n Mal. 4. 5. Mat. 17. 10. & 11. 14. Is. 40. 3. Mal. 3. 1.

o Ch. 1. 2—9. & 6. 16—29. Mat. iii. & 11. 2—18. & 14. 3—12. & 21. 24, 25. Luke i. & iii. John 1. 6—36. & 3. 23—36. & 5. 33—35.

and restoreth all things; and [p] how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

13. But I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.*

* Might be read thus: "Elias is indeed come, as it is written of him: and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed."

Verses 1—13. The first verse of this chapter should properly, as in *Matthew*, have closed the preceding: as it is the conclusion of that discourse, and an argument to engage the fidelity of his disciples, from the view of the nearness of the Messiah's coming with power and glory to punish the persecutors of his people by the destruction of the Jewish state and nation; and, by the mighty effusion of his Spirit, to erect his church in the world, and bless the labours of his faithful ministers with the most astonishing success; and these events some of those then present should live to see.

Six days after the former discourse we have an account,

1. Of his transfiguration on the mount, in presence of three of his disciples, see Matt. xvii. This glimpse of his glory would serve to prevent the *offence of the cross*, and enable them, when they reflected on what they now saw and heard, to stand fast, unmoved under all the discouragements which their faith might afterwards encounter.

2. Of the discourse which passed between Christ and his disciples as they came down from the mountain. However desirous Peter was of dwelling there, the glorious scene was transient, like those bright beams of heavenly consolation we sometimes enjoy below; and though we say it is *good for us* to be here, he who knows best, will not have us now live by sight, but by faith. Christ, as they went, particularly charged them to take no notice of what they had seen and heard; at least not till after his resurrection from the dead, when this vision would gain the more ready credence, and serve to prove his divine glory even in the midst of his humiliations. What this *resurrection from the dead should mean*, they were at a loss to conceive; whether it was to be taken literally, or to be applied metaphorically to his exaltation from his present state of poverty and indigence, to the throne of that glorious temporal kingdom which their prejudices still expected. And as they had been taught by their scribes, that Elias was to prepare the way for the Messiah's coming and kingdom, they inquired of him whether there was any real ground for such an expectation, especially as Elias had made so short a stay with them on the mount, and had not appeared at all in public. Christ clears up their doubts; the person spoken of by the prophet Malachi, was not to be Elias personally, according to the traditions taught by the scribes, but one in his spirit and power, and he had already appeared, and been rejected; plainly pointing them to John the Baptist in whom the prophecy was fulfilled. And the same inspired writings that foretold the coming of John, predicted also the sufferings and indignities the Messiah should suffer; these therefore also they may assuredly expect to see accomplished in their season.

14. ¶ [q] And when he came to *his* disciples he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. 15. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were [r] greatly amazed, and, running to *him*, saluted him. 16. And he asked the scribes, What [s] question ye * with them? 17. And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, [t] I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; 18. [u] And wheresoever he taketh him, he † teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and [x] they could not. 19. He answereth him, and saith, [y] O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. 20. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit [z] tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming. 21. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, [a] Of a child. 22. And oft-times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but, if thou canst do any thing, [b] have compassion on us, and help us. 23. Jesus said unto him, [c] If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth. 24. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; [d] help thou mine unbelief.‡ 25. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, [e] he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, Come out of him, and enter no more into him. 26. [f] And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. 27. But [g] Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. 28. [h] And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? 29. And he said unto them, [i] This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

‡ This struggle in the father's heart, between solicitude for the preservation of his child, and a kind of involuntary distrust of Christ's power to heal him, is here expressed with an air of reality which could hardly be counterfeited.—*Paley.*

Verses 14—29. At the return of Jesus with his three disciples from the mount, he found their companions in no small perplexity.

1. The cause of it was, their being unable to heal a child possessed of a devil, who was brought to them for cure during their Master's absence: whereupon the scribes triumphed over them, and probably were now disputing against them, concerning their Master's doctrine and miracles, and the authority they pretended to derive from him. In this juncture Jesus himself appeared; and, struck with surprise at his critical arrival, the people with eagerness ran to him, congratulating him on his return, and giving him a hearty welcome. *Note*, (1.) They who have ever tasted the sweetness of communion with Jesus, cannot but mourn his absence, and welcome his return. (2.) When we are most at a loss what to say or do, the Lord then

[p] Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. 50. 5, 6. & 52. 14. & liii. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7.

[q] Mat. 17. 14—21. Luke 9. 37—42.

[r] Ver. 2, 3. Exod. 34. 30. It seems the lustre of his face still partly continued.

[s] Ver. 14. ch. 8. 11. † Luke 11. 53, 54.

* Or *among yourselves.*

[t] Ch. 2. 3. & 6. 56. & 8. 22. & 10. 14. & 7. 26.

[u] 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44. Mat. 13. 22. Luke 9. 39.

† Or *dasheth him.*

[x] Mat. 17. 16. Luke 9. 40. ver. 19, 28, 29.

[y] Mat. 17. 16. & 6. 30. & 8. 26. & 14. 31. & 16. 8. & 13. 58. Heb. 3. 19.

[z] Luke 9. 42. ch. 1. 26. ver. 18, 22, 56. Rev. 12. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44.

[a] Job 14. 1. & 5. 7. John 9. 1, 20.

[b] Mat. 15. 22. Ps. 25. 7.

[c] Mat. 17. 20. & 21. 22. ch. 11. 23. Luke 17. 6. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Acts 14. 9. Is. 7. 9.

[d] Luke 17. 5. Phil. 1. 29. 2 Thes. 1. 11.

[e] Mat. 17. 18. Luke 9. 42. Mat. 4. 24. & 9. 33. & 12. 22. Acts 10. 38. 1 John 3. 8. Gen. 3. 15.

[f] Ch. 1. 26. ver. 18, 20. with Gen. 22. 14. Deut. 32. 36.

[g] Ch. 3. 10. & 5. 41. & 7. 33. & 8. 23. Mat. 17. 19. & 13. 10, 36. & 15. 15. Ps. 109. 31.

[h] Mat. 17. 20, 21. Eph. 6. 18. 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8. 1 Kin. 17. 20, 21. 2 Kin. 4. 33, 34.

[i] Ps. 50. 15. Is. 45. 11. Mat. 7. 7. Jam. 5. 16.

appears peculiarly gracious in coming to our help, and ordering our goings.

2. Addressing himself to the scribes on the cause of the dispute, they dared not to answer him; but the father of the child represented the piteous case, and the unsuccessfulness of his application to the disciples. His child was possessed of a *dumb spirit*, under whose malicious influence he was often thrown into terrible convulsions, foaming at the mouth, gnashing his teeth, and pining away under the frequent and violent returns of these diabolical agitations. And he had brought him to the disciples, who attempted to cure him in vain.

3. With a sharp rebuke to the malicious scribes, and all others who had joined them in their dispute with the disciples, (among whom probably, the father of the child might be included, on being disappointed in his application) he brands them as a *faithless generation*, wilfully blind to all the stupendous evidences of his power which he had shown, a people who wearied out his patience; but he would give them, notwithstanding, a fresh evidence of that divine mission they disputed, and therefore bids the father bring the child to him. If they will not believe, they shall, at least, be left without excuse.

4. No sooner was the lad brought within sight of Jesus, than the spirit, enraged at being about to be dispossessed, threw him to the ground in the most violent agonies, as if he would have torn him in pieces, and there he lay wallowing and foaming. To make the cure appear more singular, Jesus hereupon asked, how long he had been thus afflicted? The father answered, from his very infancy; and representing the imminent dangers to which he was frequently exposed, of being drowned or burned by this malicious spirit, who had oft cast him into the fire and into the water, he importunately begs, if this be not a case beyond the power of Jesus, that he would compassionate a parent as well as child so distressed, and help them out of their miseries. *Note*, (1.) In their first approaches to Christ, young converts often meet the most violent conflicts. (2.) The possession of inveterate corruption is from the womb, and nothing but the almighty grace of Jesus can cure the deeply rooted evil. (3.) Sometimes we doubt Christ's power, sometimes his willingness to help us, and both show the unbelief of our hearts.

5. In answer to his suggestion, Christ replied, *If thou canst believe, all things are possible*, &c. He had said, *If thou canst do*, as if he suspected Christ's want of power, therefore he retorts upon him, and bids him suspect his want of faith; yet to encourage his trust, assures him, that this and every other case is possible, when the application is made in faith. With eagerness and tears, between fear and hope, the afflicted father cried out, *Lord, I believe* thy all-sufficiency, and grieving over the hardness and infidelity of my heart, beg thee to *help mine unbelief*, and enable me confidently to trust thee. *Note*, (1.) If ever we come short of any of our requests, we may assuredly impute it to our unbelief. (2.) It is a sure sign of some faith when a man is convinced of, and really cries to be delivered from the unbelief of his heart. (3.) The strongest in faith need every day to pray for the pardon of their remaining unbelief, and an increase of this most necessary grace.

6. Christ performs the wondrous cure. The people came running to see how the affair would end, and whether Jesus or Satan prevailed; when with a voice of authority our Lord bids the foul fiend, who had made the child dumb and deaf, to depart, and never more return to him; nor dared the devil disobey; though with the deepest reluctance and most violent struggles quitting his hold, insomuch that the lad lay breathless and motionless, so that many verily thought him dead. But Jesus, stretching forth his hand, lifted him up, and immediately he arose perfectly well. *Note*, (1.) After Christ hath begun his work upon the heart in seasons of sore temptation, the soul, to human view, may appear as if utterly lost, but Jesus causes it again to revive, and restores us from our falls. (2.) Where he hath once dispossessed the enemy, he will effectually prevent his return; those whom he will save, shall never perish.

7. When the disciples inquired privately why they had miscarried, our Lord lets them know it was through want of this kind of faith, and their having neglected the instituted mean for obtaining it, prayer and fasting. *Note*, If we neglect the means, our grace will necessarily decay and languish.

30. ¶ [k] And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee: [l] and he would not that any man should know *it*.
31. [m] For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. 32. But [n] they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him. 33. ¶ [o] And he came to Capernaum: and, being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? 34. But they held their peace: [p] for by the way they had disputed among themselves who *should be* the greatest. 35. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them: [q] If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.
36. And he took [r] a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, 37. [s] Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.
38. ¶ [t] And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. 39. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: [u] for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me. 40. For he that is not against us is on our part.

[k] Mat. 17. 22. Luke 9. 44.
[l] Ch. 1. 45. & 3. 7. & 4. 10, 11. & 6. 31, 32. ver. 2, 9
[m] Mat. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19, 28. & 26. 2. & 21. 38, 39. Luke 9. 44. & 18. 31. & 24. 26. John 2. 19. & 3. 14. & 10. 18. & 12. 32, 33. & 19. 11. Acts 2. 23. & 4. 27, 28. 1 Cor. 15. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 8. ch. xiv—xvi.
[n] Luke 2. 5. & 18. 34. ver. 10.
[o] Mat. 17. 24. & 18. 1—7. Luke 9. 46—48.
[p] Prov. 13. 10. Jer. 45. 5. ch. 10. 42. Luke 22. 24—27. 3 John 9.
[q] Ch. 10. 43. Mat. 20. 26, 27. & 23. 8—12. Luke 14. 11. Jam. 4. 6.
[r] Ch. 10. 14. Ps. 34. 11. & 45. 10. Prov. 8. 17. Eccl. 11. 9. & 12. 1.
[s] Mat. 18. 5. & 10. 40—42. & 25. 40, 45. Luke 9. 48. & 10. 16. John 5. 23. & 12. 44. & 13. 20. & 14. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 8.
[t] Luke 9. 49, 50. & 11. 19. Num. 11. 27. Job 5. 2. Eccl. 4. 4. Gal. 5. 26.
[u] 1 Cor. 12. 3. Luke 9. 50. & 11. 23. Mat. 12. 30. Phil. 1. 18.

Verses 30—40. Being in haste to go toward Jerusalem, and designing to be alone with his disciples, he travelled through Galilee with all secrecy, to prevent any interruption from the people assembling around him. And by the way, we are told,

1. The repeated notices he gave to his disciples of his approaching sufferings, death, and resurrection: but they understood not his meaning, clear as the words were. Their prejudices concerning his temporal kingdom, spread a veil over their hearts, and they were ashamed and afraid to ask him, lest they should meet with a rebuke from him for their dulness. *Note*, Many live and die in ignorance, because they are ashamed to own it, and to inquire of those that would instruct them.

2. He reproves them for their pride and affectation of superiority. He knew the subject of their disputes in the way had been, who should possess the first honours in his kingdom; but he put a question, as if he wanted to be informed concerning it

to which, ashamed of what had passed, they returned no answer. But Jesus, to show them that he knew the secrets of all hearts, and to check these most unbecoming desires of temporal grandeur, assured them that this ambitious affectation of pre-eminence would be punished with the lowest degradation: whilst the surest way to rise, would be by entertaining the lowliest thoughts of themselves, and studying how to be most serviceable to the meanest of his disciples. And to impress what he had spoken the more deeply, he took a little child into his arms, whose humility, teachableness, and unambitious simplicity they ought to imitate; assuring them, that whoever showed regard to the lowest of his people, because of such a spirit in them, for the sake of their resembling and relation to him, he would regard it as done to himself; yea, God the Father, who sent him, would requite it. *Note*, (1.) Christ observes, and is displeased with the angry disputes of his disciples, and will call them to account for them. (2.) Nothing is so contrary to the spirit of Christianity, as the affectation of pre-eminence.

3. He checks the jealousy and rashness of the beloved disciple. John in his travels, when he was sent forth with his fellow-labourers to preach the gospel, had seen a man casting out devils in Christ's name; perhaps one of the Baptist's disciples, who, though a believer in Jesus as the Messiah, had not constantly attended him as they had done, nor been invested with any particular commission from him. Jealous therefore for their Master's honour, or perhaps rather for their own, unwilling others should share these miraculous powers with them, they had forbade him, because he had not been a professed disciple, or invested with any such commission as they had received. But Jesus said, *Forbid him not.* One who had such faith in his name would not easily be brought to say or do any thing dishonourable to his cause. Such a one ought rather to be countenanced than discouraged; and as he took no part with the enemy, but rather the contrary, he was to be regarded as a friend. *Note*, (1.) Partial to our own opinion and party, we are apt to monopolize Christ, and to think our cause is so much his, that all who *follow not with us* are to be regarded *as separated from him:* but there may be a great diversity of opinions in lesser matters among those who together hold the head, and therefore we should bear and forbear, think and let think, without rash and rigid censures of those who differ from us. (2.) Wherever real good is done, where Christ is preached and souls rescued from the power of Satan, though we may count the methods pursued irregular and unauthorized, we must leave every man to stand or fall to his own Master, and beware how we oppose what is attended with a blessing from God. (3.) Where nothing appears contradictory to the faith of the gospel, charity ever bids us hope the best.

x Mat. 10. 42. & 25. 40.

41. [x] For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. 42. [y] And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, [z] it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. 43. [a] And if thy hand ‡ offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 44. [b] Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 45. And if thy foot ‖ offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: 46. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 47. And if thine eye * offend thee, [c] pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: 48. Where their worm dieth not,† and the fire is not quenched. 49. [d] For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. 50. [e] Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? [f] Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

y Mat. 18. 6. Luke 17. 1, 2. Rom. 14. 13, 21. 1 Cor. 8. 9—13. & 10. 32.

z Acts 9. 4. Mat. 25. 41—46. 2 Thes. 1. 6—9.

a Mat. 5. 30. & 18. 8. Deut. 13. 6. 8. Heb. 12. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Col. 3. 5. Rom. 8. 13.

‡ Or *cause thee to offend.*

b Is. 66. 24. Jer. 7. 20. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Mat. 25. 41. Rev. 14. 10, 11. & 21. 8. & 20. 10, 15.

‖ Or *cause thee to offend.*

* Or *cause thee to offend.*

c Mat. 18. 9. & 5. 29. Heb. 12. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Jam. 1. 21. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 24. Rom. 8. 13.

† The duration of the punishment of the wicked is here sufficiently marked.

d Lev. 2. 13. Ezek. 43. 24.

e Mat. 5. 13. Luke 14. 34. with Job 6. 6.

f Col. 4. 6. Eph. 4. 29. Ps. 34. 14. Mat. 5. 9. Rom. 12. 18. & 14. 19. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Heb. 12. 14.

Verses 41—50. Christ will not suffer the least kindness done to his poorest disciples to be unrewarded, nor the least offence given to them to go unpunished. The heaviest of all judgments hangs over that guilty head that shall hinder, discourage, or grieve the weak, or do ought to turn them back from Christ. And therefore, if any corruption in our hearts, or allurement from the world, or darling idol, would seduce us from the path of duty, and lead us and others into sin, though they were near and dear to us as a hand, a foot, or an eye, they must be cut off without pity. Eternity is at stake; and as a life of everlasting glory will amply repay us for every such sacrifice we make, so will the endless torments in hell make us rue the indulgence of our sins, when for a momentary gratification, we should be doomed to endure the gnawings of a guilty conscience filled with the wrath of God, and the intolerable agonies of burnings unquenchable and eternal. For as, under the law, every burnt-offering was salted before it was laid on the altar, where the fire never went out; so every apostate shall fall a sacrifice to divine justice, and be cast into the fire of hell, preserved by the power of God from an extinction of their being, to suffer that wrath of God which is for ever wrath to come. And, on the other hand, the soul which is seasoned with divine grace, and offered daily a living sacrifice to God, shall be preserved incorruptible, separated from the taint of this world's pollutions, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. For, as *salt is good* to preserve meat from putrefaction, and render it savoury, so doth the grace of God preserve the soul from the corruption of sin, and renders those who possess this inestimable gift blessings to others, by spreading the sweet savour of Christ in the world. *But if the salt have lost its saltness*, and they, whose hearts, lips, and lives, should be seasoned with the salt of grace, prove destitute of it, and apostatize from their profession, their fall is usually irrecoverable, and their ruin inevitable. Therefore see that ye *have salt in yourselves*, the life of grace in your souls, subduing the corruptions within, and showing itself in a savoury conversation, in every good word and work, that may minister edification to others; *and have peace one with another*, united in closest bonds of love and fellowship, laying aside all disputes and envyings, and concurring to promote and propagate the gospel through the world. *Note*, (1.) The terrors and eternity of hell torments, if really believed, will be a powerful check to the raging passions of the soul. (2.) They who have the salt of grace must show it in their lips, and in their lives; and where this is really found, such shall never see corruption.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's dispute with the Pharisees*

concerning divorce, ver. 1—12. 2. *The kind entertainment he gave to the little children that were brought to him to be blessed,* ver. 13—16. 3. *His trial of the rich man that inquired what he must do to get to heaven,* ver. 17—22. 4. *His discourse with his disciples upon that occasion concerning the peril of riches,* ver. 23—27. *and the advantage of being impoverished for his sake,* ver. 28—31. 5. *The repeated notice he gave his disciples of his sufferings and death approaching,* ver. 32—34. 6. *The counsel he gave to James and John, to think of suffering with him, rather than of reigning with him,* ver. 35—45. 7. *The cure of Bartimeus, a poor blind man,* ver. 46—52. *All which passages of story we had the substance of before,* Mat. xix. and xx.

1. AND [a] he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan: and the [b] people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again. 2. ¶ [c] And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him. 3. And he answered and said unto them, [d] What did Moses command you? 4. And they said, [e] Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away. 5. And Jesus answered and said unto them, [f] For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept: 6. But [g] from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. 7. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8. [h] And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. 9. [i] What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. 10. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter.* 11. And he saith unto them, [k] Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. 12. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

a Mat. 19. 1—9. Luke 4. 16. John 3. 22. & 10. 40.

b Mat. 4. 23—25. & 8. 1, 18. & 9. 35. & 12. 15. & 13. 1. & 14. 35. & 15. 30. & 17. 14. ch. 6. 33. & 8. 1.

c Ch. 2. 16, 18, 24. & 3. 6. & 7. 1, 2. & 8. 11. & 12. 13. Luke 11. 53, 54.

d Is. 8. 20. John 5. 39.

e Deut. 24. 1. Jer. 1. 1. Mat. 5. 33. & 19. 7.

f Deut. 9. 6. & 31. 27. Acts 7. 51. & 13. 18. & 14. 16.

g Gen. 1. 27. & 5. 2. & 2. 24. Mal. 2. 14—16. with Jer. 6. 16.

h Gen. 2. 24. Eph. 5. 31. 1 Cor. 6. 16.

i Mat. 5. 31, 32. Mal. 2. 14—16. Rom. 7. 1—3. 1 Cor. 7. 10—13.

k Mat. 5. 32. & 19. 9. Luke 16. 18. Rom. 7. 1—3. Mal. 2. 14—16. 1 Cor. 7. 10—13.

Verses 1—12. Wherever our Lord journeys, we find him employed in the blessed work of preaching the word, to teach us to be instant in season and out of season. Multitudes still followed him, some to hear, some to be healed, and some with a malignant purpose to entangle him in his talk, and raise some matter of accusation against him. Of this number were the Pharisees, who, by an insnaring question concerning divorce, endeavoured to lead him into a dilemna, either of contradicting Moses, or being exposed to the censure of a man of loose morals. He asked them what Moses had commanded? They answered, that in many cases he had permitted divorce. Our Lord replies, that it was no more than a *permission,* granted merely because of the hardness of their hearts and their cruel disposition, as a law of the state to prevent worse consequences; but at the beginning it was not so; the very creation of one man and one woman, and but once, intimated the inseparable union between them; the settling the law of marriage, Gen. ii. 24. declared it, since for the sake of this relation, a man must quit even the dearest ties of nature, and prefer his wife to father and mother: and the connection arising from the marriage-bond is so close, that, as Adam and Eve were one flesh, her body being formed from his, so must every husband and wife reckon themselves *as no more twain, but one flesh.* Whom God therefore hath thus indissolubly joined together, it would be the highest presumption in man to separate.

The disciples, who had been used, according to the generally received opinion among the Jews, to think divorces lawful, desired in private farther information on this point. And our Lord informs them there was but one lawful cause for divorce; and, except in the case of adultery, whatever man or woman divorced their partner, and married again, would themselves be adulterers, and expose the injured party to the like crime. *Note,* It becomes us first well to weigh the case before we take a companion for our lives: when once the choice is made, mutual kindness and forbearance, and desire to please, should every day endear the relation, and remove whatever might occasion a wish of separation.

13. ¶ [l] And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and *his* disciples [m] rebuked those that brought *them.* 14. But when Jesus saw *it,* he [n] was much displeased, and said unto them: [o] Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. 15. Verily I say unto you, [p] Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. 16. [q] And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

l Mat. 19. 13—15. Luke 18. 15, 16. Gen. 48. 14, 15. Jer. 49. 11.

m Ch. 9. 38. Mat. 15. 23.

n Ch. 3. 5. & 3. 33. & 9. 39. Luke 9. 54—56.

o Mat. 18. 3. & 19. 14. Luke 18. 16. Gen. 17. 7. Deut. 29. 11. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Prov. 8. 17. & 23. 26. Eccl. 12. 1. Ps. 34. 11. & 45. 10.

p Mat. 18. 3. & 20. 26. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2. John 3. 3, 5, 6. Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15.

q Gen. 48. 14. & 16. 8. Luke 4. 40. & 13. 13. Is. 40. 11. Num. 8. 10.

Verses 13—16. Christ Jesus hath a tenderness for the lambs of his flock: he doth not refuse the request of those pious parents who present their babes to him before they can lisp his praises. The disciples here indeed opposed their application; but Jesus encouraged it, took up the infants in his arms, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them. And, if they were capable of receiving the spiritual blessings of his kingdom, what should hinder their being admitted by baptism into the visible communion of his church? Of such he declares the kingdom of God consisted, as well as of grown persons, who in humility, teachableness, and dependence upon their father's care, must become as little children; without which they never can partake of the privileges of this kingdom. Lord, give me then this spirit of a child, that I may be enabled to cry, Abba, Father!

17. ¶ [r] And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, [s] Good Master, [t] what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? 18. And Jesus said unto him, [u] Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is,* God. 19. [x] Thou knowest the commandments; Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy

r Mat. 19. 16—22. Luke 18. 18—23.

s John 3. 2. & 11. 28.

t John 6. 28. Acts 2. 37. Exod. 19. 8. Rom. 9. 31, 32. & 10. 2, 3. & 2. 17, 18. Gal. 2. 16. & 3. 10, 12.

u 1 Sam. 2. 2. Ps. 119. 63. James 1. 17.

x Gal. 4. 21. Exod. 20. 12—17. Deut. 5. 16—21. Rom. 13. 9. Jam. 2. 11. Lev. xix. Gal. 5. 14.

father and mother. 20. And he answered and said unto him, Master, [y] all these have I observed from my youth. 21. [z] Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, * and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, [a] take up the cross, and follow me. 22. [b] And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. 23. ¶ And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, [c] How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! 24. And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them [d] that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! 25. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 26. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, [e] Who then can be saved? 27. And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, [f] With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. 28. ¶ [g] Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. 29. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, [h] There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, 30. But he shall receive [i] an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, [k] with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. 31. [l] But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

[y] Phil. 3. 6. Tit. 1. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Is. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31. Luke 18. 11, 12.

[z] Ch. 8. 34. Luke 12. 33. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. Acts 2. 44. & 4. 32, 34. Mat. 6. 19, 20.

* Approved of him with expressions of outward kindness and friendship for his care of his parents and other good deeds. — *Lightfoot.*

[a] Ch. 8. 34. John 16. 33. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

[b] 2 Cor. 7. 10. Judg. 18. 24. ch. 4. 19. Phil. 3. 19. Ps. 17. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 10.

[c] Mat. 19. 23—26. Luke 18. 24—27. Mat. 13. 22. Luke 21. 34. Job 31. 24. Ps. 62. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 26. Jam. 4. 4. & 5. 1—3. & 2. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.

[d] Ps. 52. 7. & 62. 10. & 17. 14. Prov. 11. 18. & 18. 11. & 23. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

[e] Mat. 7. 14. Luke 13. 24. Num. 24. 23.

[f] Job 10. 13. & 42. 2. Jer. 32. 17, 27. Zech. 8. 6. Luke 1. 37. Heb. 7. 25. Is. 63. 4.

[g] Mat. 19. 27—30. Luke 18. 28—30. ch. 1. 20. Phil. 3. 7—9. Deut. 33. 9—11.

[h] Luke 22. 28, 29. 2 Cor. 6. 8.

- Ps. 19. 11. Is. 61. 10. 2 Chr. 25. 9.

[k] Mat. 16. 24. John 16. 33. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Col. 1. 24. Heb. 12. 6.

[l] Mat. 19. 30. & 20. 16. & 8. 11, 12. & 21. 13. Acts 13. 46. Luke 13. 30. & 7. 29, 30. & 18. 14.

Verses 17—31. We have here,

1. The young ruler's application to Christ, and sorrowful departure from him; which we considered, Mat. xix. 16. His address was most respectful, and his question infinitely important; eternal life being our great concern, and to secure that the one thing needful: and, where the value of an immortal soul is felt, we cannot but be solicitous in our applications to Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life. Our Lord perceived the error under which he laboured, and, rebuking him for giving the title of *good* to any person whom he regarded as a mere man, desired to discover to him the insufficiency of his own righteousness, and his inability to keep that law, by a perfect obedience to which eternal life alone could be secured: and in the precepts of the second table our Lord sets before him the path of duty. Ignorant of the spiritual extent of the commandments, he conceives he may venture to say he hath kept all these from his youth, because he hath escaped the grosser violations of them. So apt are we to flatter ourselves in our own eyes that we are righteous, when indeed it is our ignorance that hides from us our sinfulness. Something amiable in him attracted the regards of Jesus, and looking upon him with compassion he would fain humble those high thoughts of himself which he had entertained: and to bring him to the test, he bids him give one proof of his obedience and charity, by selling all his possessions, distributing them to the poor, trusting on the promise of a more enduring substance in heaven, and then let him take up his cross and follow a suffering Saviour: and this would infallibly bring him to the eternal life he sought. But, alas! these were too hard sayings for so rich a man to comply with: he went away sorely chagrined at the proposal; and if such was the only alternative, he rather chose to part with eternal life than his great possessions. *Note*, (1.) The only proper use of worldly wealth is to do good with it. Though we may not be commanded to sell all literally, we must remember we are really no more than stewards, and that a solemn account will shortly be required concerning every penny we have possessed. (2.) Great riches often prove a great snare. How many by these have lost eternal life! (3.) A man may be possessed of a thousand amiable qualities, and yet be utterly destitute of true grace.

2. Christ observes, to the astonishment of the disciples, the difficulty of their salvation who have the abundance of this world, and whose hearts, in consequence thereof, are engaged to trust on their riches: and when, by the impracticability of a camel's going through a needle's eye, he intimated the immense obstructions there were in the way of a rich man's salvation, the disciples, above measure astonished, concluded the impossibility of any man's being saved, since such as were not rich in general wished to be so, and they were conscious to themselves how much their own hearts were set on temporal grandeur. Jesus, looking with compassion upon them, to relieve in some measure their anxiety, bid them consider that, though such a change of heart as was needful to every mortified disciple of his was beyond the power of man, it was not beyond the power of God, who can give the most wealthy the deepest poverty of spirit, and enable those, who have the greatest obstructions in their way to glory, to surmount them.

3. They who leave all for Christ shall be no losers thereby. Peter mentions with some satisfaction, that though their possessions and connections were not great, they had given them up to follow him. And Christ assures him that what they or any others should part with for his sake, would prove in the issue to be their unspeakable gain; whether a man quitted his home, his substance, his relations, friends, or whatever else was dear to him, for the sake of faithful adherence to Christ and his gospel, he should find his truest advantage in it, in present comfort, and sometimes in kind, the Lord will give him a hundred fold, *with persecutions*, which all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must expect as long as they are in the body, and in the world to come an eternal life of happiness and glory. *But many that are first* in profession will be so outstripped in zeal and fidelity by others, who will be called after them, as to come in *last* in the race: whilst *the last*, who seemed farthest from the kingdom of heaven, and latest embraced the offers of the gospel, by their diligence will often first reach the goal; see 1 Cor. xv. 10. *Note*, (1.) The nearest and dearest relations must not weigh with us, when set in competition with our professing of Christ, and the service of his gospel. (2.) Till we come to heaven, however prosperous our circumstances may be, we are to expect the cross; t is only then that we shall have finished our warfare, and entered into our eternal rest.

32. ¶ [m] And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem: and Jesus went before them; and they were amazed;

[m] Mat. 20. 17—19. Luke 18. 31—34. Ps. 40. 8. Is. 53. 7.

and as they followed they [n] were afraid. [o] And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, 33. *Saying*, [p] Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: 34. And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again. 35. ¶ [q] And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, [r] we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. 36. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? 37. They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one [s] on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. 38. But Jesus said unto them, [t] Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of [u] the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? 39. And they said unto him, [x] We can. And Jesus said unto them, [y] Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: 40. [z] But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared. 41. And [a] when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John. 42. But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, [b] Ye know that they which * are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. 43. [c] But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: 44. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. 45. [d] For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

n John 11. 8, 16. ch. 9. 31.
o Mat. 11. 25. & 13. 11. ch. 4. 31.
p Mat. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19. ch. 8. 31. & 9. 31. Luke 9. 22. & 18. 31—33. & 24. 7. with ch. xiv—xvi. John xviii, xx. Mat. xxvi—xxviii. Luke xxii—xxiv. Ps. xxii, lxix. Is. liii. Acts 4. 27. & 2. 23.
q Mat. 20. 20—28. & 4. 21. ch. 1. 19. & 5. 37. & 9. 2.
r 1 Kin. 2. 16. Rom. 8. 26. Jam. 4. 3. Jer. 45. 5. They asked by, or along with, their mother.
s Be thy chief ministers of state. 1 Kin. 2. 19. & 22. 19. Ps. 45. 9. & 110. 1. Mat. 16. 27. & 19. 28.
t Rom. 8. 26. Jam. 4. 3.
u John 18. 11. Ps. 75. 8. Luke 12. 50. & 22. 42. ch. 14. 36. Mat. xxvi, xxvii. Ps. xxii, lxix.
x John 11. 16. ch. 11. 31.
y John 16. 33. Mat. 10. 17—31. & 24. 9. Col. 1. 24. Acts iv—xii. Rev. 1. 9.
z Is. 52. 13. & 49. 3. John 17. 2, 6, 24. Mat. 25. 34. Rom. 8. 30, 33. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.
a Luke 22. 24. Mat. 20. 24. Prov. 13. 10. Jam. 4. 1. Job 5. 2.
b Luke 22. 25. Mat. 20. 25.
* Or *think good.*
c Mat. 20. 26, 27. & 18. 3, 4. & 23. 8—13. Luke 22. 26, 27. & 14. 11. & 18. 14. John 13. 12—17. 1 Cor. 9. 19—23. Jam. 4. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6.
d Mat. 11. 29. & 26. 28. Phil. 2. 5—8. Heb. 5. 8. 1 Tim. 2. 4—6. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 3. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Dan. 9. 24, 26. see Mat. 20. 28. Is. 53. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 19.

Verses 32—45. The nearer Christ drew to the scene of his sufferings, the plainer he warns his disciples of them, that they might be the less surprised at them when they came.

1. He here appears eagerly hastening to face his enemies; whilst his disciples, considering what he had suggested would happen to him at Jerusalem, were amazed at his resolution, and followed him trembling, apprehensive, probably, lest they might be involved in his troubles. To prepare them for this distressing event, Christ again called them, and told them distinctly all that would befall him; that when it came to pass, they might remember that he suffered nothing of which he was not apprized, and to which he did not voluntarily submit: adding, after all his indignities and death, that he should rise again; and that, if they had understood it, would have been a sufficient support against all their fears.

2. He rebukes the pride and ambition of his disciples, which all these warnings could not cure. Two of them wanted to be prime ministers in his kingdom; and, through their mother, wished to have a general promise granted them of bestowing on them a request they were about to make, which proved to be no less than securing the two most honourable places next the throne, when Christ should, as they expected, set up his earthly reign. But, as they mistook the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, which called them to suffer, not to bear rule, so also was their desire impossible to be granted; it being unalterably fixed by the eternal decree of God on whom the honours of glory should be bestowed. The ten, as culpable as the two petitioners, and equally ambitious of the places they sought, were exceedingly displeased at their affecting this precedency, to which they thought themselves equally entitled. But Jesus, to silence both parties, lets them know, that the kingdom he was about to erect, was not to be governed as earthly monarchies, where the rulers exercised despotic sway: but, on the contrary, he would be the greatest in the Messiah's kingdom, who was in his own eyes most abased, and most ready in every work and labour of love to serve the meanest disciple; for herein he nearest resembled his Master, who came with deepest humility as a servant, and was to die upon a cross as a slave, paying down the ransom for the sins of many, whom he intended to bring in this way unto glory.

46. ¶ [e] And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway-side begging. 47. And when he heard that it was [f] Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* [g] son of David, have mercy on me. 48. And [h] many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me. 49. [i] And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, [k] Be of good comfort; rise, he calleth thee. 50. [l] And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. 51. And Jesus answered and said unto him, [m] What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, [n] Lord, that I might receive my sight. 52. And Jesus said unto him, [o] Go thy way; thy faith hath† made thee whole. [p] And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

e Mat. 20. 29—34. Luke 18. 35—43. with Is. 59. 10.
f Mat. 1. 21. & 2. 23. Luke 4. 16. John 1. 45, 49.
g Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Mat. 1. 1, & 9. 27. & 12. 23. & 15. 22. & 22. 42, 45. Rom. 1. 3, 4. Rev. 22. 16.
h Mat. 20. 31. & 19. 13. & 15. 23. Luke 18. 1.
i Heb. 4. 15. & 2. 17. Ps. 145. 8. & 86. 15. & 103. 10—14.
k John 11. 28. Is. 45. 22.
l Eccl. 9. 10. Phil. 3. 7—9. Song 1. 4. Ps. 84. 2. & 42. 1, 2.
m Ver. 36. Mat. 7. 7, 8. with Is. 35. 5.
n Or. *Rabboni.* John 20. 16.
o Mat. 8. 13. & 15. 28. & 9. 22. Luke 7. 50. ch. 5. 34.
† Or *saved thee.*
p Gen. 1. 3. Ps. 33. 9. Is. 35. 5. & 42. 18. Mat. 11. 5. & 9. 29. & 12. 22. ch. 8. 25.

Verses 46—52. In Matthew we were told of two blind men, here but of one; perhaps he was the most remarkable, as the son of Timeus. He sat begging by the way-side; and no sooner heard of Jesus passing by, than crying incessantly, he would

not be silenced till Jesus stood and called him; when, eager to be led to him, he threw off his upper garment, and, coming before the Saviour, presented his request and received his cure. In him we see, (1.) An emblem of the sinner's misery; poor, blind, and destitute. And a happy thing it is when, brought to a sense of this misery, he is found at the way-side of ordinances, crying after Jesus. (2.) The blind and lame are amongst the truest objects of charity, and to their cries we must never be deaf. (3.) The calls of Jesus are our encouragement to come to him: and they are so general, free, and full, that, whenever a poor, guilty, corrupted creature feels his wants, we may safely say to such a one, *He calleth thee.* (4.) When we are coming to Christ, whatever would prove a hinderance, like this garment, should be cast off, particularly that robe of self-righteousness and self-sufficiency which sticks so close to us. (5.) None truly cry to him, and go away without relief. If we have faith in his power and love, we shall assuredly see the salvation of God. (6.) When Christ enlightens the eyes of our minds, it is in order that we should henceforth keep him ever in view, and follow him in all his holy ways.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

We have here, 1. *Christ's riding in triumph into Jerusalem,* ver. 1—11. 2. *His cursing the barren fig-tree,* ver. 12, 13, 14. 3. *His driving those out of the temple that turned it into an exchange,* ver. 15—19. 4. *His discourse with his disciples concerning the power of faith and efficacy of prayer, on occasion of the withering of the fig-tree he cursed,* ver. 20—26. 5. *His reply to those who questioned his authority,* ver. 27—33.

a Mat. 21. 1—11. Luke 19. 29—40. John 12. 12—16.

1. AND [a] when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany,* at [b] the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, 2. And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring *him.* 3. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that [c] the Lord [d] hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. 4. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. 5. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? 6. And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go. 7. And they brought the colt to Jesus, [e] and cast their garments on him: and he sat upon him. 8. And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed *them* in the way. 9. And they that went before, and they that followed, [f] cried, saying, Hosanna; blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord: 10. Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. 11. And [g] Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the even tide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

* A village at the foot of mount Olivet, on the west side, about two miles east of Jerusalem, where the ascension of Christ is said to have taken place. The name of Bethany was sometimes extended to the whole tract from the village itself to Bethphage.

b 2 Sam. 15. 30. 1 Kin. 11. 7. 2 Kin. 23. 13. Luke 22. 39. Acts 1. 12. Zech. 14. 4. ch. 13. 3.

c Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 10, 11. Acts 10. 36. Heb. 1. 2.

d 2 Cor. 8. 9. Zech. 9. 9.

e 2 Kin. 9. 13. John 12. 12—14. & 1. 14. Lev. 23. 40.

f Ps. 118. 24—26. Mat. 21. 9. & 23. 39. John 12. 13. Luke 19. 37, 38. & 2. 14. & 1. 32. Ps. 72. 17—19. Is. 9. 6, 7. & 11. 2—4. & 52. 13. & 53. 12.

g Mat. 21. 10—17. Luke 19. 45.

Verses 1—11. The last week of the life of Jesus now is come, and we see him here entering Jerusalem in triumph, so little terrified with the fears of his enemies, or cast down by the sufferings he was about to undergo.

1. He enters Jerusalem amidst the hosannas of the people. He ordered his disciples, when he drew near the city, to bring an ass' colt from the opposite village, directing them to the spot, and delivering a message from him, if any questioned them for what they did. Accordingly they went as Jesus had commanded them; and, when the owners of the colt demanded why they loosed him, they told them *the Lord hath need of him;* and they contentedly let him go. Seated on this mean animal did Jesus enter the city, whilst, to express their gladness, his poor followers spread their garments in the way, and cut down branches from the trees as at the feast of tabernacles, surrounding him with hosannas, wishing prosperity to the long expected Messiah, now bringing salvation to his people: praying that his reign may be long, and happy who comes to sit on his father David's throne, invested with divine authority; calling on the angels to join their praises, and begging God to pour down the best of blessings on the Messiah and his people.

2. He went directly to the temple: that was his palace: he aimed not at a temporal but spiritual dominion. After looking round him to observe what was done there, and spy out the abuses which called for his correction, and, as appears, from Matt. xxi. 12, 13. casting out those who trafficked there, he retired in the evening to Bethany with the twelve, the place he chose for his abode. *Note,* The eye of Jesus is upon his temple, to see what the priests do there; it is upon the living temple of his people's heart, observing every rising thought of evil. How watchful then need we be!

12. ¶ [h] And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: 13. [i] And, seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves: for the time of the figs was not *yet.* 14. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard *it.* 15. ¶ [k] And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; 16. And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple. 17. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, [l] My house shall be called of all nations, The house of prayer?† but ye have made it a den of

h Mat. 21. 18.

i Mat. 21. 19. Luke 13. 6—9. & 19. 42—44. Phil. 3. 18, 19. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. Mat. 12. 43—45. & 21. 40—44. Rev. 3. 1.

k Mat. 21. 12—16. Luke 19. 45—48. John 2. 12—16. Deut. 14. 25, 26.

l Is. 56. 7. & 60. 7. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20—23. with Jer. 7. 11. Hos. 12. 7. Luke 19. 46. Mat. 21. 13.

† There is a reverence due to God's house for the owner's sake, for the service' sake: secular and profane actions are not fit for that sacred roof. What but holiness can become that place which is the beauty of holiness?—*Hall.*

thieves. 18. [m] And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people were astonished at his doctrine. 19. [n] And when even was come, he went out of the city. 20. ¶ [o] And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. 21. And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away. 22. And Jesus, answering, saith unto them, [p] Have faith in God. 23. [q] For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith. 24. Therefore I say unto you, [r] What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*. 25. [s] And when ye stand * praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. 26. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

m Mat. 21. 15. Luke 19. 47, 48. John 12. 19. Acts 4. 2. & 13. 45. Is. 26. 11. Ecc. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. ch. 1. 22. & 6. 2.

n Ver. 11. ch. 13. 1. John 12. 36. Luke 21. 37.

o Mat. 21. 19, 20. & 24. 42, 44, 50. & 25. 6, 13. Job xviii, xx. Is. 30. 13, 14. Heb. 6. 8. & 10. 26, 27.

p Or *have the faith of God.* 2 Chr. 20. 20. Is. 7. 9. Prov. 3. 5. Ps. 62. 8. ch. 5. 36. & 9. 23.

q Mat. 17. 20. & 21. 21. Luke 17. 6. Jam. 1. 5, 6. Rom. 14. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

r Mat. 7. 7, 11. & 18. 19. & 21. 22. Luke 11. 9. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 24. Jam 5. 16—18. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14. Is. 45. 11. Gen. 32. 26. Ps. 118. 5. & 123. 2. 2 Cor. 12. 8. Heb. 4. 16.

s Mat. 6. 14. & 18. 23—35. Eph. 4. 32. Col. 3. 13. Mat. 7. 1, 2. Jam. 2. 13.

* Standing seems to have been a frequent posture in praying among the Jews.

Verses 12—26. We have here,

1. The cursing of the barren fig-tree, the type of the destruction of the Jewish nation. Our Lord, on his return from Bethany to the temple in the morning, being hungry, seeing a very flourishing fig-tree, came, expecting to find some figs thereon; *for the time of figs was not yet*, or, *it was not a season of figs*, it was a bad year: but that tree promised better than others: or *the time of figs*, when they should be gathered in *was not yet*, and therefore he might expect fruit on the tree; but, finding none, he cursed the tree in the hearing of his disciples who took particular notice of it. *Note*, The curses of the Lord are fearful, and never fall in vain.

2. He purges the temple of the buyers and sellers, who had made that sacred place a house of merchandise. It appears from Matt. xxi. 12. he had done the same the preceding day; but probably supported and encouraged by the priests the traders had returned to their former traffic the next day, and were thus again expelled. And, to vindicate his procedure, he quoted the words of the prophet, Isa. lvi. 6, 7. where God, speaking of the sons of the stranger, the proselytes, undertakes to welcome them to his house, which should be a house of prayer to all nations. But the court, which was appropriated to the service of the Gentiles, they had profaned by turning it into a market, and made it by their knavery and extortion a den of thieves.

3. The priests and scribes, incensed at what they saw and heard, especially those severe rebukes, which reflected so deeply on their characters, were bitterly exasperated; and being determined to murder him, sought only how they might do it without exposing themselves to the fury of the populace; for they were afraid openly to use violence, the people in general expressing such a veneration for Christ's person, and such respect and reverence for his doctrine. *Note*, Envy and malice naturally lead to murder, and it is only the fear of men that in a multitude of instances deters the wicked from the very act.

4. In the evening they returned to Bethany, and next morning, in their way to the city, the disciples took notice with surprise of the withering of the fig-tree; and Peter, pointing to the tree, observed to his Master how it was withered away in consequence of the curse he had pronounced upon it. And from thence Christ took occasion to encourage them confidently to exercise faith in God at all times; and especially in the exertion of the miraculous powers with which he had furnished them, they should find nothing impossible, not even to remove the mountain on which they stood, and cast it into the sea, if they had an unshaken trust in the divine power and promises, and looked up to God, nothing doubting; for whatever they should ask in prayer, which should be for his glory to give, and they were warranted from his word to expect, should certainly be given them. And on this occasion, as what would be essential to their obtaining an answer to their prayers, he inculcates fervent charity and mutual forgiveness: when they stood praying for forgiveness they must be ready to grant that pardon to others which they themselves sought at God's hand. But if, under the spirit of uncharitableness, they refused to forgive their brother his trespasses, their prayers would be in vain, and they may never hope for the pardon themselves sought at the hands of their heavenly Father. *Note*, (1.) Faith is the conquering grace that overcomes the world, and bears down all obstacles before it. If at any time we are terrified by guilt, or enslaved by corruption, it is through our want of *faith in God*. (2.) Nothing can be a more powerful argument to engage our charity and forgiveness towards others than what arises from our own prayers.

27. ¶ [t] And they come again to Jerusalem: and, as he was walking [u] in the temple, there come to him [x] the chief priests and the scribes, and the elders, 28. And say unto him, [y] By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things? 29. And [z] Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one † question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. 30. [a] The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me. 31. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven, he will say, Why then did ye not [b] believe him? 32. [c] But if we shall say, Of men, they feared the people: for all *men* counted John that he was a prophet indeed. 33. And they answered and said unto Jesus, [d] We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, [e] Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

t Mat. 21. 23—32. Luke 20. 1—8.

u Mal. 3. 1. Hag. 2. 7, 9.

x Ps. 2. 1—5. & 22. 12, 16. Is. 53. 3. Acts 4. 27, 28.

y Exod. 2. 14. Acts 7. 27. & 4. 7. Mat. 7. 29.

z Is. 52. 13. Amos 5. 13. Mat. 10. 16. Eph. 5. 15. John 5. 13.

† Or *thing*.

a Ch. 1. 1—11. Mat. iii. Luke i, iii. John 1. 6—36. & 3. 22, 36. & 5. 32—36. Luke 7. 29, 30. ch. 9. 13.

b John 1. 26, 29—36. & 3. 28—36. & 5. 32, 33.

c Mat. 3. 5. & 11. 9. & 14. 5. John 1. 25. & 5. 35. ch. 6. 20. Luke 7. 26—30.

d Rom. 1. 18, 21, 22, 28. 2 Cor. 2. 15. & 4. 3, 4. 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10. Is. 6. 9, 10.

e Prov. 26. 4. Job 5. 13.

Verses 27—33. Vexed at the heart to behold the respect paid to Jesus, and impatient to revenge his rebukes, which they construed into reproaches, we have here,

1. The demand of the high priest and elders challenging Christ to produce his authority for what he had said and done

the preceding days, as if he had been lord and master of the temple.

2. He answers their question by another. By what authority did John preach and baptize? give me a direct reply? The answer was easy, but the difficulties in which on either side it involved them were great. They saw that to confess his mission divine, was to own all that Jesus claimed, John having borne testimony to him; to deny that the Baptist was sent of God, and to brand him as a pretender and impostor, would instantly enrage the people to rise up, perhaps, and stone them, all men in general being persuaded of John's prophetic character: therefore, after reasoning on the matter, they are forced to conceal under a lie a truth they dared not own, and to pretend ignorance of what they knew, as the only way to evade the answer Christ demanded of them. He therefore was fully justified in refusing them farther information, when it evidently appeared they sought not conviction of the truth, but merely his destruction. *Note*, (1.) It is a mercy to be able to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and at least to confound those who refuse to be convinced. (2.) They who wilfully choose to be ignorant are justly abandoned to judicial blindness.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The parable of the vineyard let out to unthankful husbandmen, representing the sin and ruin of the Jewish church*, ver. 1—12. 2. *Christ's silencing those who thought to insnare him with a question about paying tribute to Cesar*, ver. 13—17. 3. *His silencing the Sadducees, who attempted to perplex the doctrine of the resurrection*, ver. 18—27. 4. *His conference with a scribe about the first and great command of the law*, ver. 28—34. 5. *His puzzling the scribes with a question about Christ's being the Son of David*, ver. 35, 36, 37. 6. *The caution he gave the people to take heed of the scribes*, ver. 38, 39, 40. 7. *His commendation of the poor widow that cast her two mites into the treasury*, ver. 41—44.

1. AND [a] he began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about *it*, and digged *a place for* the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. 2. And [b] at the season he sent to the husbandmen [c] a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. 3. [d] And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty. 4. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled. 5. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. 6. [e] Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. 7. [f] But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the [g] heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. 8. And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard. 9. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? [h] he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. 10. And have ye not read this scripture; [i] The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: 11. This was the Lord's doing, and [k] it is marvellous in our eyes? 12. And they sought to lay hold on him, but [l] feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

a Mat. 21. 33—46. Luke 20. 9—19. Is. 5. 1—4. Jer. 2. 21. Ps. 80. 8—15. Song 8. 11, 12. Exod. xxxv—xl. Lev. i—xxv. 1 Kin. vi—viii. Num. iii, iv, viii. Deut. i. 15. & 16. 18. 1 Chr. xxii—xxvii.

b Ps. 1. 3. Song 8. 11, 12.

c 2 Kin. 17. 13. 2 Chr. 36. 15. Jer. 44. 4. Zech. 7. 7. Neh. 9. 29. Heb. 1. 1.

d 1 Kin. 22. 24. 2 Chr. 16. 10. & 23. 19, 21. & 36. 16. Jer. xx, xxvi, xxxvii, xxxviii. 1 Thes. 2. 15. Mat. 23. 34—37. Acts 7. 52, 59. Heb. 11. 36.

e John 3. 16. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. John 1. 14. Luke i, ii, iv, &c. Mat. i—xxv. ch. i—xiii. John i—xvi.

f Acts 2. 23, 36. & 3. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 15. Ps. 22. 6—21. & 69. 1—21. Mat. 2. 3—20. & 12. 14. & 21. 46. & xxvi, xxvii. ch. 3. 6. & xiv, xv. Luke 4. 28, 29. & 11. 53, 54. & xxii, xxiii. John v, vi—xii, xviii, xix. Heb. 13. 12.

g Heb. 1. 2. Ps. 82. 8. & 2. 8, 9, 12.

h Mat. 21. 41, 43, 44. & 8. 11, 12. & 12. 43—45. & 23. 35—38. & 22. 7. & 3. 12. & 24. 2—34. ch. xiii. Luke 19. 27, 42—44. & 20. 15, 16. & 17. 22—37. & 21. 6—33. John 9. 39—41. Prov. 1. 21—32. Acts 28. 23—28. Lev. xxvi. Deut. 4. 26, 27. & xxviii—xxxii. Rom. xi. Acts 13. 46, 47.

i Ps. 118. 22. Acts 4. 11, 12. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. Is. 28. 16. Eph. 2. 14—22. & 1. 19—23. Phil. 2. 6—11. Mat. 16. 18.

k 1 Tim. 3. 16. Rom. 16. 26, 27. Col. 1. 25—27. Eph. 3. 3—9. 1 Cor. 2. 7.

l Ch. 11. 18, 32. Mat. 21. 26, 46. Luke 20. 6, 19. John 7. 19.

Verses 1—12. Since they had thus wickedly rejected their Messiah, he here in parables sets forth before them the guilt and ruin coming upon them in consequence thereof. The parable of the vineyard we had before, Matt. xxi. 33. The scope and design of it is to upbraid them with their continual rejection and persecution of God's prophets from the days of their forefathers to that hour, the measure of whose guilt they were now about to fill up in the murder of the Son of God, and thus they would bring down the temporal and eternal wrath of God, upon their devoted heads; who, instead of the Jewish people, would admit the Gentiles in their stead, and, in spite of all their envy and enmity, erect his glorious church on that one foundation and chief corner-stone the Messiah, whom they rejected, and hereby make his marvellous power and grace evident to all. The parable was too plain for them to mistake the meaning, the chief priests and elders perceived it was levelled at them; and enraged beyond measure at such boldness, though they dared not apprehend him publicly, they consulted how they could privately get him into their power and cut him off. *Note*, (1.) God expects from those who are placed in his vineyard the church, that they should render him that tribute of love and duty for which they stand so highly indebted. (2.) In all ages the true ministers of Christ have met with the cruelest usage, and usually their bitterest persecutors have been those who have pretended a divine commission, and to be labourers in God's vineyard. (3.) God will have a church and people in the world, whatever opposition may be formed against them. (4.) It is a truly marvellous thing in the eyes of a gracious soul, when he observes the operations of divine grace in himself, and how the Lord sets up his kingdom within him, in spite of all the opposition from Satan and indwelling sin. (5.) They who refuse to be convinced by the truth of God's word are generally exasperated both against the minister and his message; and thus what was sent as *a savour of life unto life*, to them becomes *a savour of death unto death*.

13. ¶ [m] And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the [n] Herodians, to catch him in *his* words. 14. And when they were come, they say unto him, [o] Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: [p] Is it lawful to give tribute to * Cesar, or not? 15. Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he knowing their hypocrisy, said

m Mat. 22. 15—22. Luke 20. 20—26. & 11. 53, 54. Ps. 2. 2. Jer. 18. 18. Eccl. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. Is. 29. 21.

n Ch. 8. 15. Mat. 16. 6.

o Ch. 14. 45. Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. with 2 Cor. 2. 17. 1 Thes. 2. 4. Gal. 1. 10. Acts 10. 34, 35.

p Ezra 4. 13. Acts 5. 37. Mat. 17. 25. Jer. 42. 2, 3. 20.

* *i. e.* the Roman emperor.

unto them, [q] Why tempt ye me? bring me a [r] penny, that I may see *it*. 16. And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cesar's. 17. And Jesus answering, said unto them, [s] Render to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's. [t] And they marvelled at him.

q Ch. 3. 2. & 8. 11. Luke 11. 16, 53, 54.

r Seven pence half-peuny; as Mat. 28. 28. & 20. 2.

s Mat. 17. 25. & 22. 21. Luke 20. 25. Rom. 13. 7. Prov. 24. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 17.

t 1 Cor. 14. 19, 20. Job 5. 12, 13. Mat. 22. 22, 33, 46. Luke 20. 26.

Verses 13—17. We have here a new attempt made by the Pharisees and Herodians, bitter enemies to each other, but close leagued against Christ. They wanted to catch up something which might serve to accuse him, and they thought they had a question which would not fail either to render him obnoxious to the civil powers, or to blast his reputation with the people, should he enforce subjection to the Roman yoke, which they so abhorred. Pretending therefore great respect to Christ, as a person of unspotted integrity, and above the fear of men, they bring to him a case of conscience, as if they wished to be guided by his superior judgment. The question was whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Cesar or not? He saw their hypocrisy, and confounds their devices; bidding them produce the tribute-money, and tell him whose image or superscription it bore. On their saying, *Cesar's*, he then bid them render to Cesar his own. By admitting the currency of his coin, they owned their subjection to him, and were bound to pay the tribute required in return for the protection they enjoyed: whilst God's right over them remained unalienably the same: in all religious concerns he was alone the Lord of their conscience, and to all his commands unreserved submission must be paid: an answer so wise, so convincing and unexceptionable, as even astonished his very enemies. *Note*, (1.) The sects most bitter against each other will readily unite to oppose the power of true Christianity. (2.) The professions of false friends are usually most specious, when their designs are most malignant. (3.) It is a dangerous thing for ministers to interfere about civil rights; their business is to teach subjection to the powers that are. (4.) Hypocrisy, however artful the veil, cannot be concealed from the knowledge of him who trieth the reins and the heart.

18. ¶ [u] Then came unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection;* and they asked him, saying, 19. Master, Moses wrote unto us, [x] If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 20. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and, dying, left no seed. 21. And the second took her, and died; neither left he any seed: and the third likewise. 22. And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also. 23. In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. 24. And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because [y] ye know not the [z] scriptures, neither [a] the power of God? 25. For, when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are [b] as the angels which are in heaven. 26. And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, [c] how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? 27. He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

u Mat. 22. 23—33. Luke 20. 27—39. Acts 23. 8. 1 Cor. 15. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

* The object of the Sadducees here is to show the absurdity and the falsehood of these doctrines of a resurrection and a future state, by stating a difficulty respecting them which they conceive to be insuperable. —*Porteus.*

x Gen. 38. 8. Deut. 25. 5, 6.

y Is. 8. 20. & 27. 11. & 28. 9, 10. Hos. 4. 6. & 8. 12. John 20. 9, 31. Rom. 15. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 15—17. John 5. 39. Acts 17. 11.

z Job 19. 25. Ezek. 37. 5—10. Dan. 12. 2.

a Gen. 17. 1. & 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17. ch. 10. 27. Luke 1. 37. Eph. 1. 19. 20. Phil. 3. 21.

b Mat. 22. 30. Luke 20. 36. 1 Cor. 15. 42, 44, 49, 52. & 7. 29, 30. 1 John 3. 2.

c Exod. 3. 6, 16. Acts 7. 32. Gen. 17. 7. & 28. 21. & 32. 9. Lev. 26. 12. Heb. 11. 16. with Rom. 4. 17. John 5. 21.

Verses 18—27. The Sadducees, the freethinkers and reasoners of the age, came next, fraught with wisdom and sophistry, and thought that, though others had been unequal to the task, they were able to propose a question which the wisdom of Jesus would find it hard to answer. But they were deceived to their cost, their ignorance exposed, their errors detected, and that resurrection they denied proved by the clearest evidence of Moses, whose authority they admitted: see Mat. xxii. 23. *Note*, (1.) Many infidels pretend a reverence for the Scriptures, in order the more artfully to introduce their suggestions, to shake our faith and destroy their credit. (2.) It is impossible but they should err, not knowing the Scripture, who, instead of submitting their fallen reason to God's word, insist that even the doctrines of revelation shall be first cited to this fallacious tribunal, and be admitted only so far as they are pleased to stamp them as rational; but if found incomprehensible, they reject them as absurd.

28. ¶ [d] And one of the scribes† came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? 29. And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, [e] Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: 30. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This *is* the first commandment. 31. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, [f] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. 32. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for [g] there is one God; and there is none other but he: 33. And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, [h] is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. 34. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, [i] Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. [k] And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

d Mat. 22. 35—40. Luke 10. 25—28.

† The office of the scribes consisted of two parts, the interpreting of the law in the synagogues, and the explaining of the traditions.—*Whitby.*

e Deut. 6. 4, 5. & 10. 12. & 31. 6. Prov. 23. 26. Mat. 22. 37. Luke 10. 27. 1 Cor. xiii. 1 Tim. 1. 5.

f Lev. 19. 18. Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Jam. 2. 8. 1 John 3. 18. 1 Cor. xiii. Mat. 7. 12. & 39. Luke 10. 27, 36. 37.

g Deut. 6. 4. & 5. 7. & 4. 30. Is. 45. 6, 14, 22. & 46. 9. 1 Cor. 8. 4—6.

h 1 Sam. 15. 22. Is. 1. 11—17. & 58. 5—7. & 66. 3. Jer. 6. 20. & 7. 22, 23. Hos. 6. 6. Amos 5. 21—24. Mic. 6. 6—8.

i Acts 26. 23. ch. 16. & 1. 14, 15.

k Mat. 22. 46. Luke 14. 6. & 20. 40.

Verses 28—34. Struck with the force of our Lord's reasoning, one of the scribes, who were of the sect of the Pharisees, acknowledged he had *answered well;* yet, willing to try his judgment farther, he proposes,

1. An important question for his solution; *which is the first commandment of all;* the greatest, most necessary to be observed, and most influential over the whole tenor of our conduct.

2. Christ fully answers him. The first and great commandment *is the love of God.* He, who is God, alone demands and deserves the whole heart and mind, and soul and strength: and in this one word is comprehended the principle of all holy obedience, and that which necessarily engages in his worship and service the whole body, soul, and spirit; and without this love nothing acceptable to him can be performed. The second commandment is of a like comprehensive nature, enjoining us, *to love our neighbour as ourselves,* fervently and unfeignedly, behaving towards him with such justice and mercy as we, if our circumstances were reversed, might justly desire and expect from him. These two comprehend every supposable duty towards God and man; and there can be no greater commandment, since in these the whole law is fulfilled.

3. The scribe confesses the justness of our Lord's answer, convinced of its admirable propriety and wisdom; and adds his testimony to the truth of his observations, that there is one only living and true God, and that to love, worship, and serve him with the most active powers of our souls, and to exercise this divine charity to our neighbour, is in God's account far more acceptable than the most expensive services, or all the ritual observances.

4. Christ approves the judicious remarks he made: he showed himself a man of understanding, unbiassed by the generally received traditions; and, as his mind appeared ingenuous and open to conviction, he was not far from the kingdom of God. In such a spirit, if he had examined the prophets, and weighed under the divine benediction the evidence of Christ's mission and miracles, he would be led into the truth, and become a member of the Messiah's kingdom.

5. From that time all the captious cavillers were silenced. Such consummate wisdom appeared in him, that none durst any more encounter him. *Note,* (1.) They who improve the light God hath given them, will receive an increase of it, and be led into all truth. (2.) Many a man goes to the borders of the truth, *not far from the kingdom of God,* and yet never enters into it; almost but not altogether a Christian.

l Mat. 22. 41—45. Luke 20. 41—44.

35. ¶ [l] And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of

m 2 Sam. 23. 2. 2 Tim. 3. 16. 2 Pet. 1. 21. Ps. 110. 1. Acts 1. 16. & 2. 30, 34. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Heb. 1. 3, 13. & 4. 14. & 8. 1. & 10. 13.

David? 36. For David himself said [m] by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. 37. David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and [n] whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly. 38. ¶ And he said unto them in his doctrine, [o] Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and *love* salutations in the market-places, 39. And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: 40. [p] Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: [q] these shall receive greater damnation.

n Rom. 1. 3, 4. & 9. 5. Mat. 1. 1. & 15. 22. Rev. 22. 16.

o Mat. 23. 5—7. Luke 11. 43. & 20. 45—47. & 14. 7. 3 John 9.

p Mat. 23. 14. Luke 20. 47. Ezek. 20. 25. Mic. 3. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 5, 6. Tit. 1. 11. Mat. 6. 5, 7.

q Mat. 11. 22, 24. Luke 12. 47, 48.

Verses 35—40. They had frequently endeavoured to puzzle him with questions captious and difficult. Our Lord now poses them with a question, which, as expositors of the Scripture, the scribes should have thoroughly understood.

1. The question was, How the Messiah, whom they all admitted to be David's son, could at the same time be David's Lord, as he expressly calls him, Psal. cx. 1. This was a mystery to the scribes; not understanding the twofold nature of the Messiah as God and man, they could not answer the question. Hereupon the common people, convinced how far Jesus in wisdom surpassed all the teachers, hearkened with delight to his divine discourses. *Note,* (1.) A babe in Christ understands more of the mysteries of godliness than the wisest unenlightened scribe. (2.) Popularity, and the approbation of the vulgar, is often cast as a reproach on the ministers of the gospel by those who envy them, as the scribes of old did their Master.

2. He takes occasion to caution the people from being deceived by the sanctified appearance of their false teachers, whilst in fact they were slaves to pride and worldly mindedness. They wore particular garments, long and trailing on the ground, or with fringes of extraordinary breadth, as a token of superior piety, and made long prayers that they might appear men of extraordinary devotion; but all they did was hypocritical and designing, in order to gain the seat of pre-eminence, and public salutations of high respect, and as a cloak under which to worm themselves into the confidence of widows, whom they plundered to enrich themselves: for which abominations they would bring down the heaviest wrath of God upon their souls. *Note,* (1.) Inordinate desire of human respect and honour is the sure symptom of a proud, worldly, and unmortified heart. (2.) Hypocrisy is among the most common and most crying sins. Beware of it.

41. ¶ [r] And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast [s] money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. 42. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two † mites, which make a farthing. 43. And he called unto *him* his disciples, and saith unto them, [t] Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury. 44. For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

r Luke 21. 1—4. 2 Kin. 12. 9.

s A piece of brass-money; see Mat. 10. 29.

† It is the seventh part of one piece of that brass-money. Two mites are not quite the fifth part of a farthing.

t 2 Cor. 8. 2, 12.

Verses 41—44. For the maintenance of the temple worship and sacrifices, there were coffers placed in the court for the reception of the free-will offerings of the people. Our Lord, being seated near the treasury, where these stood, observed the people who cast in their money. Many of the rich gave much, as became them; but, among the rest, a poor widow came and cast in two mites. Highly applauding the deed, our Lord pointed her out to his disciples, as having presented a richer and more acceptable offering than those who out of their abundance had given more liberally. They had enough left still to supply their wants; but she, out of love to the service, threw in her little all, trusting on divine providence for her future sustenance. *Note,* (1.) Almsgiving is a most needful duty; and our Lord expects, according to our abilities, that we should be ready to distribute, willing to communicate: but he looks not merely at

the gift, but at the spirit and temper of the giver; for that alone stamps the offering with its value in his account. (2.) None can be supposed poorer than this widow; yet she gave. If we have but little, that must be no excuse; we must give our diligence *to give of that little*, and then it is accepted *according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* (3.) A truly gracious and charitable soul will sometimes straiten himself to supply others' more urgent wants, willing not only *to his power, but above his power*, to assist them.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Christ foretells the destruction of the city and temple; the figure of the day of final recompense; warning all men to watch, lest they be surprised unawares by judgments in this world, or the sudden appearing of the Son of man.

1. AND [a] as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!* 2. And Jesus answering, said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? [b] there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 3. ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, [c] Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, asked him [d] privately, 4. [e] Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

a Mat. 24. 1—3. Luke 21. 5—11. John 2. 20. Ezek. 7. 20. & 24. 21, 25.

b Luke 21. 6. & 19. 44. Jer. 5. 10. & 26. 18. Mic. 3. 12. 1 Kin. 9. 7. Ezek. 7. 20—22. & 24. 21, 25.

c Ch. 1. 16, 19. & 5. 37. & 9. 2. & 10. 35. & 14. 33.

d Mat. 13. 10, 36.

e Mat. 24. 3. Luke 21. 7. Dan. 12. 6, 8. John 21. 21. Acts 1. 6.

Verses 1—4. Departing now from the temple to return no more, one of his disciples, pleased with the beauty of that stupendous fabric, could not help observing to him, of what massy stones it was built, and how magnificently adorned. But Christ assures him, admirable as it appeared, and strong as it stood, the day was near when it should be so utterly rased from the foundations, that one stone should not be left upon another. Struck with so sad a prospect four of the disciples came privately to him, as he sat upon the mount of Olives, desiring to be informed when these awful predictions would come to pass, and what would be the signs of their approaching fulfilment.

5. And Jesus, answering them, began to say, [f] Take heed lest any *man* deceive you: 6. [g] For many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* and shall deceive many. 7. [h] And when ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for *such things* must needs be; but [i] the end *shall* not *be* yet. 8. [k] For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of [l] sorrows. 9. [m] But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. 10. [n] And the gospel must first be published among all nations. 11. [o] But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. 12. [p] Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. 13. And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: [q] but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

f Jer. 29. 8. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 2. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 3. 1 John 4. 1. & 3. 7. Gal. 6. 7. 1 Cor. 6. 9. & 15. 33.

g Jer. 14. 14. & 23. 21, 25. John 5. 43. ver. 22.

h Jer. 4. 19. & 5. 10, 11. & 51. 46. with Ps. 46. 2, 3. & 27. 1—3. & 112. 7. Is. 8. 12.

i Jer. 4. 27. & 5. 10, 18.

k Is. 19. 2. Hag. 2. 22. Zech. 14. 13. Heb. 12. 27. Dan. 2. 44. Acts 11. 28. Mat. 24. 8.

l Or *the pains of a woman in travail.* Is. 37. 3. & 66. 7, 8. Ps. 48. 6.

m Mat. 24. 9—14. Luke 21. 12—19. Mat. 10. 17—22. & 23. 34, 37. & 22. 6. & 13. 21. & 11. 6. John 15. 20. & 16. 2. Acts ii—xxvi. Rev. 2. 10. Phil. 1. 28. 2 Thes. 1. 5.

n Mat. 24. 14. & 26. 13. & 28. 18—20. ch. 16. 15. Rom. 1. 8. & 10. 18. & 15. 19. Col. 1. 6, 23. Acts ii—xix.

o Mat. 10. 19, 20. Exod. 4. 12. 2 Sam. 23. 2. Jer. 1. 6—9. Luke 12. 11, 12. & 21. 14, 15. Acts 2. 4, 17. & 4. 8, 31. & 6. 10, 15. Dan. 3. 16, 17.

p Mat. 10. 21. Ezek. 38. 21. Mic. 7. 4—6. John 15. 18—21. & 16. 1—3.

q Rev. 2. 7, 10. & 3. 10. Mat. 10. 22. & 24. 13. Heb. 3. 6, 14. & 10. 39. Gal. 6. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 4. 16, 18. Dan. 12. 13.

Verses 5—13. In answering the question, their curiosity raised, Christ gives them some cautions for the direction of their conduct, it being infinitely more their concern to be always ready to meet the approaching calamities, than to know the precise time of their arrival.

1. He cautions them against the false Christs which should arise, and seduce many of the Jews, who were ready to run after every impostor, whilst they had rejected the true Messiah.

2. He warns them not to be discouraged with the wars and commotions, the famines, earthquakes, and pestilence, which would ravage the earth; these being but the beginning of sorrows, *the end is not yet:* and what is here spoken with an immediate reference to the Jewish state and nation, seems also to have a view to the like calamities which will be the signs and presages of the final dissolution of all things. But amidst the wreck of nature, and the flames of a dissolving world, the soul that is stayed upon Christ need not be troubled; his safety is secured by the everlasting promises of the unchanging Jehovah.

3. He bids them prepare for persecutions, and exhorts them to bear up courageously under them. Far from possessing that earthly greatness and respect with which they flattered themselves, they must expect the very reverse; they will *be hated of all men* for his sake: in enmity to Jesus and his gospel, the world in general would combine against them: yea, even *their nearest relations* would prove false and faithless, and become the bitterest enemies; and, breaking the strongest ties of nature, persecute them even to death. They would be dragged before the rulers, civil and ecclesiastical, and punished as heretical and seditious: yea, even before the heathen kings and magistrates they would be accused, and called to seal the testimony they bore, with their blood. But distressing as these things might appear, they have abundant reason to trust and not be afraid Jesus assures them he will stand by them. When called to answer before the tribunals of the Mightiest, they need not distress themselves about what they shall say: a divine revelation shall be given to them, and they shall be directed in the properest manner to reply to every charge; yea, their very trials before the kings and rulers shall prove a testimony against them; they will thereby have an opportunity of preaching the gospel to those who might never else have heard it. And whatever attempts are made to suppress and silence them, they shall prove abortive; Christ will cause his gospel to be preached and spread, in defiance of opposition, into all lands; and either shelter them from the malice of their persecutors, or reward their fidelity unto death with a crown of everlasting life and glory: considerations sufficient to make them welcome the cross, while such a crown was in view. *Note,* (1.) Sufferings for Christ stumble many; we need to take heed that we be not thereby offended.

(2.) The image of Jesus, as it must reprove the world, will ever procure the hatred of men against those who possess it. (3.) The spirit of bigotry and enmity, which is in the natural heart, against Christ and his people, sometimes breaks through the strongest ties of blood; makes children rebellious, and parents unnatural, even to wish the death of those they are most bound to love and cherish. (4.) Wherever the gospel is preached, if it be not received, it will at least rise up for a testimony against all who neglect or reject so great a salvation. (5.) When we are called to stand forth for Christ, we may still confidently expect to be supported by him, and to be taught by his Spirit how to speak and act for his glory. (6.) All sufferings, and even death itself, will be regarded as light afflictions that are but for a moment, by those whose faith realizes to their minds the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

r Mat. 24. 15—28. Luke 21. 20—24. & 19. 43. Dan. 9. 27. & 12. 11. with Gal. 1. 17. Gen. 36. 8.

s Lam. 1. 10. Ezek. 44. 9. Deut. 23. 3.

t Job 2. 4. Mat. 6. 25. Prov. 22. 3. Heb. 11. 7. Acts 7. 18, 19. Luke 17. 31, 33.

u Luke 21. 23. & 23. 29. Hos. 13. 16. Deut. 28. 56, 57.

x Lev. 26. 14—39. Deut. 28. 15—68. & 29. 18—28. & 31. 17, 18. & 32. 21—31. Prov. 1. 24—32. Ps. 21. 8—12. & 69. 22—28. Is. 65. 12—15. see on Mat. 24. 21. Joel 2. 2. Dan. 12. 1.

y Zech. 13. 8, 9. Is. 1. 9. & 6. 13. & 65. 8.

z Mat. 24. 23. Luke 17. 23. & 21. 8. Deut. 13. 1—3. 2 Thes. 2. 11.

a Ver. 6. 2 Thes. 2. 9—11. Deut. 13. 1, 2. Rev. 13. 3, 13. John 5. 43. Mat. 7. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 1. & 3. 17.

b John 6. 37. & 10. 20, 28, 29. Rom. 8. 28—39. 1 Pet. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 19. 1 John 2. 19.

c Ver. 5. Luke 21. 8, 34. Mat. 7. 15. 2 Pet. 3. 17. John 16. 1. Is. 44. 7, 8. & 46. 10. & 48. 5, 6.

14. [r] But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing [s] where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains: 15. [t] And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house: 16. And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. 17. [u] But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 18. And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. 19. [x] For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. 20. [y] And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. 21. [z] And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or, lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not: 22. [a] For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, [b] if *it were* possible, even the elect. 23. [c] But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

Verses 14—23. Two things the disciples are here taught,

1. To secure their lives by flight, when the Roman army, *the abomination of desolation*, appears before Jerusalem. No moment must be lost, no attempt made to save any thing: they must seek their safety in instant flight. Those who are heavy with child, or have babes at their breast, will be in that day most peculiarly miserable, as least able to fly, or to bear the hardships which they must undergo; and if this flight were in winter, the inclemency of the season would make the situation of the fugitives more deplorable, therefore they need pray that it may not be so. But whenever the time comes, such a scene of affliction, misery, and desolation, will appear, as never was from the creation before, and never will be again to the end of time. They who read the history of Josephus, may see this prophecy awfully fulfilled. Indeed it is marvellous that any inhabitant of Judea survived the dire catastrophe; nothing but the most gracious interposition of divine providence could have prevented their utter extirpation. But God having still a remnant among the Jewish people, and designs of grace towards some, who, in distant ages should descend from them, for the sake of these *his elect*, will shorten the days of affliction, and pluck some as brands from the burning. *Note*, Many who abhor and persecute God's people, know not how much they are indebted to them and their prayers.

2. To take care of their souls. Seducers will abound in those evil days, and with large promises of procuring them relief from the impending calamities, will persuade many to join them; giving themselves out for the Messiah, or pretending to have found him; and with lying wonders and false miracles, will not only impose upon the credulous, but would, *if it were possible*, deceive the very elect. Christ warns them, therefore, against impostures, which he so plainly foretells. *Note*, It is a most comfortable consideration, that in spite of Satan's wiles, and all the cunning craftiness of men who lie in wait to deceive, God's chosen cannot be seduced. They have an infallible test, his written word, to prove the spirits whether they are of God, and he will enlighten their minds, and lead them into all truth.

24. ¶ [d] But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, 35. And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. 26. [e] And then they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory. 27. [f] And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. 28. Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: 29. So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, [g] know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors. 30. Verily I say unto you, That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. 31. [h] Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. 32. ¶ [i] But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. 33. [k] Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. 34. *For the Son of man is* [l] as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. 35. [m] Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh; at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: 36. Lest coming sud-

d Mat. 24. 29—41. Luke 21. 25—33. Joel 2. 30, 31. Acts 2. 19, 20. Zeph. 1. 14—18. Amos 5. 20. with Is. 13. 10. Ezek. 32. 7. Rev. 6. 12—17. & 20. 12.

e Dan. 7. 10, 13. ch. 8. 38. & 14. 62. Mat. 16. 27, 28. & 26. 64. Rev. 1. 7. Zech. 14. 5. Acts 1. 11. 1 Thes. 4. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 8—10. Mat. 25. 10, 31.

f Prov. 9. 1—5. Ps. 22. 27—31. & xiv, lxxii, lxxxvii. Is. 2. 2—5. & liv, lx, xlix. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20—23. John 10. 16. ch. 16. 15, 16. Mat. 28. 18—20. Acts i—xx. or 1 Cor. 15. 52. 1 Thes. 4. 16. Mat. 25. 31. & 13. 41.

g Luke 21. 29—33. Mat. 24. 32—35. Jam. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Heb. 10. 37. Mat. 11. 16. & 16. 28. & 23. 36. Ezek. 7. 2—13. & 12. 22—28.

h Mat. 24. 35. & 5. 18. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Is. 40. 8. & 51. 6. Heb. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 25. Rev. 20. 11.

i Mat. 24. 36—51. Luke 17. 26—36. Mat. 25. 10, 13. 31. 1 John 5. 28. Acts 1. 7. & 17. 31. 1 Thes. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10.

k Luke 21. 34—36. & 12. 40. Mat. 24. 42, 44. & 25. 13. & 26. 41. 1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 16. 15.

l Mat. 25. 14—31. & 25. 1—30. Luke 19. 12—27.

m Mat. 25. 13. Luke 12. 39, 40. & 21. 34. Rom. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 34. Eph. 5. 14. 2 Pet. 3. 10, 13. Rev. 3. 3. & 16. 15. Mat. 24. 42. & 25. 13.

denly, he find you [n] sleeping. 37. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

n Song 3. 1. & 5. 2. Mat. 25. 5. Luke 21. 34. 1 Thes. 5. 6, 7. Eph. 5. 14. Rom. 13. 11—13. Prov. 6. 9—11. & 24. 33, 34.

Verses 24—37. The things here predicted primarily refer to the destruction of the Jewish people; but they seem also to have respect to the final appearing to judgment of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. As his hand visibly appeared in the ruin of Jerusalem, the temple, and Jewish nation, and also in his separating his disciples, when the calamity came near, who fled to Pella, and escaped the Roman sword; so will he fulfil this prophecy in the approaching dissolution of all things, when he shall personally appear, coming in the clouds with power and great glory, to execute judgment on all impenitent sinners, and to gather his elect into his eternal kingdom. Concerning these great events he warns them,

1. That the time of their fulfilment is near, and they might judge of their approach by the preceding signs, just as surely as they would of the summer's drawing nigh by the budding of the fig-tree. Some of that generation would live to see the utter ruin of Judea and Jerusalem: his prophetic word must infallibly take place, and heaven and earth sooner pass away, than one tittle of his predictions fail. Near also, even at the door, is the great day of judgment. The period of time, which yet remains, we know is short; how short, who can tell?

2. The time, when, is uncertain. None in heaven or earth precisely knows the hour, not even the Son, as man, or in virtue of his designation to the mediatorial office; it is a secret locked up in God's eternal mind, and neither revealed to men nor angels. We are left in this awful uncertainty, that we may be always ready.

3. He admonishes them, in the view of what he had spoken, to watch and pray, which he enforces by the following parable. His appearing would be like that of a master, who took a long journey, committed to his stewards the management of his affairs, and directed the work in which he would have his servants employed during his absence; charging the porter to take especial care that no thief broke in, and that all should be ready to receive him at his return, which he left uncertain, that they might be in constant expectation of him, and prepared to welcome him. Thus, when Jesus ascended up on high, he left a charge with all his servants, whether ministers or private Christians, to employ themselves diligently in the work he hath appointed them, and to be prepared to give an account of their fidelity. He is coming again to make a solemn inquiry; the time when, is uncertain; every hour we stand in jeopardy, not knowing whether by day or by night the calls of death or judgment may place us before him. Our care therefore must be, above all things, that we are not surprised by him, slothful, negligent, and unprepared to meet him, though he come never so suddenly. What, therefore, our Lord inculcates upon his disciples, we are alike bound to hear, for unto us it is alike addressed, *I say unto all, Watch. Note*, Our great concern upon earth is to be ready for death and judgment; each breath we draw may be our last: let us seize then the moment as it flies: and whilst the hour lasts, give all diligence, that we may be found of him in peace.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The plot of the chief priests and scribes against Christ,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The anointing of Christ's head at a supper in Bethany,* ver. 3—9. 3. *The contract Judas made with the chief priests to betray him,* ver. 10, 11. 4. *Christ's eating the passover with his disciples, his instituting the Lord's supper, and his discourse with his disciples at and after supper,* ver. 12—31. 5. *Christ's agony in the garden,* ver. 32—42. 6. *The betraying of him by Judas, and the apprehending of him by the chief priests' agents,* ver. 43—52. 7. *His arraignment before the high priest, his conviction, and the indignities done him at that bar,* ver. 53—65. 8. *Peter's denying him,* ver. 66—72. *Most of which passages we had before,* Matt. xxvi.

1. AFTER [a] two days was *the feast of* the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death. 2. [b] But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people. 3. ¶ [c] And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of * spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. 4. [d] And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? 5. For it might have been sold for more than † three hundred pence, and [e] have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. 6. And Jesus said, [f] Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. 7. [g] For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. 8. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand [h] to anoint my body to the burying. 9. Verily I say unto you, [i] Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. 10. ¶ [k] And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. 11. And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to [l] give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

a Mat. 26. 2—5. Luke 22. 1, 2. Ps. 2. 1—5. & 22. 12, 16. John 11. 47, 53. & 13. 18. Acts 4. 26—28.

b John 7. 12, 40. & 13. 1. Luke 20. 6. ch. 11. 18, 32. with Prov. 19. 21. & 21. 30.

c Mat. 26. 6—13. Luke 7. 37. John 11. 2. & 12. 3—9.

* Or *pure nard*, or *liquid nard*. The spikenard was accounted the most precious kind of nard.

d Eccl. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. Mat. 26. 8. John 12. 4—6.

† About £9: 7s. sterling.

e Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. & 78. 36, 37 John 12. 6. & 13. 29.

f Ps. 109. 31. Job 42. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 10. 18.

g Deut. 15. 11. Mat. 26. 11. John 12. 8. & 13. 33. & 16. 5, 28. & 17. 11. Acts 3. 21. with Mat. 18. 20. & 28. 20. & 14. 19

h Mat. 27. 57—60. ch. 15. 42—47. Luke 23. 50—56. John 19. 38—42.

i Ch. 16. 15. Mat. 26. 13. & 28. 19. Rom. 1. 8. & 16. 18. & 15. 19. Col. 1. 6, 23. Is. xxxv, xlii, xlix, liv, lx. Ps. lxvi, lxvii, lxxii, lxxxvii. Acts i—xix.

k Mat. 26. 14—16. Luke 22. 3—6. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12—14. John 6. 70, 71.

l 1 Tim. 6. 10. Prov. 28. 22. & 1. 10—16. Zech. 11. 12, 13. Exod. 21. 32.

Verses 1—11. The scene of our Saviour's suffering now approaching, we have here the steps preparatory thereunto.

1. The anointing him as he sat in the house of Simon the leper; so called, probably, as having been cured by Jesus of that nauseous disease. *Note*, When the sin is forgiven, and the backslider restored, the reproach will still frequently abide. Whilst Jesus was at supper, a woman supposed to be Mary Magdalene, or Lazarus' sister, came behind him, and poured upon his head a box of precious spikenard. Some of the disciples, with Judas at their head, with indignation beheld what they esteemed such unnecessary waste, the value of the ointment amounting to above nine pounds, which they suggested might have been much more profitably employed in charitable uses; but Christ, who knew the secret murmurs they were afraid to utter, reproved their rash censures, and commended the deed as highly praiseworthy; it being intended as a burial unction,

which, according to her power, willing to honour her Lord whilst alive, she thus anticipated, as she would not have an opportunity to do it for him after his death. Their care indeed for the poor was commendable, but they being ever present, abundant occasions would offer to relieve them. But as he was ready to depart, it was the only opportunity of showing him respect which would be ever afforded her: therefore to her honour shall this be mentioned, wherever in future days the gospel shall be preached, and this remarkable instance of her faith and love shall for ever accompany the narrative of his death and resurrection. *Note*, (1.) They who love the Lord Jesus Christ, never think they can do enough to testify their regard for him. (2.) They who honour him, whatever censures others may cast on them, he will honour.

2. The scheme laid for his betrayal and ruin. Determined upon his death, the chief priests and scribes consulted only on the means of effecting it with the least noise; and at first bethought them that on the feast-day it would be dangerous to arrest him for fear of the people: but whilst they were in council, a most unexpected incident fixed their resolutions. Judas, one of the twelve apostles, came and offered to betray his Master. The bargain was instantly struck, the money engaged for, and immediately he set himself to find the properest opportunity to put him into the hands of these his implacable enemies. *Note*, (1.) Where the love of filthy lucre reigns, whatever profession a man may make, there wants nothing but temptation to draw forth the apostasy of his heart. (2.) The devil often favours his servants with most unexpected success, in order to embolden and harden them in wickedness, and to bind them faster in his chains.

12. ¶ [m] And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? 13. And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. 14. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, [n] The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where [o] I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 15. And he will shew you a large [p] upper room furnished * *and* prepared: there make ready for us. 16. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and [q] found as he had said unto them: and [r] they made ready the passover. 17. And [s] in the evening he cometh with the twelve. 18. [t] And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, [u] One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. 19. And they began to be [x] sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is* it I? and another *said*, *is* it I? 20. And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that [y] dippeth with me in the dish. 21. The Son of man indeed goeth, [z] as it is written of him: but [a] woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born. 22. ¶ [b] And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this [c] is my body. 23. And he took the cup: and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it. 24. And he said unto them, This is my [d] blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. 25. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the [e] fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the [f] kingdom of God. 26. ¶ And when they had sung an [g] hymn, they [h] went out into the mount of Olives. 27. [i] And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, [k] I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. 28. But after that I am risen, [l] I will go before you into Galilee. 29. [m] But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I. 30. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. 31. [n] But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. [o] Likewise also said they all.

m Mat. 26. 17—29. Luke 22. 7—23. John 18. 28. Exod. 12. 6. & 13. 3. Lev. 23. 5, 6. Num. 9. 3. & 28. 16, 17. Deut. 16. 1—4.

n Mat. 8. 25. & 21. 3. & 23. 8—10. John 11. 8, 28. & 20. 16. Acts 10. 36. Mat. 26. 18. ch. 11. 3. & 10. 17.

o Exod. 12. 6—11. Lev. 23. 5. Num. 9. 3—5. Deut. 16. 1—4.

p Acts 1. 13. & 9. 39. & 20. 8.

* The English word which comes nearest the import of the Greek here is *carpeted*. Not only the floor, but the couches on which the guests reclined at meals, were spread with a coverlet or carpet for the sake both of neatness and convenience.

q Ps. 33. 9. Num. 23. 19.

r 1 Sam. 15. 22. Exod. 23. 21. John 15. 14. Deut. 11. 32.

s Exod. 12. 6. Lev. 23. 5. Deut. 16. 1.

t Mat. 26. 20—25. Luke 22. 14—18. John 13. 21—30.

u John 6. 70, 71. Mat. 26. 2, 21. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12—14.

x Mat. 9. 15. 2 Kin. 8. 13. 2 Sam. 3. 8.

y John 13. 18, 26. Luke 22. 21, 22. see on ver. 18.

z Gen. 3. 15. Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. 52. 14. & 53. 1—12. & 50. 5, 6. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7.

a Ps. 55. 15—23. & 109. 1—20. Mat. 27. 3—5. Acts 1. 16—20.

b Mat. 26. 26—29. Luke 22. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 11. 23—29. & 10. 16, 17

c *Represents.* Gen. 41. 26, 27. 1 Cor. 10. 4. Exod. 12. 11, 12.

d Exod. 24. 8. Zech. 9. 11. Mat. 10. 28. Heb. 9. 14—17. Rom. 5. 10, 11, 15—21. Heb. 13. 20. Jer. 31. 33.

e Luke 22. 16. Ps. 104. 15. Acts 10. 41.

f Mat. 3. 2. & 4. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 24, 28. Luke 22. 29, 30.

g Or *psalm, i. e.* Ps. cxiii—cxviii.

h Mat. 26. 30—35. Luke 22. 39. John 18. 1—4.

i Mat. 26. 31. John 16. 32. Jer. 17. 23.

k Zech. 13. 7. Is. 53. 2—10. Dan. 9. 26. Gen. 3. 15. Rom. 8. 32. Mat. 16. 21.

l Mat. 26. 32. & 28. 10, 16. ch. 16. 7.

m Mat. 26. 33—35. Luke 22. 31—34. John 13. 36—39. with ver. 66—72. Mat. 26. 69—75. Luke 22. 54—62. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

n Ps. 30. 6. 2 Kin. 8. 13. Prov. 16. 18. & 29. 23.

o Exod. 19. 8. & 25. 3, 7. Deut. 5. 27.

Verses 12—31. We have here,

1. Christ's celebration of the passover with his disciples. By his orders, two of them had been sent with particular directions where to prepare it; and having accordingly found the person with the pitcher of water, and followed him home, they were shown by the master of the house a furnished room, where they prepared the supper; and in the evening Jesus came with the rest of the disciples, and sat down to eat the paschal lamb. *Note*, (1.) When we have our Lord's order, we must go forth depending on his providence, even when we know not whither we go. (2.) The purest communions will not be without false brethren this side heaven; of twelve apostles, one was a traitor.

2. At the table he startled his disciples with an information the most alarming, that one of them, who now appeared so friendly, would prove a traitor, and betray him into the hands of his enemies. Exceedingly grieved at such an assurance, each unwilling to suspect another, and unconscious of such design, Judas excepted, began to say, *Lord, is it I?* I dread the thought of such villany, and wish not a moment to lie under the suspicion of it. In answer to their question, Christ points out the traitor, by directing them to one of the twelve then dipping in the dish with him, adding a most fearful commination against him, ver. 21. if any thing at last might touch that hardened traitor's conscience. *Note*, (1.) A zealous soul is grieved but to be suspected of unfaithfulness. (2.) We cannot be too jealous over ourselves. A sincere disciple wishes others to search him, and prays the Lord each day to try the ground of his heart, and

show him if there be any hidden iniquity there that it may be repented of and renounced. (3.) Not one jot or tittle of God's word can fail, and all his decrees infallibly have their accomplishment; even wicked men, when most envenomed against him, are nevertheless made subservient to his purposes, though this neither extenuates their guilt, nor will at all mitigate their punishment.

3. At the close of the paschal supper, our Lord instituted that ordinance, which in his church should supersede, and supply the place of this solemn feast. Having taken bread, he blessed it, broke, and gave to each of them, to be eaten in remembrance of his broken body, which should procure for them a more glorious redemption than in the passover they commemorated; a redemption from sin, and death, and hell. Then taking the cup in like manner, after his solemn benediction, he bid them all drink of it, as they did; and this he explains as his *blood of the New Testament;* by the shedding of which, all the promises of the covenant of grace would be confirmed to them, and to as many as in faith received these instituted seals of that covenant. And hereupon our Lord takes his farewell of them, till the day came when they should sit down with him in glory, and drink the new wine in the kingdom of God, partaking of the joys at his right hand for evermore. Then closing the solemnity with a hymn, they departed for the mount of Olives.

4. In the way to the retirement whither Jesus went, he took occasion to warn his disciples of their approaching desertion of him, which the Scripture had foretold, and they were about to fulfil that very night. But to encourage them to return to him again, he lets them know, though he should be smitten, and they scattered from him, yet after his resurrection, they should again see him to their comfort in Galilee. Peter, shocked at the thought, confident in himself, and with warmth resenting the suspicion, solemnly engages, though every one of his brethren, like Judas, should desert his Master, he never would. And, notwithstanding the repeated warnings our Lord gives him, that he would not only forsake, but deny him before the morning returned; more resolute and peremptory than before, Peter with vehemence insists he will die with him, sooner than deny him. And all the rest, unwilling to be outdone in assurances of fidelity, declared this also to be their determined resolution. *Note,* (1.) We know not our own hearts, when we confidently boast what we will do. The first temptation will prove our weakness. (2.) Many are discouraged from the Lord's table, for fear of falling afterwards, as if every subsequent sin was mortal: but though no doubt we are called to use peculiar watchfulness, we must not think, if we fall, the door of grace is shut. The disciples, immediately after the sacrament, fell, and foully too; and yet the Lord recalled and recovered them. Let us not then despair.

32. ¶ [p] And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I [q] shall pray. 33. And he taketh with him [r] Peter, and James, and John, and began to be [s] sore amazed and to be very heavy; 34. And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and [t] watch. 35. And he went forward a little, and [u] fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36. [x] And he said, Abba, Father, [y] all things *are* possible unto thee: [z] take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt. 37. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? [a] couldest not thou watch one hour? 38. [b] Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak. 39. And [c] again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. 40. And when he returned, he found them [d] asleep again: for their eyes were heavy; neither wist they what to answer him. 41. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, [e] Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, * the hour is come; [f] behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42. Rise up, let us go: lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

p Mat. 26. 36—46. Luke 22. 39—46. John 18. 1—4.
q Ps. 22. 2. & 109. 4. Heb. 5. 7. ver. 36, 39.
r Ch. 1. 16, 19. & 5. 37. & 9. 2.
s Is. 53. 3, 4, 10. John 12. 27. Gal. 3. 13. Heb. 5. 7. Ps. 116. 3. & 69. 1, 2. & 22. 14.
t Ver. 38. ch. 13. 33, 35, 37. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 18, 19.
u Num. 14. 5. & 16. 22. Deut. 9. 18. 2 Chr. 21. 16.
x Mat. 6. 9. Gal. 4. 6. Rom. 8. 15.
y Gen. 17. 1. & 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27.
z Luke 22. 42. John 12. 27. Heb. 5. 7, 8. Phil. 2. 8. Ps. 40. 8. John 5. 30. & 6. 38, 39. & 18. 11. Mat. 20. 22.

a Ver. 29, 31, 34. Mat. 25. 5. Jer. 10. 23. John 15. 5.
b Ch. 13. 33—37. Mat. 24. 42. & 25. 13. 1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 18.
c Ps. 109. 4. & 22. 2. 2 Cor. 12. 8. Heb. 5. 7. Luke 18. 1.
d Song 5. 2. Mat. 25. 5. ver. 34, 37, 38.
e 1 Kin. 18. 27. Eccl. 11. 9. Judg. 10. 14.
* Rather, *All is over. 'Tis done.* The time wherein they might have been of use to him by their counsel and comfort was now lost.
f Ver. 18. John 13. 1. ch. 8. 31. & 9. 31. & 10. 32.

Verses 32—42. We have before us the amazing scene of the Redeemer's agony in the garden of Gethsemane. Having left eight of his disciples at a greater distance, he took three of them to be nearer spectators of his sufferings.

1. His anguish was unutterable. Amazement and horror seized his soul, and a sense of the divine wrath oppressed his conscience with its intolerable load. Sorrows, like the agonies of death, compassed him about; and pains, like those the damned feel, got hold upon him. He acquaints his three disciples with something of what he endured, which words were too feeble to express, and bids them tarry there, and watch with him in this hour of temptation. We may here, as in a glass, observe, (1.) The dreadful evil of sin, and every pang the Redeemer feels should be a dagger to our hearts, begetting deepest self-abhorrence and most unfeigned grief for those abominations, which nothing but these sufferings of the Son of God could expiate. (2.) The sure foundation of our faith. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all; these agonizing pains are the ransom he pays to satisfy the justice of an offended God; and having accepted one for all, there is no more condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. (3.) The inexpressible transcendent love of our Lord and Saviour, willingly resigning himself thus for our sakes: what returns, then, do we not owe him? (4.) The comfort procured for us under our affliction and dejection. Whatever we suffer, Jesus hath drank deeper of the bitter cup; and having been thus tempted himself, can tenderly feel for us and will succour us under our sorrows, and bring us happily to the end of them.

2. His prayer was humble, fervent, importunate, submissive. As *man*, he could not but wish the bitter cup might remove; as *mediator*, he bowed submissive to his Father's will, content, whatever must be endured, to finish the work which God had given him to do. Thrice he renews the same request, and thrice resigns himself to suffer whatever might be for the glory of the divine Justice to inflict. *Note,* (1.) We are not forbid to mourn and pray for the removal of our burdens, even when most resigned to suffer God's holy will. (2.) Though our troubles are not soon removed, we must not be weary in waiting upon God. In his time they shall end, and we shall finally receive the answer of peace, if we faint not; either deliverance from our trials, or strength to endure them.

3. On coming to his disciples, he finds them asleep, and therefore rouses them with a just and sharp rebuke, especially ad-

dressed to Simon, who had lately appeared so zealous and promised such distinguished fidelity. How shameful that they could not watch one hour with their agonizing Master? or if not for his sake, at least for their own, when it was so needful for them to watch and pray: such temptation being ready to overtake them, as nothing but almighty grace could enable them to bear: but whilst he thus upbraids and warns, the tender Saviour pities them, and kindly seeks to excuse what he must condemn. Their spirit was willing, he knew their hearts; but the flesh was weak to withstand the effects of weariness and the oppressions of grief: and the infirmities incident to this feeble frame, disabled them from doing what they desired. A second time he goes to pour out his sorrows before God; again he returns, and they are asleep, and when awaked, unable to answer his just rebuke, after having received such repeated admonition. The third time he retires to redouble his cries, yet finds them on his return sleeping still. Now therefore he bids them *sleep on*, if they dared any longer; or rather, *will ye sleep yet?* when danger was now at the door; he calls them, therefore, to go with him to meet his betrayer. *Note*, (1.) Slothfulness in prayer is usually the forerunner of sad falls. (2.) Jesus, by his word and providences, is repeatedly knocking at our stupid hearts, to awaken our attention, and rouse us to watchfulness and prayer. (3.) Those who have made the strongest professions are peculiarly criminal if they act unsuitably. (4.) It is well for us we have a compassionate High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and sees that the spirit of his people is willing, even when through the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright. (5.) They who do not watch and pray when danger threatens, will be unprepared to meet it, and sink under the temptation.

43. ¶ [g] And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves,* from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever [h] I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely. 45. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, [i] Master, master; and kissed him. 46. [k] And they laid their hands on him, and took him. 47. [l] And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. 48. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves, to take me? 49. [m] I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. 50. [n] And they all forsook him, and fled. 51. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth† cast about *his* naked *body;* and the young men laid hold on him: 52. And [o] he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

g Mat. 26. 47—56. Luke 22. 47—53. John 18. 3—11. Acts 1. 16. Ps. 3. 1. & 2. 1, 2. & 22. 12, 16.

* Or, *clubs.*

h John 18. 3, 12. 2 Sam. 20. 9. Ps. 28. 3. & 12. 2. & 55. 21. Prov. 27. 6.

i Gr. *Rabbi, Rabbi.* Ch. 10. 51. John 20. 16. Mat. 23. 8—10. & 26. 49.

k Lam. 4. 20. Acts 2. 23. Ps. 22. 12, 16.

l John 18. 10. ver. 33. Mat. 26. 51, 52. Luke 22. 49—51.

m Mat. 26. 54—56. Luke 22. 52, 53. Ps. 22. 1—12. & 69. 16. Is. 53. 2—11. Luke 24. 25, 27, 44.

n Ver. 27. John 16. 32. Job 19. 13, 14. Ps. 88. 8, 18. & 38. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 16.

† Pearce supposes this to have been a tunic, or vest-coat; but Campbell argues that it was only a piece of loose cloth cast carelessly about the wearer.

o Gen. 39. 12. Job 2. 4. see ch. 13. 14—16.

Verses 43—52. His internal sufferings in the garden being ended, his external sufferings begin; so fast doth billow roll on billow, till all the storms of wrath are gone over him.

1. He is apprehended by a band of men sent from the chief priests, scribes, and elders, under the conduct of Judas the traitor; who, as it was night, that they might not mistake the person of Jesus, gave them this signal, that they might know him, by his going up and kissing him. And hereupon, with great pretended respect, approaching Christ, he kissed him, and they who were at his heels laid hands upon him. *Note*, (1.) Apostates ever prove the blackest instruments of hell, and no height of office, or profession, is safe from temptation. We need not stumble at the falls of the greatest apparent Christians, when we see an apostle a traitor and a devil. (2.) The basest schemes of villany are often crowned with success, and the wicked triumphant, but their time is short.

2. Peter, ever violent, no sooner saw his Master apprehended, than he attempted a rescue; and drawing his sword, struck at one of the men who had seized Jesus, and cut off his ear; his intention was good, but his zeal intemperate. *Note*, (1.) Many have more zeal than prudence, and their good intentions are no excuse for their rashness. (2.) In times of persecution, it is much easier to draw the sword and fight, than patiently to bow down and meekly suffer.

3. Christ expostulates with his enemies on this clandestine manner of apprehending him, as if he had been some infamous villain and murderer that needed to be seized, and overpowered with arms and numbers, when they knew he had every day appeared in the temple; where they might easily have taken him; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled that spoke of his betrayal and sufferings, and the flight of his disciples; for they no sooner saw him submit quietly to be bound, than they all forsook him and fled, glad every one to shift for himself, lest they also should be apprehended. *Note*, (1.) The most innocent men are often proceeded against, as if they were the vilest of mankind, and such apprehensions studiously raised against them, to cloak the malice of their persecutors. (2.) The fulfilment of the Scriptures should be a great comfort to us under all our sufferings for Christ's sake: thus, we see, it must be. (3.) We need not think it strange, if in times when we most need such support, our dearest friends abandon us, through fear of being involved in our troubles. In these seasons we should remember Jesus in the garden.

4. A young man near the garden, probably disturbed by the noise, started up from his bed, and ran down with only a sheet about him, or some linen garment, to inquire into the cause, and followed the crowd a little way. Being observed by one of the soldiers, and perhaps suspected for a disciple, they attempted to lay hold of him; but with the loss of his garment, he got loose and fled naked. This incident seems to be related to show the inveteracy of these enemies of Jesus; none that looked like his disciples might expect to meet any quarter from them.

53. ¶ [p] And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. 54. [q] And Peter followed him afar off, even unto the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. 55. [r] And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and [s] found none. 56. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.‡ 57. And there arose certain,

p Mat. 26. 57—68. Luke 22. 66—71. John 18. 12—14, 19—24. Acts 8. 32. Is. 53. 7. Ps. 22. 12, 16.

q Ver. 29, 31. John 8. 15, 17. Prov. 9. 6. & 13. 20. ch. 13. 33—37. ver. 38.

r Mat. 26. 59—62. John 18. 19—23. Ps. 27. 12. & 35. 11. Acts xiii. 1 Kin. 21. 10.

s Dan. 6. 4. 1 Pet. 3. 16.

‡ Campbell prefers the rendering, *their testimonies were insufficient.*

and bare false witness against him, saying, 58. We heard him say, [t] I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. 59. But neither so did their witness agree together. 60. And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?* 61. [u] But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou [x] the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62. And Jesus said, I am: [y] and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 63. Then the high priest [z] rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 64. Ye have heard [a] the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. 65. [b] And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

t John 2. 19. Mat. 27. 40. & 26. 61. ch. 15. 29. Acts 6. 13.

* Admitting all that was attested, it did not amount to a capital crime. This made the high-priest think of extorting from our Lord's mouth a confession which might supply the place of evidence.—*Campbell.*

u Is. 53. 7. Acts 8. 32. Ps. 38. 13, 14. ch. 15. 3, 5. John 19. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 23. Mat. 11. 29.

x Mat. 11. 4, 5. & 16. 16. John 1. 49—51. & 6. 69. & 10. 30, 36. Is. 9. 6, 7. Zech. 13. 7.

y Mat. 24. 30. & 25. 31. & 16. 27. ch. 8. 38. & 13. 26. Ps. 110. 1. Dan. 7. 13, 14. John 6. 62. Acts 1. 11. & 17. 31. Rom. 14. 10. 1 Thes. 1. 7—10. 2 Thes. 1. 7—10. Rev. 1. 7. & 20. 11.

z Lev. 21. 10. Is. 36. 22. & 37. 1.

a Lev. 24. 16. Acts 6. 13. John 19. 7.

b Is. 50. 6. & 52. 14. & 52. 3, 5. ch. 15. 19. 29—32. John 19. 3. Luke 22. 63. Mic. 5. 1.

Verses 53—65. Our blessed Lord, after being dragged through the streets as a criminal, is here carried before the high priest and Sanhedrim, in order that some matter of accusation might be found whereon to ground his condemnation: and Peter, now a little recovered from his fright, and prompted by strong curiosity to see the end, at a distance followed the band; and having got admission into the palace, sat and warmed himself with the servants at the fire, presuming in such company none would take him for a disciple. We are here informed,

1. What pains were taken to suborn false witnesses, in order to have a pretence for putting Jesus to death: this being their bloody resolution, and the process a mere veil to cover the murder. But though many, to please the priests, witnessed against him, and some perverting the words which he had spoken of the temple of his body some years before, and applying them to the temple of Jerusalem, would have represented him as the enemy of their worship and religion, yet all the charges they could muster up amounted to nothing capital, whilst the most glaring contradictions appeared in their evidence.

2. Unable to condemn him upon the evidence of others, the high priest seeks to extort from himself something more material. Finding him silent under all these frivolous and false accusations and not to be prevailed upon to reply aught to these charges, he rose with vehemence, and solemnly adjured him to say directly whether he really was, as he pretended, the Messiah, the Son of the blessed God? Then Jesus, undismayed, with dignity becoming his office, asserted his divine mission and character, with an awful warning to them who now thus despised and set him at nought, that the time would come when they should tremble at his presence, and behold him executing his temporal judgments on their place and nation, and yet more fearfully meet him at the great day, when they must stand at his tribunal, and perish eternally. Pretending indignation against what he termed blasphemy, the high priest rent his clothes, exclaimed against the need of further evidence, and, branding him as a blasphemer, appealed to the rest for their opinion; who, following such a wicked example, unanimously condemned him to death. *Note*, (1.) We may not be staggered if we see the most reverend, aged, wise, and noble, conspiring against the cause of Jesus, and persecuting his people. By such was Jesus himself condemned. (2.) The silence of our Redeemer under every accusation should teach us patience when we are thus reviled, committing our cause to him that judgeth righteously. (3.) It is easy to brand those as blasphemers who have the highest desire to give glory to God. The best men have often been dressed up in the most shocking colours, and blackened with the most opprobrious names, in order to make the persecution of them appear necessary and laudable.

3. No sooner was judgment given against him, than they began to insult him with the most grievous indignities. They spit upon him, blindfolded him, buffeted him, struck him on the face, and in derision bid him exercise his prophetical office, by telling who smote him. Thus did he not hide his face from shame and spitting, that we might be enabled without shame to stand before the tribunal of God.

66. ¶ [c] And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of [d] the maids of the high priest: 67. And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus [e] of Nazareth. 68. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew. 69. [f] And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them. 70. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: for thou art [g] a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*. 71. [h] But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak. 72. [i] And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And [k] when he thought thereon, he wept.

c Mat. 26. 58, 69—75. Luke 22. 54—62. John 18. 15—18, 25—27. with ver. 29, 31. John 13. 36—38.

d Gen. 3. 13. & 16. 2.

e Mat. 1. 21. & 2. 23. Luke 4. 16. John 1. 45, 49. ch. 10. 47. Acts 10. 38.

f Mat. 26. 71. Luke 22. 58. John 18. 25. see ver. 66, 67.

g Ch. 1. 16. Luke 13. 1. John 1. 43, 44. Judg. 12. 6.

h Ver. 29, 31. Mat. 26. 74. Luke 22. 60. John 18. 26, 27. Ps. 144. 3. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

i Mat. 26. 34, 79. ver. 30. John 13. 38. Luke 22. 61, 62.

k Or *he wept abundantly*, or *he began to weep*. Ps. 119. 59, 60. Ezek. 7. 16. Zech. 12. 10. Jer. 31. 18. 2 Cor. 7. 11. 2 Sam. 24. 10. Many versions have it, *Having covered his head*, or *his face, he wept.*

Verses 66—72. Peter's fall had been foretold, and we here see the prediction sadly verified.

1. He had rushed needlessly into temptation, and thrust himself into the midst of bad company, and then no marvel he fell. He was first ashamed of Christ, and that was but one step from denying him. *Note*, They who care not to be found among the disciples of Jesus because it is reproachful, and associate with the world in order to gain estimation, and to be thought well of, will pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

2. On the slightest trial Peter repeatedly denied and disowned his Master, and from words descended to oaths, sealing perfidy and lies with foulest perjury. Lord, what is man, when left to himself! A servant-maid confounded the chief of the apostles when trusting for a moment to the strength of his own resolution. Peter's mouth hardly knew how to pronounce an oath, and would before have shuddered at the thought; but, when a lie had first opened the door, profaneness and perjury easily

entered. When once we turn aside from the path of truth never so little, none know to what dreadful lengths they may be hurried. Complicated crimes loaded the apostle's conscience; denial of his Master, falsehood before God, repeated lies, horrid profaneness, and wilful perjury. Yet even this is of use. Many a poor sinner might have despaired, if he had not seen such examples, and read in their pardon and recovery the possibility of his own.

3. When he was sunk into the lowest depths of sin, then was the time for the almighty, sovereign, saving grace of Jesus to appear. Once had the cock crowed, after his first denial of his Master, and that warning had passed unnoticed; for, till God softens the heart, all alarms of providence or the word are disregarded. The second time, after his repeated crimes, this herald of God reminds him of his Master's words, and his dire fulfilment of them. And now in full view his horrid guilt stared him in the face: every reflection shocked him; and, unable to bear that place, he retired to pour out in tears his bitter anguish. Some render the words, *covering* his face as a mourner, *he wept* bitterly, with penitential sorrow returning to a pardoning God. And it stands upon record, for the comfort of the chief of sinners, that he found mercy with him.

CHAP. XV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Here we have, 1. *Christ arraigned and accused before Pilate the Roman governor,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Cried out against by the common people at the instigation of the priests,* ver. 6—14. 3. *Condemned to be crucified immediately,* ver. 15. 4. *Abused as a mock king by the Roman soldiers,* ver. 16—19. 5. *Led out to the place of execution with all possible ignominy and disgrace,* ver. 20—24. 6. *Nailed to the cross between two thieves,* ver. 25—28. 7. *Reviled and abused by all that passed by,* ver. 29—32. 8. *Forsaken for a time by his Father,* ver. 33—36. 9. *Dying and rending the veil,* ver. 37, 38. 10. *Attested and witnessed to by the centurion and others,* ver. 39, 40, 41. 11. *Buried in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea,* ver. 42—47.

1. AND [a] straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate. 2. [b] And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest *it*. 3. [c] And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. 4. [d] And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. 5. But Jesus answered yet nothing;* so that Pilate marvelled. 6. ¶ [e] Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. 7. [f] And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. 8. And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them. 9. But Pilate answered them, saying, [g] Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 10. (For [h] he knew that the chief priests had delivered him [h] for envy.) 11. [i] But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. 12. [i] And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the [k] King of the Jews? 13. And they cried out again, Crucify him. 14. Then Pilate said unto them, Why? what evil hath he done? [l] And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

a Mat. 27. 1—23. Luke 22. 66. & 23. 1—28. John 18. 28—40. & 19. 1—15. Acts 3. 13. & 4. 26—28. & 2. 23. Luke 18. 32.

b Mat. 27. 11. Luke 23. 3. John 18. 33—37. 1 Tim. 6. 13.

c Luke 23. 2, 5. John 18. 30. & 19. 7, 12. Mat. 27. 12. Is. 53. 7.

d Ch. 14. 61. Mat. 26. 62. & 27. 13, 14. John 19. 10.

* Rather, *answered no more.* The present translation would imply that he had answered nothing to the former questions: the reverse of which was the fact.

e Mat. 26. 2, 5. & 27. 15. Luke 23. 17. John 2. 13. & 4. 45. & 18. 39.

f Luke 23. 18, 19, 25. John 18. 40. Mat. 27. 16.

g Josh. 24. 15. 1 Kin. 18. 21. Mat. 27. 17, 21. Luke 23. 13—21. John 18. 39. & 19. 12.

h Acts 7. 9. John 9. 22. & 12. 42. Eccl. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. Prov. 27. 4. Luke 12. 47. Jam. 4. 17. 1 John 3. 12.

i Mat. 27. 20. Luke 23. 18. John 18. 40. Acts 3. 14, 15. Hos. 5. 1. Ezek. 22. 26.

k Mat. 2. 2. Is. 9. 6, 7. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 30. 21. & 33. 15, 16. Mic. 5. 2.

l Prov. 27. 4. Is. 53. 3. John 15. 18, 24, 25. Ps. 35. 19. & 69. 5. Luke 23. 23.

Verses 1—14. Unwearied in wickedness, we see those who had great part of the night sat up to seize and condemn the Lord Jesus, early in the morning again in consultation how to get their sentence confirmed by the Roman governor and executed. Let it shame our slothfulness, that they should be carried farther by enmity against Christ, than we by zeal to serve him.

1. They bound and led him prisoner to Pilate's tribunal. Our mighty Samson might indeed easily have snapped these cords asunder; but, faster bound with bands of love to our sinful souls, he quietly submitted to be led as a lamb to the slaughter.

2. Before Pilate our Lord witnessed the good confession. In answer to his interrogatories, he confessed, and denied not, that he was the Christ, the King of his spiritual Israel: but to the clamorous charges of the priests, his envenomed persecutors, he observed a profound silence; nor, when urged to answer by Pilate, deigned to make the least reply. He despised their malice; he was prepared to suffer; he desired not to be delivered; and he knew it in vain to remonstrate with those who wilfully and obstinately rejected the truth; and therefore to Pilate's admiration he still held his peace. *Note,* (1.) Christ is a king; and they who refuse to bow as willing subjects to his government, will find him able to punish the rebels that will not have him to reign over them. (2.) We need not marvel if false brethren are our bitterest accusers. Read the Scriptures, and from the beginning it will be seen, that wicked, worldly, and sensual priests are ever the most envenomed enemies to the cause of truth. (3.) Silence is the best answer to false and scurrilous invective.

3. Pilate, convinced of the innocence of Jesus, greatly desired to deliver him from his enemies; as he plainly saw that the envy of the priests was alone the cause of this malicious prosecution; and as it was an established custom at the passover, to gratify the people by the release of any prisoner they desired, he bethought him of an expedient which he imagined could scarce fail of success. There was a most infamous miscreant then in prison for murder and insurrection, and he doubted not, but if he proposed to the people these two, Jesus and Barabbas, they would infallibly prefer the former. The supposition was reasonable; but he was disappointed in the issue. *Note,* (1.) When people think to extricate themselves from their difficulties by indirect means, because if they act openly and honestly it may expose them to censure, they often but farther involve themselves. (2.) Whatever many pretend as the specious pleas for reviling the zealous ministers of truth, it is envy that instigates their enmity; they cannot bear the reproof of their lives and doctrine.

4. Swayed by the malignant insinuations of the priests and elders, who, forgetting their dignity, mingled with the crowd, the people rejected Jesus, and demanded Barabbas. Pilate, amazed, laboured still to get Jesus off, and proposed the question to them, what he should do with that poor man, who was called the King of the Jews, and more to be pitied than feared. They

cried out all together, *Crucify him, crucify him.* In vain the governor attempted to expostulate on the injustice, the cruelty of such a punishment, where a man had been proved guilty of no crime; they only grew more outrageous and clamorous, and tumultuously demanded an instant compliance with their request. *Note*, We must not judge of the justice of a cause by the clamours of the populace: the voice of truth is often silenced amidst the louder cries of prejudice.

15. [m] And *so* Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them; and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified. 16. ¶ [n] And the soldiers led him away into the hall called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band. 17. And they clothed him with purple,* and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his *head;* 18. And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! 19. [o] And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and [p] bowing *their* knees, worshipped him. 20. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and [q] led him out to crucify him. 21. [r] And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

m Mat. 27. 24—53. Luke 23. 24—46. John 19. 13—30.

n Mat. 27. 27, 31. Luke 23. 11. John 19. 1—5. Gen. 3. 18. Ps. 22. 16. Prov. 29. 12.

* Matthew calls it *a scarlet cloak.* In strictness, the garment may have been neither purple nor scarlet; yet it may have had so much of each colour as would lead one to give it one of these names, and another, the other.

o Ch. 14. 65. Mic. 5. 1. Is. 50. 6. & 52. 14. & 53. 3—5. Ps. 22. 6, 7, 12—21. & 69. 7, 8, 19.

p Ch. 1. 40. & 10. 17. Gen. 41. 43.

q Ch. 12. 8. Heb. 13. 12.

r Mat. 27. 32. Luke 23. 26. Rom. 16. 13.

22. And they bring him unto [s] the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a scull. 23. And they gave him to drink [t] wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not. 24. ¶ And when they had crucified him, [u] they parted his garments, casting lots upon them what every man should take. 25. And it was the [x] third hour, and they crucified† him. 26. [y] And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. 27. [z] And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. 28. And the [a] scripture was fulfilled which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. 29. ¶ [b] And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, 30. Save thyself, and come down from the cross. 31. Likewise also the chief priests, mocking, said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. 32. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. [c] And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

s Num. 15. 35. 1 Kin. 21. 15. Acts 7. 58. Heb. 13. 12. Mat. 27. 33. Luke 23. 33. John 19. 17.

t Ps. 69. 21. John 19. 28. Mat. 27. 34. Luke 22. 36.

u Ps. 22. 18. John 19. 23, 24. Mat. 27. 35. Luke 23. 34.

x John 19. 14. Luke 23. 44. Mat. 27. 45. ver. 33. John says it was about *the sixth hour.* The seeming discrepancy may be reconciled by supposing that the third hour was past, but that the sixth hour was not yet come.

† Literally, *nailed him to the cross.*

y Mat. 27. 37. Luke 23. 38. John 19. 19—22. Deut. 23. 5.

z Mat. 27. 38. Luke 23. 32, 33. John 19. 18.

a Is. 53. 12. with Num. 23. 19. Tit. 1. 2. Heb. 6. 18.

b Ps. 22. 7, 8. & 69. 7, 20. & 109. 25. Lam. 2. 15. Mat. 27. 39—43. Luke 23. 35—38.

c Mat. 27. 44. But one afterwards repented. Luke 23. 39—43.

Verses 15—21. The importunity and clamour of the people overcame the convictions of Pilate's conscience. To content them, he released Barabbas, pronounced sentence of crucifixion on Jesus, and delivered him up for execution, having before scourged him in hopes of moving their compassion, But,

1. The soldiers, in order more bitterly to insult him, dragged him to the hall called *Prætorium*, and gathering their whole company, in derision of the pretensions of Jesus, arrayed him as a king, in a purple robe, placed a crown of thorns upon his head, and, ridiculing his mock dignity, wished all happiness to the King of the Jews; striking him on the head with the cane which they had put into his hand, to make the thorns on his head pierce the deeper: spitting upon him in contempt, whilst they fell on their knees, pretending to pay him homage. Thus, because sinful man had affected to be like God, he who came to bear the punishment of our pride, must submit to the basest indignities to expiate our guilt. With wonder and love then let us behold the man, astonished at his humiliation, and bowing with no fictitious homage, but with deepest reverence before him, as our incarnate God and king.

2. When they were tired of this inhuman sport, they disarrayed him of the purple robe, put on his own garment, and led him away to the place of execution, bearing his cross. But being unable to support the load, lest he should die by the way, and disappoint their cruelty, they took it off from him, and seizing one who passed by, perhaps known to be a disciple, the father of Alexander and Rufus, men afterwards of note among the faithful, they compelled him to carry the cross after Jesus to Calvary. *Note*, (1.) Unexpected crosses often come upon us; it is well to be habitually prepared for them. (2.) However ignominiously we may be treated now for Christ's sake, it shall hereafter redound to our everlasting honour.

Verses 22—32. We are here led to the lowest step of the Saviour's humiliation, his humiliation to death, even the death of the cross.

1. They crucified him about nine o'clock on mount Golgotha; a punishment and death the most painful, ignominious, and accursed. The hands and feet torn with the nails, excited the most excruciating pain, the whole body hanging on the wounds; the bones dislocated; the blood streaming down; and, lingering in agonies inexpressible, he felt all the horrors of death in its most tremendous form. None but the vilest miscreants and slaves were thus punished; and God in his law had branded the death upon a tree with his curse, Deut. xxi. 23. He who stood in the room of sinners, of the chief of sinners, therefore submitted to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, to endure all the shame, the pain, the curse, which they had deserved, and thus to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

2. On the tree he continued to endure every fresh insult and cruelty which malice could devise. [1.] Instead of the intoxicating draught usually given to criminals, he was offered some sour wine, mixed with bitter ingredients, which he refused to drink. [2.] Whilst he hung in agonies, the four soldiers more immediately his executioners, sported themselves with dividing his clothes as their fee, and casting lots for their several shares. [3.] The superscription over his cross, though it fastened no crime upon him, was an insult on his pretensions. [4.] Two thieves were crucified with him, one on each side, that he might not only appear numbered with the transgressors, but branded as the vilest of the vile. Thus undesignedly they fulfilled the Scriptures concerning him, Isa. liii. 12. [5.] Every passenger with bitterest sarcasms cast in his teeth what they regarded as his arrogant boasts, ver. 29. wagging their heads in scorn, and bidding him prove the mission which he challenged by coming

down from the cross. The chief priests and scribes also, who came to glut their vengeance with this spectacle, and to see the execution performed with every circumstance of ignominy and cruelty, now triumphed over him, deriding his pretensions as a Saviour to others, who was so little able to save himself: insultingly demanding now that he would show himself the Messiah, the King of Israel, and promising to believe on him, if he can give an instance of the power he assumed, by unfastening himself from the tree, and coming down before them all. Nay, even the very thieves who hung by his side, vented their rage and reviling against him, so hardened even in the jaws of death. Whilst with horror and amaze at such wickedness we read and tremble, let us fear that we do not repeat those crimes we so condemn, by our sins crucifying the Son of God afresh, and putting him to open shame.

d Amos 8. 9. Is. 50. 3. Mat. 27. 45—53. Luke 23. 44—46.

33. ¶ And [d] when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole [*] land until the ninth hour. 34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, [e] Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 35. And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, [f] Behold, he calleth Elias. 36. And one ran and filled a spunge full of [g] vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. 37. And [h] Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. 38. ¶ [i] And the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. 39. ¶ [k] And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, [l] Truly this man was the Son of God. 40. [m] There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome: 41. (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women who came up with him unto Jerusalem.

* Or *earth*.

e *Eloi* is the Syriac as well as the Hebrew word for *my God*. Mat. 27. 46. Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. & 109. 4. Heb. 5. 7.

f Ps. 56. 5. Mat. 11. 14. & 17. 11—13. ch. 9. 11—13.

g Ver. 23. Ps. 69. 21. Mat. 27. 34, 48. Luke 23. 36. John 19. 29.

h Mat. 27. 50. Luke 23. 46. John 19. 30. & 10. 11, 15, 18. Is. 53. 10. Dan. 9. 26. Heb. 5. 7. Ps. 22. 15.

i Exod. 26. 31. 2 Chr. 3. 14. Mat. 27. 51. Luke 23. 45. Heb. 6. 19. & 10. 19. Eph. 2. 14, 18.

k Mat. 27. 54—56. Luke 23. 47—49.

l Mat. 3. 17. & 8. 27. & 14. 13. & 16. 16. John 1. 49. & 6. 69. Acts 8. 37.

m Luke 8. 2, 3. & 23. 48, 49. & 7. 37—50. Mat. 27. 55, 56. & 20. 20, 21. & 13. 55. John 19. 25. & 20. 1—18. Ps. 38. 11.

Verses 33—41. Death at last brings the welcome release from such uncommon wretchedness, after Jesus had hung on the tree about six hours; during which we are told,

1. The dreadful darkness that for the three last hours covered the earth, portending that fearful state of blindness and hardness of heart to which the Jewish people were now abandoned for their wickedness. The Sun of Righteousness was now setting, to rise on them no more; and most justly do those who hate the light, deserve to be deprived of it, and to be left to the darkness of their fallen minds.

2. The darkness of the sun was but the emblem of the more dreadful darkness which involved the Redeemer's soul, and extorted from him that exceeding bitter cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Such a complaint from the mouth of the Son of God may well amaze every hearer. The arrows of wrath now drank up his spirit, the powers of darkness struggled with their might, and all that Jesus could endure was laid upon him. Never had such an hour passed since the sun began its revolutions; nor shall be again, till he is plucked from his sphere.

3. Astonishingly hardened, notwithstanding all that had passed, some that stood by mocked him, as if he now wanted Elias to come; and running and filling a sponge with vinegar, they put it to his lips, the more to insult him; while others said, *Let alone;* let us see whether Elias will appear to save him or no. Thus they regarded him as abandoned of God, and concluded, that none on earth or heaven desired to help him.

4. Having finished the atonement, he dismissed his spirit, and left the lifeless corpse upon the tree. *He cried with a loud voice*, not as one worn out with pains, but as a triumphant conqueror, and vanquished as he fell, by death destroying him that had the power of death, that is the devil.

5. At that instant the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, intimating the abolition of the ritual service, the rending the Jewish state in pieces, and the access opened now through the cross of Jesus, and his body there offered, for every sinner into the holiest of all; God being reconciled through the blood of his cross, and willing to receive all that come unto him through this dying Redeemer.

6. The amazing cry, and sudden departure of Jesus, deeply affected the Roman centurion, under whose command the soldiers were; and, convinced by what he saw and heard of his innocence, and the truth of that assertion for which he suffered, he could not but confess, that *this was verily the Son of God.* He was the first fruits of the Gentile confessors, and appointed to bear testimony to the Redeemer's glory in the hour of his deepest humiliation.

7. Those pious women who had followed Jesus from Galilee, and supported him out of their substance, continued with him to the last. The names of some of them are mentioned to their everlasting honour. Mary Magdalene was one; much had been forgiven her, and she thus proved how much she loved the Saviour in return: and *Mary the mother of James the Less*, so called probably from his low stature: *and Salome*, the mother of Zebedee's children: and now all their hopes seemed to be extinguished by the death of their Lord. Thus when we seem sunk into the lowest depths, then doth the glory of God more eminently appear in raising our desponding souls, and filling us with the triumphs of faith and joy.

42. ¶ [n] And now when the even was come, (because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,) 43. [o] Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. 44. [p] And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto *him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. 45. And when [q] he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. 46. [r] And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and [s] laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. 47. [t] And Mary Magdalene, and Mary *the mother* of Joses, beheld where he was laid.

n Mat. 27. 57—61. Luke 23. 50—56. John 19. 38—42. The word answering to evening is used with some latitude in scripture. The first began at the ninth hour' answering to our 3 o'clock afternoon. And this is probably the period meant here.

o Ps. 22. 29. Is. 53. 9. Luke 2. 25, 38.

p John 19. 33. ver. 37.

q John 19. 31—34. Mat. 27. 58.

r Mat. 27. 59, 60. Luke 23. 52, 53. John 19. 40—42.

s Is. 53. 9. Ps. 22. 15. Hos. 13. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 4. Mat. 12. 40.

t Mat. 27. 61. Luke 23. 55, 56. Mat. 28. 1. ch. 16. 1.

Verses 42—47. Nothing now remained but to take down the bodies as the evening approached, longer than which they were forbidden to hang there; and also, it being the preparation of the sabbath, the work needed to be hastened. But who shall perform this last kind office to the corpse of Jesus? The Lord hath prepared an unexpected person for the service, Joseph of Arimathea, a person of distinction, a counsellor, probably one of the great Sanhedrim, a secret disciple of Jesus: and who, notwithstanding his sufferings and death, expected that this glorious kingdom would come, and in faith waited for it.

1. He went in *boldly* to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus, when none of his apostles or followers had the courage to own him. Pilate, who could hardly believe that Christ was yet dead, called the centurion, and when he was assured of the fact, readily granted Joseph's request, and gave an order for delivering the body. *Note*, (1.) In Christ's cause we have need of courage. They who dare appear on the side of the people that are every where spoken against, must not be shamefaced. (2.) God hath his chosen among the great, the noble, and honourable counsellors; though not many, yet enow to leave the rest inexcusable in their infidelity.

2. Joseph with great respect having taken down the mangled corpse of his Lord, and wrapped it in fine linen bought for the occasion, interred the body in his own new tomb, which was hewn out of a rock, and closed the door with a large stone; whilst the two Marys, who had continued near the cross, now followed their master to his grave, and marked the place, intending after the sabbath to embalm the corpse. *Note*, (1.) They who love the Lord Jesus, serve him with their best, and count nothing too much to bestow for his honour. (2.) In the grave of Jesus the poor sinner beholds with joy all his iniquities buried, and never more shall they rise up to condemn or destroy him. (3.) Visits to the grave are very useful; they serve to quicken us to prepare for our great change.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Christ here, 1. *Rises from the dead,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Appears to Mary Magdalene,* ver. 9—11. 3. *To two of his disciples; then to the eleven,* ver. 12—14. 4. *Invests them with their commission to preach the gospel,* ver. 15—18. *He ascends into heaven,* ver. 19, 20.

1. AND [a] when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. 2. [b] And very early in the morning, the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.* 3. And they said among themselves, [c] Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? 4. And when they looked, they saw that [d] the stone was rolled away; for it was very great. 5. [e] And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. 6. And he saith unto them, [f] Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: [g] he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. 7. But go your way, tell his disciples, and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: [h] there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. 8. [i] And they went out quickly, and fled† from the sepulchre; for they trembled, and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man;* for they were afraid.

a Mat. 28. 1—8. Luke 23. 56. & 24. 1—12.

b Luke 24. 1. John 20. 1. Mat. 28. 1.

* Or, *about sunrise.*

c Ps. 14. 5. ch. 5. 36. Mat. 6. 34.

d Ch. 15. 46. Mat. 27. 60, 66. & 28. 2. Luke 24. 2.

e John 20. 11, 12. Mat. 28. 6. Dan. 10. 4, 5. Rev. 18. 1. Luke 1. 12, 19. Dan. 8. 17, 27. & 10. 8, 16, 17.

f Mat. 28. 4. Luke 24. 5. Is. 41. 10, 14. Rev. 1. 17, 18. ch. 5. 36.

g John 2. 19. Mat. 12. 40. & 16. 21. & 17. 23. & 20. 19. 1 Cor. 15. 4. Ps. 16. 10.

h Mat. 26. 32. & 23. 10, 16. ch. 14. 28. John 20. 19. & 21. 1. Acts 1. 3. & 10. 41. & 13. 31. 1 Cor. 15. 5.

i Mat. 28. 8. Luke 24. 9. John 20. 18. Eccl. 9. 10.

† Or, *and they, getting out, fled.*

Verses 1—8. No sooner was the sabbath past, during which Christ had lain in the grave, than we find,

1. Early in the morning on the first day of the week, the pious women, who the preceding evening had provided spices for embalming the body, little expecting his resurrection from the dead, set out from the city for the sepulchre, which they reached just at sun-rising; and by the way having expressed to each other their concern how to roll back the ponderous stone from the mouth of the cave, to their surprise they beheld it already done for them. *Note.* (1.) Though difficulties at a distance seem insurmountable, when we go on steadily depending upon God, we shall often meet with unexpected assistances. (2.) It is mentioned to their distinguished honour, how assiduous and faithful the women who followed Jesus proved, when the men forsook him. The weaker vessel is often seen to be the stronger Christian.

2. An angel appears to them. As they entered into the sepulchre, to their great surprise and terror, they beheld one in the likeness of a young man, in long white robes, sitting within. But the angel soon quieted their fears: bid them not be terrified; he knew their business there was to seek the crucified Jesus; and, to their inexpressible joy, informs them, he is no longer numbered with the dead, but *risen.* There was the place where he lay: they are therefore enjoined without delay to carry the glad tidings to Peter and the rest of the apostles, and to tell them, according to his promise, that their glorified Master will meet them in Galilee, and make them happy with his presence and converse. *Note,* (1.) We are often apt to fear where no fear is, and to dread our mercies as miseries. (2.) They who seek a crucified Jesus are sure to find comfort to their souls. (3.) Though we for our unfaithfulness might justly be left to mourn our folly, Christ is a compassionate Saviour, willing to pardon, and in haste to speak peace to the souls of his afflicted disciples. (4.) Peter is particularly mentioned; had he not, perhaps he would have thought the message was good news for the rest, but not for him, as having rendered himself unworthy the name of a disciple: but where sin hath abounded, there will the Lord make his grace much more to abound. (5.) They who know the joy of meeting Jesus, and of his spiritual presence in the ordinances of his worship, will not count the way long to go, where his word is dispensed, and his voice is still heard.

3. The women ran eagerly to carry the message, trembling with a mixture of surprise and joy, and spoke to no man by the way, afraid the news was too good to be true, or that the Jews would be exasperated if they heard it, and say they had stolen the body. *Note,* The great good news of a finished salvation, perfect and entire in Christ Jesus, appears to the trembling sinner almost beyond belief.

9. ¶ Now when *Jesus* was risen early, the first *day* of the week, [k] he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. 10. [l] *And* she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. 11. And they, when they had heard that he

k John 20. 14, 16 Luke 8. 2. & 7 37, 50. ch. 15. 40, 47.

l Luke 24. 10, 11 John 20. 17, 18. & 16. 20. Mat. 9. 15. & 5. 4. Jer. 31. 13—20. Ezek. 7. 16. Is. 66. 2.

was alive, and had been seen of her, [m] believed not. 12. ¶ After that he appeared in another form [n] unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. 13. [o] And they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they them.

m Exod. 6. 9. ver. 13, 17. Luke 24. 11, 25. & 16. 31.

n Luke 24. 13—35. with 16. 31.

o Luke 24. 34, 35. & 21. 25. & 16. 31.

Verses 9—13. Christ here appears,

1. On the morning he arose, to Mary Magdalene, that remarkable sinner, out of whom he had cast seven devils. Sometimes the greatest sinners prove the greatest saints, and dearest to the Saviour. She immediately carried the joyful news to the eleven, who, inconsolable, with bitter anguish lamented their departed Lord, and their own unfaithfulness to him, and seemed sunk in despair of ever seeing him again. Nay, so slow of heart were they to believe, notwithstanding the repeated predictions Christ had given them of his rising from the dead, that they received her declarations as a mere fancy, and imagined her deceived by some spectre or apparition. *Note*, (1.) The most reviving comforts usually are sent when we are most dejected and desponding. (2.) The very incredulity of the disciples tends to the confirmation of our faith: it shows, they were not themselves willing to believe, but upon the most indubitable evidence.

2. The same day at evening he appeared to two others of his disciples, who were going towards Emmaus, a village about seven miles from Jerusalem; but perhaps being in a different dress from what he usually wore, and *their eyes being holden that they should not know him*, Luke xxiv. 16—31. they conversed with him for a while, and at last their eyes were opened, and they knew him: whereupon they instantly returned to acquaint their brethren; and even then they would not be persuaded, though the witnesses were so unexceptionable.

14. ¶ [p] Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat * at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because [q] they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. 15. [q] And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16. [r] He that believeth † and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not ‡ shall be damned. ‖ 17. [s] And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18. [t] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.

p Luke 24. 36—46. John 20. 19—29. 1 Cor. 15. 5, 7.

* Or *together*.

q Mat. 28. 19. Luke 24. 47. Acts 1. 8. Is. 2. 2, 3. & 52. 10. John 15. 16. Rom. 10. 18. Col. 1. 6, 23. Is. 45. 22.

r John 3. 3, 5, 16, 18, 36. & 12. 48. Acts 2. 38. & 8. 37. 1 Pet. 3. 21. Rom. 10. 9.

† Or, *He that shall believe.*

‡ Or, *he who will not believe.*

‖ Rather, *shall be condemned.*

s Luke 10. 17. Acts 2. 4. & 5. 16. & 8. 7. & 10. 46. & 19. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 10, 28. Acts 16. 18.

t Acts 28. 5, 8. Luke 10. 19. Jam. 5. 14, 15. John 14. 12.

Verses 14—18. Since they are so loath to believe the report of others, Jesus condescends to put the matter beyond dispute, by appearing himself the same evening unto all the apostles, except Thomas, as they were sitting at table together.

1. He *upbraids them with their unbelief and hardness of heart*, that they were so backward to receive the testimony of those who had seen him, notwithstanding the many assurances of his rising again, which he had given them before his death. *Note*, (1.) Unbelief is a most besetting sin, and highly displeasing to the Lord Jesus. (2.) Naturally we are indisposed to believe farther than we can see; and yet, if even we did see, it would not truly produce faith in any soul that is not satisfied with the evidence of the gospel.

2. He solemnly invests them with authority to go and preach the gospel among all nations, and to confirm their mission by the miracles he would enable them to work. This transaction passed, it should seem, not at the time of his first appearing to them, but afterwards, just before his ascension.

[1.] He enlarges their commission to go into all the world, and to preach that gospel, which had been hitherto confined to the Jewish people, to every human creature, as far as their labours would reach; with power also to send out others, as fellow-labourers with them, to spread the savour of the truth in every place.

[2.] The summary of their preaching must be faith in the Son of God, in his life, death, and resurrection; the necessity of the salvation obtained by his obedience and sufferings for lost sinners; the fulness and all-sufficiency of it to procure pardon, life, and glory for all who trust in him: and the sin and danger of those who reject this method of divine wisdom and love, and refuse obedience to the faith of the gospel, their damnation being as inevitable, as the salvation of those who believe in Jesus, and in consequence thereof make open profession of their faith, and are by baptism received into the bosom of the church, is sure and certain. *Note*, Under the gospel none perish because of the greatness of their sins, but because they sin against the remedy, and seal themselves up under wrath by their unbelief.

[3.] In confirmation of their doctrine they are empowered to work the most astonishing miracles. *In the name of Jesus*, depending on his power, and to advance his gospel, they shall be enabled *to cast out devils* from those that were possessed; *to speak with new tongues*, which they had never learned, with the most entire fluency and readiness, as if they had severally been their native language. *They shall take up serpents*, the most venomous, without the least harm, see Acts xxviii. 3—6. *If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them;* when thus openly or secretly their persecutors might strive to make away with them. *They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover*, every disease giving way to their healing touch. And these miraculous powers they not only possessed themselves, but were enabled to impart to others, and were continued till Christianity got firm footing in the world: since which these miracles, being no longer necessary, are ceased.

19. ¶ So then, after the Lord had [u] spoken unto them, he was [x] received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20. And [y] they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

u John 20. 20—22. & 21. 15—22. Mat. 28. 18—20. Acts 1. 23.

x Luke 24. 50, 51. Ps. 110. 1. Acts 1. 2, 3, 9. & 3. 21. & 7. 55. Heb. 1. 3. & 4. 14. & 8. 1. & 10. 12. Rev. 3. 21. & 5. 6. John 16. 5, 28. & 17. 5, 13.

y Acts ii—xix. & 1. 4. & 14. 3. Rom. 10. 18. & 15. 19. 1 Cor. 3. 6, 9. & 15. 10. 2 Cor. 6. 1. Heb. 2. 4.

Verses 19, 20. When our Lord had thus commissioned and qualified them for the great work he had committed to their charge, we see him,

1. Ascending to his throne of glory, and exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high. Having finished the work of redemption in behalf of his people, all power is put into his hands, to bestow eternal life on as many as the Father hath given him, and to reign in and over them as his faithful subjects; whilst his enemies, as vanquished, must bow before him, and whether they are devils or wicked men, will shortly receive from his lips their eternal doom.

2. We see them going forth according to their Master's orders, preaching the gospel in defiance of all opposition from earth and hell, the Lord supporting them against all their persecutors, giving the most amazing success to their labours; by wondrous

miracles attesting their mission to be divine; and by the power of the Holy Ghost making their word powerfully effectual to the conversion of the hearts of innumerable multitudes. And this sign will ever follow the gospel to the end of time; wherever it is preached in spirit and in truth, it will be found the power of God unto salvation: and as the Evangelist adds his *Amen* hereunto, so are we also bound to do, assured that thus it *will* be, and praying that thus it *may* be; that the word may daily run and be glorified, till the ends of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord, and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God. Amen. So come, Lord Jesus!

A PRACTICAL COMMENT UPON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO St LUKE.

Introduction.

The penman of this Epistle is Luke; of what country is uncertain: I incline to their opinion who suppose him a native Israelite. He was, it seems, a Physician, Col. iv. 14. and though *Religio Medici* is used as a proverb, we find an Evangelist of that profession. He is mentioned with honour as the companion of the blessed Apostle *Paul* in his prison, 2 Tim. iv. 11. and is supposed to be that brother so esteemed in the churches, 2 Cor. viii. 18. The date of his gospel is not fixed, some regarding him as the first of the Evangelists; others say, he wrote during his travels with Paul in Achaia, about seventeen years after Christ's ascension; and many conclude it was written at Rome, during Paul's imprisonment, and just before the history of the *Acts of the Apostles;* and then it will be fixed about the twenty-seventh year after Christ, and the fourth of the reign of Nero; but whenever or wherever he composed it, it is generally received as genuine, and written by divine inspiration, and, as such, stands among the records of our holy religion.

CHAP. I.—YEAR OF THE WORLD, 4000.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Luke's preface to his gospel,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The prophecy and history of the conception of John Baptist, who was Christ's forerunner,* ver. 5—25. 3. *The annunciation of the virgin Mary,* ver. 26—38. 4. *The interview between Mary the mother of Jesus, and Elizabeth the mother of John,* ver. 39—56. 5. *The birth and circumcision of John Baptist, six months before the birth of Christ,* ver. 57—66. 6. *Zacharias's song of praise, in thankfulness for the birth of John, and in prospect of the birth of Jesus,* ver. 67—69. 7. *A short account of John Baptist's infancy,* ver. 80.

a John 1. 14. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Acts 1. 1—3, 21, 22. & 4. 20. 1 John 1. 1—3. 2 Pet. 1. 16—18.
b Ch. 24. 48. Acts 1. 3, 8, 21. & 4. 20. & 10. 41. Heb. 2. 3. 2 Pet. 1. 16. 1 John 1. 1—3.
c Acts 15. 19, 25, 28. 1 Cor. 7. 40. Heb. 2. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13.
d Acts 1. 1. 1 Sam. 2. 30.

1. FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of [a] those things which are most surely believed among us, 2. Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were [b] eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; 3. [c] It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, [d] most excellent Theophilus, 4. [e] That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

e John 20. 31. 1 Pet. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 1. 15, 19. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13.

Verses 1—4. Dedications are usually but the feather with which flattery tickles the pride of the great: but here is one, whose simplicity bespeaks the Christian spirit of the author, and recommends the book not to the patronage of his noble friend, as needing his countenance, but to the consideration of his pupil, in order to instruct his conscience, and direct his practice.

The evangelist opens with his reason for writing. Because many had undertaken to publish narratives of the birth, life, doctrines, miracles, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who, though probably well-meaning disciples, wrote under no infallible guidance of the Spirit; it appeared therefore to be the will of God, and highly proper, that he should compose a connected history, and particular account of all things from the beginning, to prevent the errors and mistakes which might arise from uninspired writings.

1. He professes to confine himself to *the things most surely believed* among the faithful: not matters of doubtful disputation, but facts established by the most indubitable evidence of those who *from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word;* heard the doctrines, and saw the miracles of Jesus, were divinely commissioned by him to go forth and preach the gospel he had delivered to them.

2. He was fully qualified for the work he undertook, *having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first;* and this not merely received by tradition from the best attested reports, but as the words (παρηκολουθηκοτι ανωθεν) may be rendered, *having attained to the exact understanding of all things from above;* which inspiration he had diligently sought, and sacredly followed.

3. The end he proposed was, *that Theophilus*, whom he addressed with the respectable title of *most excellent*, being, it seems, a man of rank and fashion, *might know the certainty of those things, wherein he had been instructed*, or *catechised*. Probably Luke had been the means of his conversion, and had taught him by word of mouth the great principles of the Christian religion; and therefore, that his memory might be assisted, his knowledge increased, and his faith more firmly established in the truths of the gospel, he drew up the following history. *Note*, (1.) The gospel of Jesus Christ is not a cunningly devised fable, but contains facts supported by the most incontestable evidence, and truths, the most sure and certain, wherein our faith may stand unshaken. (2.) Catechising was the ancient method of communicating to the youth, and newly-converted persons, the knowledge of the great doctrines of religion; and perhaps our present deplorable ignorance is owing to no one cause more than to the perfunctory discharge or total neglect of this most useful method of instruction. (3.) Christianity, though it forbids to give flattering titles, enjoins us to pay honour to whom honour is due; it teaches us politeness without falsehood; simplicity without rudeness; respect without servility; and courtesy without cringing.

Before the common account called *Anno Domini, the 4th year.*

5. ¶ THERE was [f] in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, [g] of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth. 6. [h] And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7. [i] And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren; and they both were *now* well stricken in years. 8. And it came to pass, that, while [k] he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9. [l] According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10. [m] And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. 11. [n] And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of [o] the altar of incense. 12. And when Zacharias saw *him*, [p] he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13. But the angel said unto him, [q] Fear not, Zacharias: [r] for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14. And [s] thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15. For he shall be [t] great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16. [u] And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient * to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for [x] the Lord. 18. ¶ And Zacharias said unto the angel, [y] Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. 19. And the angel answering, said unto him, [z] I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. 20. And, behold, [a] thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, [b] because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. 21. And the people [c] waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. 22. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. 23. And it came to pass that, as soon as the [d] days of his administration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. 24. ¶ And after those days his wife Elisabeth [e] conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, 25. Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein [f] he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men.

f Mat. 2. 1.

g 1 Chr. 24. 5, 10, 19. Neh. 12. 4, 17. This was one of the sacerdotal families into which the whole order was divided by David.

h Gen. 6. 9. & 5. 24. & 17. 1. Job 1. 1, 8. & 1. 2. Ps. 119. 6. 2 Kin. 20. 3. Phil. 3. 6. Acts 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

i Gen. 18. 11, 12. & 25. 21. Judg. 13. 3. Josh. 13. 1. 1 Kin. 4. 1.

k 1 Chr. 24. 19. Heb. 9. 6.

l Exod. 30. 7. 1 Chr. 6. 49. & 28. 21. Heb. 9. 6.

m Exod. 30. 7. Lev. 16. 17.

n Heb. 1. 14. Dan. 8. 16. & 9. 21. Zech. 2. 1. & 3. 1. ver. 19, 26. ch. 2. 10.

o See Exod. 30. 1.

p Judg. 13. 20, 22. Dan. 10. 8. Mark 16. 5.

q Judg. 6. 23. Dan. 10. 12. & 12. 23. Rev. 1. 17. ver. 30. ch. 2. 10. Mark 16. 6.

r Gen. 25. 21. 1 Sam. 1. 19. ver. 24, 57—69.

s Gen. 17. 19. ver. 58. John 5. 35. Prov. 15. 20.

t Mat. 11. 9, 18. Num. 6. 3. Judg. 13. 4, 5. Lev. 10. 9. Jer. 1. 5. Gal. 1. 15. ver. 16, 17.

u Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6. Is. 40. 3—Mat. iii. ch. 3. 1—23. John 1. 6—36. & 3. 23—36. & 5. 33—35. Mat. 11. 14. Mark 9. 12. ver. 76—79.

* Or *by*. Campbell renders the passage thus: *And by the wisdom of the righteous, to render the disobedient a people well disposed for the Lord.*

x Mat. 3. 2. Is. 40. 3, 9—11. & 9. 6, 7. John 1. 14, 29. Rom. 9. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Tit. 2. 13.

y Gen. 15. 8. & 17. 17. Judg. 6. 36—40. & 13. 19. Is. 7. 11. & 38. 22.

z Dan. 9. 21—26. & 8. 16. ver. 26. Mat. 18. 10. Heb. 1. 14.

a Ezek. 3. 26. & 24. 27.

b Gen. 18. 10, 12, 13. Num. 20. 12. Is. 7. 9. Rom. 3. 3. Num. 23. 19. Heb. 6. 18. Tit. 1. 2.

c For the blessing. Num. 6. 23—26.

d That is, his week, for it lasted no longer at one turn. 2 Kin. 11. 5. 1 Chr. 9. 25. Heb. 9. 6. & 5. 1.

e Gen. 21. 1, 2. & 25. 21. & 30. 22, 23. 1 Sam. 1. 19, 20. Judg. 13. 5.

f Gen. 21. 1, 2. & 30. 23. 1 Sam. 1. 6. Is. 4. 1. & 54. 1, 4.

Verses 5—25. The other evangelists commenced their history from the conception and birth of Jesus; Luke begins farther back, with that of John the Baptist, his forerunner, which was attended with extraordinary circumstances well deserving our regard.

1. We have an account of his parents. They lived in the reign of Herod, an Idumean, who held his kingdom under the Roman emperor. Both Zacharias and Elisabeth were of the sacerdotal family; he was of the course of Abia, the eighth of those four and twenty into which the priests were divided, 1 Chron. xxiv. 7—19. To the honour of this aged pair it is recorded, that their piety was most exemplary; they approved themselves to God in a holy blameless conversation, living by faith in the expected Messiah, whom they regarded in the use of all the divine institutions, and were sincerely observant of all the ordinances of worship, and duties of morality. But notwithstanding the distinguished excellence of their characters, it was their infelicity to be destitute of children, Elisabeth being barren, and both of them now so advanced in years, as in the common course of nature to

deprive them of the hope of issue. *Note,* (1.) In the worst of times God preserves some faithful ones, as eminent instances of his grace, and reprovers of the world which lieth in wickedness. (2.) Our mercies are often long deferred to make them at last the more welcome.

2. An angel appeared to Zacharias as he was discharging his ministry in the temple. The services to be performed by the course in waiting were determined by lot; his office was to burn incense in the sanctuary; and whilst this was performing, the holy worshippers without in silent aspirations lifted up their prayers to God, expecting acceptance through the intercession of Christ, which the smoke of the incense offered by the priests represented, see Rev. 1—4. And whilst Zacharias was thus employed, *an angel of the Lord* appeared to him on *the right side of the altar of incense;* and, struck with the glorious sight and unusual appearance, Zacharias trembled, and feared greatly what such a vision might portend. *Note,* (1.) Visits from another world may well fill even good men with terror, not only through the weakness of the humanity, but also from the consciousness of their guilt and sinfulness. (2.) Prayer is the service God's people never neglect; and herein their care is to lift up their hearts unto God, not so solicitous about the choice of words, as that internal fervent desires may speak the language of their souls. (3.) All our services and prayers must be offered through the mediation of Jesus, for then only they can be acceptable unto God.

3. The angel delivers to him the message with which he was sent. Having first kindly quieted his fears, he assures him of gracious acceptance with God, and an answer to his prayers. Probably at that time he had particularly been crying for the coming of the promised Messiah, as he had formerly often asked for a son, and both are now granted him; the latter first, in order to introduce the former. *Thy wife Elisabeth,* so long barren, and now aged, *shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John,* which signifies *gracious,* and was most admirably suited for him who should be so great in spiritual gifts and graces, and the harbinger of the Messiah and his kingdom. *And thou shalt have joy and gladness;* not only in him, as a welcome child given after so long waiting, but in the view of the high character and office he is ordained to bear: *and many shall rejoice at his birth:* congratulating his parents on such an unexpected blessing. And it will afford yet farther cause of joy to multitudes, who afterwards shall be blessed with his ministry and labours; *for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord;* highly honoured of God, and blessed with singular endowments from him; *and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink;* a Nazarite from his birth; for it becomes those designed for eminent services, to live a life of eminent self-denial, and deadness to sensual delights. *He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb;* sanctified, set apart, and qualified fully for the ministry to which he was appointed; *and many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God,* the Messiah, their incarnate God, then ready to appear; *and he shall go before him,* as his messenger and harbinger, the morning star that ushers in the rising sun; *in the spirit and power of Elias;* endued with the zeal of that eminent reformer, and in austerity of manners nearly resembling him: *to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children;* either the Jews to the Gentiles, removing their prejudices and enmity against them; or *with the children,* converting young and old by his preaching; *and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,* convincing the most rebellious sinners, and leading them to Christ for justification, even to the wisdom that maketh wise unto salvation: and thus *to make ready a people prepared for the Lord;* raising their expectations of him, removing their prejudices, and pointing him personally out to them as their Lord and Saviour; or *prepared by the Lord,* according to his eternal counsels ordained to life and glory, and now by John's ministry to be called to faith in the Son of God. *Note,* (1.) Though our requests are long delayed, they are not therefore denied; and the mercy at last comes enhanced in value, as the answer of many prayers. (2.) True greatness is not to be estimated by outward grandeur or wealth; God's favour, and the possession of the gifts and graces of his Spirit, these alone make a man great in his eyes who is the fountain of honour. (3.) The great end of a zealous minister of God's word is to convert the souls of men, and turn them to the Lord Jesus: nor need they despair of the most disobedient sinners: almighty grace can bend the most stubborn heart.

4. Zacharias, looking at human probabilities, staggered at the promise through unbelief, and wanted some further sign to remove his doubts. He and his wife being now grown old, the age as well as barrenness of Elisabeth made him regard the event as incredible: very unlike a son of Abraham, Rom. iv. 19, 20.

5. The angel gives him the sign he asked, and therewith the just punishment of his unbelief. *I am Gabriel;* my very appearance to you should have been sufficient to beget confidence in my word; because *that* I *stand in the presence of God,* attentive to his orders, and employed in his service; *and am sent* expressly *to thee* with this message, *and to show thee these glad tidings,* which should have been received with thankfulness and joy: but since thou askest a sign, *behold, thou shalt be dumb,* and no more able to object to the truth of what I say, *and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed,* as a punishment upon thee, *because thou hast not believed my words, which,* notwithstanding all obstacles unbelief suggests, *shall be fulfilled in their season. Note,* (1.) Our unbelief is very dishonourable and displeasing to God. (2.) God's promises will take effect, notwithstanding our unbelief: and though we suffer for our distrusts of him, he will not cast us off from him.

6. Zacharias returns to the people, who wondered at the length of his stay in the temple, and were waiting for the usual benediction before they retired. And their wonder increased, when coming forth he was unable to speak a word, and by his signs they perceived he had seen a vision in the temple, and for a time continued deaf and dumb, see ver. 62. The Aaronical priesthood was now about to be silenced, and the dumb signs of typical institutions to be set aside by the clear voice of gospel grace.

7. The angelic message quickly received its accomplishment. Having stayed out the days of his ministration in the temple, he returned home with his wife, who immediately conceived by him: and thereupon, as she was to bring forth a Nazarite, kept herself for five months close retired from all company, that she might contract no ceremonial uncleanness; spending the time in thankfulness, praise, and devotion; blessing God for the singular mercy, in removing the reproach of barrenness from her, under which she had so long laboured, and at last bestowing on her, in so extraordinary a way, that son who should be the harbinger of the Messiah. *Note,* In all our mercies God is ever to be acknowledged; and particularly we are assured, that children and the fruit of the womb are the heritage and gift that cometh from the Lord.

26. ¶ And in the [g] sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto [h] a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27. [i] To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary. 28. And the angel came in unto her, and said, [k] Hail, *thou that art* [l] highly favoured, [m] the Lord *is* with thee: [n] blessed

g Ver. 24, 30.
h John 7. 41, 52. & 1. 46. Mat. 2. 23.
i Is. 7. 14. Jer. 31. 22. Gen. 3. 15. Mat. 1. 18. ch. 2. 4, 5.
k Ver. 30, 42. Judg. 5. 24. & 6. 12. Ruth 2. 4. & 3. 10. Prov. 11. 16. Eph. 1. 6.
l Or *graciously accepted,* or *much graced;* see ver. 30.
m Gen. 18. 15. Is. 41. 10, 14. Rom. 8. 31. 2 Tim. 4. 22.
n Judg. 5. 24. ch. 11. 27, 28.

art thou among women. 29. And when she saw *him*, [o] she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30. And the angel said unto her, [p] Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31. [q] And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32. [r] He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him [s] the throne of his father David: 33. [t] And he shall reign over the house of [u] Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34. Then said Mary unto the angel, [x] How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35. And the angel answered and said unto her, [y] The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called [z] the Son of God. 36. [a] And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. 37. For [b] with God nothing shall be impossible. 38. And Mary said, [c] Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

o See ver. 12.
p See ver. 13. Is. 41. 10, 14. Rev. 1. 17. ch. 2. 10. & 9. 50. Mat. 28. 5.
q Is. 7. 14. Mat. 1. 21. Gen. 3. 15. Jer. 31. 22. Gal. 4. 4. ch. 2. 21.
r Is. 9. 6, 7. Mat. 28. 18. Tit. 2. 13. Phil. 2. 9—11. Is. 9. 6.
s 2 Sam. 7. 12. Ps. 132. 11. Is. 16. 5.
t Dan. 7. 14. & 2. 44. Mic. 4. 7. Ps. 72. 8. & 89. 36, 37. Is. 9. 6, 7. & 54. 5. Amos 9. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 24. John 12. 34. Heb. 1. 8. & 12. 28. Obad. 21. Eph. 1. 22.
u Gal. 6. 16. Rom. 9. 6.
x Mat. 13. 36.
y Gen. 3. 15. Is. 7. 14. Dan. 2. 34. Jer. 31. 22. Mat. 1. 20. Dan. 9. 24.
z Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. Rom. 1. 3, 4. & 9. 5. & 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. John 1. 14. & 3. 16. & 10. 30. Gal. 2. 20.
a Ver. 24—26. Mal. 3. 1. Is. 40. 3.
b Gen. 17. 1. & 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27. Zech. 8. 6. ch. 18. 27. Mat. 19. 26. Job 9. 10. & 42. 2. Rom. 8. 31.
c 2 Sam. 7. 25, 29. Mark 9. 24. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Jer. 11. 5. Mat. 15. 28.

Verses 26—38. Six months after the former miraculous conception of Elisabeth, the same angel Gabriel is sent on a more important message, to foretell the conception and birth of the Lord's Christ. We have here,

1. The person from whom the human nature of the Son of God was to be taken. Her name was Mary; of the royal race of David, but now reduced to very mean circumstances: a virgin unspotted, espoused to Joseph of the same royal line; dwelling in a remote corner of the land, and in a place despicable almost to a proverb, see John i. 46.

2. The angel's address and salutation. *Hail, thou that art highly favoured*, &c. He wishes her all peace, prosperity, and joy; assures her of the favour of the Most High; that his gracious presence was with her; and that she of all others was singled out to be distinguished with peculiar honour, and to be called blessed in all generations, as the mother of the adored Messiah. The popish plea for the adoration of the Virgin Mary, taken from hence, is absurd, and utterly unsupported; these words in no wise implying prayer, or worship, but merely a friendly salutation.

3. Mary's surprise on the angel's appearance and address. She was greatly astonished at such an unexpected visit, and the respect paid to her, a woman so unknown and unnoticed; and much perplexed, reasoned with herself what this blessedness should mean, which was pronounced with such solemnity.

4. The angel, to remove the perplexity and confusion under which she appeared, proceeds with his message. *Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God;* and when this is the case, all disquieting fears are groundless: *and, behold*, astonishing as the tidings are, yet true, *thou shalt conceive in thy womb*, though a virgin immaculate, (Isa. vii. 14.) *and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus*, the same as Joshua, or Saviour, of whom the former deliverers of Israel were types and figures. *He shall be great*, in dignity, person, offices, and works; *and shall be called the Son of the Highest;* shall really be so, partaking of the same divine nature; *and the Lord shall give unto him*, as the Messiah, *the throne of David his father*, from whom, as man he descended, and whose kingdom was typical of that spiritual dominion which Jesus should erect in the hearts of his people, sitting as a king upon his holy hill of Sion, the church of his redeemed; *and he shall reign over the house of Jacob*, the true Israel of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, brought to the obedience of the faith; and his throne shall be established *for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end*, enduring as the days of time, and subject to none of the vicissitudes and changes which attend earthly sovereignty; and, when time shall end, this kingdom shall be continued in a more glorious form, coeval with the ages of eternity.

5. The virgin, not distrusting the truth, or questioning the possibility of what he said, humbly desires to be informed by what means this should be brought to pass, seeing she was conscious of her own virginity.

6. He vouchsafes to inform her as much as she need wish to know. *The Holy Ghost, the power of the Highest*, exerting his almighty influence, will by his immediate agency, as he moved upon the face of the water in the first creation, enable her to conceive: and therefore, because in this miraculous manner the body of the child Jesus should be formed, he shall be *a holy thing*, from his conception not partaking of the taint of human corruption, as all flesh do in the ordinary course of generation; and shall be called *the Son of God*, being as such now manifested in the human nature: and that which he conceived, henceforward indissolubly subsisting in personal union with the second person of the sacred Trinity, should henceforth bear his name. And he adds as an encouragement to strengthen her faith in his word, that *her cousin Elisabeth*, who was by one of her parents allied, it seems, to the house of David, as by the other descended from Aaron, was now with child, though so stricken in years, and in the sixth month of her pregnancy, who had before been barren. The same power therefore which had wrought this miracle, would work this greater one, of which he assured her; *for with God nothing is impossible*, however it exceeds human power or conception, what he promises he can and will surely perform.

7. Mary, with deep humility and submission, yields herself up to the Lord, as his handmaid, desiring him to do with her whatever he pleased: utterly unworthy so great an honour, yet, since such was his promise, begging it might be fulfilled, and faithfully depending upon the Lord's almighty power and grace. Hereupon the angel departed, having finished the work the Lord had given him to do. *Note*, (1.) However wonderful and surpassing God's great promises are, it becomes us to credit his word, and rest our everlasting hopes thereon; then we glorify him. (2.) Angelic visions here below were always transient; shortly these blessed spirits will be our companions to eternity.

39. ¶ And Mary arose in those days, and went into the [d] hill country with haste, into a [e] city of Juda; 40. And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the [f] babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was [g] filled with

d Josh. 15. 48—59.
e Probably Hebron. Josh. 15. 54. & 21. 11.
f Jer. 1. 5. Ps. 22. 10.
g Rev. 1. 10. Acts 6. 3.

the Holy Ghost: 42. And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, [h] Blessed *art* thou among women, and [i] blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb. 43. [k] And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of [l] my Lord should come to me? 44. For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45. [m] And blessed *is* she † that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. 46. ¶ And Mary said, [n] My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48. [o] For he hath regarded the [p] low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations [q] shall call me blessed. 49. [r] For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name. 50. [s] And his mercy *is* on them that fear him from generation to generation. 51. [t] He hath shewed strength with his arm; [u] he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52. [x] He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53. [y] He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. 54. [z] He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy; 55. [a] As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. 56. And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

h Ver. 28. Judg. 5. 24.
i Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 17, 18. Ps. 21. 6. & 45. 2. & 72. 17, 19. Rom. 9. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 15.
k Judg. 6. 15 Ruth 2. 10. 2 Sam. 9. 8.
l John 20. 28. Phil. 3. 8, 9. Gal. 2. 20.
m Ch. 11. 28. John 20. 29. 2 Cor. 20. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 8.
† Or *which believed that there.*
n Ps. 103. 1—6. & 34. 2. & 35. 9, 10. 1 Sam. 2. 1. Is. 24. 16. & 45. 25. & 61. 10. Hab. 3. 17, 18. 2 Cor. 2. 14. Rom. 5. 11. Phil. 3. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 1. 1. Tit. 2. 13.
o 1 Sam. 2. 8. Ps. 113. 6, 7. & 138. 6. 2 Kin. 14. 26. Ps. 25. 18. & 102. 17.
p Or *lowliness.* Is. 66. 2. 1 Pet. 5. 5.
q Gen. 30. 13. ch. 11. 27. Judg. 5. 24.
r Ps. 71. 19. & 111. 9. & 126. 2, 3.
s Gen. 17. 7. Exod. 20. 6. Ps. 103. 17. & cxxxvi, cxlv.
t Is. 59. 1. & 51. 9. & 52. 10. & 40. 10. Ps. 89. 13. & 99. 1.
u Ps. 33. 10. & 89. 10. Is. 29. 16. Exod. 15. 9. Esth. 6. 6. Dan 4. 34. ch. 12. 19, 20. 1 Pet. 5. 5.
x Job 12. 19, 21. 1 Sam. 2. 6—8. Job 5. 11. Ps. 113. 6, 7. Is. 66. 2.
y 1 Sam. 2. 5. Ps. 34. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 26.
z Is. 41. 8, 10. & 46. 4. & 30. 18. & 65. 7. Jer. 31. 3, 20. Ps. 98. 3. Mic. 7. 18—20.
a Gen. 17. 9, 10. & 22. 18. Ps. 132. 11. Rom. 11. 28, 29. Ps. 103. 17.

Verses 39—56. Quickly after the angel's departure we are informed,

1. Of Mary's visit to her cousin Elisabeth in haste, to confer with her on these strange events, that they might confirm each other's faith, and rejoice in these singular mercies. The journey was long from Galilee to the hill-country of Judea, probably to Hebron, a city of priests; but the converse of such a friend as Elisabeth would repay all her pains. *Note,* Nothing is more encouraging, comforting, and quickening, than when the faithful communicate their mutual experiences.

2. Their meeting was accompanied with circumstances very remarkable. No sooner had Mary entered the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth, than the babe, as under a divine impulse, leaped in her womb, seeming to congratulate the blessed Virgin's arrival; *and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost;* with the extraordinary afflatus of the divine Spirit, revealing to her mind the Messiah's conception, the message of the angel to Mary, her faith therein, and the sure performance of what was then promised: and addressing her welcome and highly honoured guest, she spoke aloud, with a transport of holy joy, as the Spirit gave her utterance, saying, *Blessed art thou among women;* distinguished above all others with peculiar marks of divine favour; and, far from envying, Elisabeth warmly congratulated her on the honour; *and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,* that divine Messiah being there conceived, in whom all nations of the world should be blessed, and who is in himself, in the glory of the divine nature, God over all blessed for ever. *And whence is this to me?* how great the condescension, *that the mother of my Lord should come to me?* that she should honour me with her company, from whom a body is preparing for the great Lord of all to appear in the human nature. *For lo!* with wonder hear what wonder I relate; *as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy,* as if conscious of the nearness of his Lord, and welcoming her who should bring forth that Messiah, whose harbinger he is appointed to be. *And blessed is she that believed;* not staggering at the promise, but acquiescing in the divine word, which shall infallibly be accomplished: *for there shall be a performance of those things which are told her from the Lord. Note,* (1.) True grace makes us thankful for our own mercies, and to rejoice without envy in others' greater attainments. (2.) When the gospel's joyful sound reaches our ears, and the sweet name of Jesus is proclaimed, then should our hearts leap as this babe, and bless the God of our salvation. (3.) Believing souls must be blessed; Christ is now formed in their hearts the hope of glory, and they shall assuredly see the eternal performance of all the great and precious promises which the faithful God hath given them.

3. Mary, deeply affected with the words of Elisabeth, and moved with the same divine inspiration, echoes back her praises, and foresees and foretells the great salvation of the Messiah now in her womb.

[1.] She rejoices in God for the distinguished honour he conferred upon her. *My soul doth magnify the Lord,* exalting his great and glorious name, and admiring and adoring the wonders of his goodness; *and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour;* and justly was it a greater cause of joy to her, that she knew herself interested in his salvation, than that after the flesh she should be honoured as his mother; for without the former, the latter could have profited her nothing. *For he hath regarded the low state of his handmaiden;* though in outward circumstances contemptible and mean, and as a poor sinner, vile and unworthy; he hath been pleased to honour me so highly: *for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;* as distinguished with this singular mark of his favour; as interested through faith in the salvation of Jesus; and as the happy instrument chosen to bring forth that Redeemer, who should be the great blessing of mankind. *For he that is mighty hath done to me great things,* displaying his power beyond all conception, in the incarnation of his Son, and his sovereign grace *to me,* appointed to bring him forth; *and holy is his name,* as all his works and ways declare; therefore from men and angels to him all praise is due; and may it be for ever ascribed to him by all the hosts of earth and heaven! *Note,* (1.) When Christ is known *as our God and Saviour,* then shall we rejoice in him, and magnify his name. (2.) The lower we are in our own eyes, the more admiring thoughts shall we have of the distinguishing grace of our Lord.

[2.] She praises him for the wonders he doth for his people in the ways of his providence and grace. *His mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation;* not to me only, but to all who with filial reverence and godly fear worship and serve him. *His mercy* to such is rich and gracious; and now more eminently displayed than ever, in the incarnation of his Son, given to bring in an everlasting righteousness, and work out an everlasting salvation, in which whosoever trusts, from generation to generation, will find mercy for ever. *He hath showed strength with his arm;* choosing the weak things of the world to confound the mighty; raising up so glorious a Redeemer from a birth so obscure: *he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts;* disappointing their schemes, and humbling them in the dust. Both in the dispensations of his providence and grace, *he hath put down the mighty from their seats;* the proud oppressors

of his people of old, as Pharaoh, Sennacherib, &c. and the spiritually proud, the lofty Pharisees, and all self-righteous sinners; these he hurls from their fancied dignity, destroys their vain confidences, and casts them down as contemptible and vile; *and exalted them of low degree*, he hath done so, and continues so to do, raising up by his providence the oppressed, as Joseph from the prison to sit among the princes; and by his grace reviving the hearts of poor and contrite sinners, exalting them to his favour, and delighting to honour them. *He hath filled the hungry*, those that hunger after righteousness, and feel their utter need of Jesus, *with good things*, satisfying their souls out of his fulness; *and the rich*, who, admiring their own excellencies, see no want of a better righteousness; those *he hath sent empty away*, destitute of all true grace, without the least mark of his favour, and given up to their own delusions. *He hath holpen his servant Israel*, in all past ages, by extraordinary interpositions on their behalf: and now more eminently, in raising them up a Saviour from their most dangerous spiritual enemies; *in remembrance of his mercy*, which from eternity dwelt in his mind towards them, and which at sundry times he revealed to them; *as he spoke to our fathers, Abraham and his seed for ever;* to whom he had promised, that in his seed all nations of the world should be blessed, which promise God was now about to fulfil. *Note*, (1.) Pride will surely have a fall. No height of station or self-confidence can protect those whom God abhors. (2.) There is help laid on one mighty to save; and all the poor, the weak, and helpless of God's Israel, may come to him, and be holpen. (3.) All God's promises will, sooner or later, receive their accomplishment, and blessed are they who wait for him.

4. Mary, after a visit of three months, returned to Nazareth, satisfied now of her own conception, and thereby assured of the truth of the angel's and Elisabeth's predictions.

57. ¶ Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and [b] she brought forth a son. 58. And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed [c] great mercy upon her; and [d] they rejoiced with her. 59. And it came to pass, that [e] on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. 60. And his mother answered and said, Not *so;* [f] but he shall be called John. 61. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. 62. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. 63. And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. 64. [g] And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he spake, and praised God. 65. [h] And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these ‡ sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. 66. And all they that heard *them* [i] laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, [k] What manner of child shall this be! [l] And the hand of the Lord was with him.

b Ver. 13. Num. 23. 19.

c Ver. 25, 76—79. Mal. 4. 5. Ps. 113. 9.

d Ver. 14. Rom. 12. 15. Gen. 22. 6. Is. 66. 10.

e Gen. 17. 9—14. Lev. 21. 3. Phil. 3. 5. Col. 2. 11. John 7. 22.

f Ver. 13. Gen. 24. 3. Mat. 1. 21, 25. Gen. 17. 21. Lev. 12. 3. ch. 2. 21. Gen. 18. 19. Is. 8. 3. Hos. 1. 4—9. 2 Sam. 12. 25.

g Ver. 20. Ps. 51. 15. & 103. 1—6. & 116. 12—18. & 145. 21.

h Mat. 9. 33. & 15. 31. Acts 5. 5, 11.

‡ Or *things*.

i Ch. 2. 19, 51. & 9. 44.

k Ch. 2. 25—38. Gen. 21. 6.

l Ver. 80. 1 Kin. 18. 46. Judg. 13. 24, 25. Jer. 1. 5. Is. 41. 10.

Verses 57—66. Elisabeth's full time being come, we have here,

1. The birth of her son, and the great joy attending it. Tidings of so extraordinary an event were soon spread among her relations and neighbours, and they could not but magnify the Lord for so signal a mercy vouchsafed to her, who was both barren and aged: and they came to congratulate her on the occasion, and rejoice with her. *Note*, A gracious heart takes pleasure in the comforts which others enjoy, and rejoices with those that rejoice.

2. On the eighth day, when the child was to be circumcised, as it was usual at that time to give a name after some of his ancestors, the friends and relations, who met on that occasion, would have called him Zacharias, after his father; but Elisabeth, informed by writing from her husband, or by revelation, objected, insisting that the child should be called John. They who were present expressed their surprise at this, and objected against what was so unusual, none of her kindred bearing that name: the matter therefore was referred to the father for his decision, who, being deaf and dumb, they made signs to him that he would fix the child's name; and he making signs for a writing-table, to the astonishment of the company, wrote, *His name is John*. *Note*, (1.) The first concern we owe our children is, early to dedicate them to God. (2.) Every John should remember the import of his name, and show himself truly *gracious*.

3. Zacharias immediately thereupon recovered his speech, and as the first and best use of his tongue, offered up his praises and thanksgiving to the God of his mercies.

4. These extraordinary events, which now were spread, and in every body's mouth, filled the people with astonishment and reverential fear, in awful expectation of what would be their issue, treasuring up in their memories, and often pondering in their mind the wonderful circumstances attending the birth of this extraordinary child; and from his earliest infancy something amazingly great and gracious was seen in him, which farther engaged their attention, it evidently appearing that *the hand of the Lord was with him*, and that he was taken under the care and guidance of his peculiar providence and grace. *Note*, God has ways we know not of, to communicate his grace to the souls of infants, and make them partakers of the Holy Ghost, even before they are partakers of reason: who then can say, why such should not be baptized?

67. ¶ And his father Zacharias was [m] filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68. [n] Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath [o] visited and redeemed his people, 69. [p] And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70. [q] As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began; 71. [r] That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us: 72. [s] To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and [t] to remember his holy covenant; 73. The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, 74. That he would grant unto us, [u] that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, 75. [x] In holi-

m Num. 11. 25. 2 Sam. 23. 2. 2 Chr. 20. 14. Rev. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 1. 21.

n Gen. 9. 27. 1 Chr. 29. 10. Ps. 72. 17—19. & 106. 48. & cvii.

o Exod. 3. 16, 17. & 4. 31. ch. 7. 16. Mat. 1. 21. Eph. 1. 7.

p Ps. 132. 17, 18. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Ezek. 17. 22, 23. & 34. 23, 20. Acts 2. 30. 1 Sam. 2. 10.

q Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 33. 15, 16. & 30. 9, 21. Gen. 3. 15. & 49. 10. Is. 7. 13, 14. & 11. 1—5. Ps. 72. 1—9. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 9. 9.

r Ps. 106. 10, 47. Is 45. 17, 22. & 49. 24—26. & 53. 10, 11. & 55. 7. Mat. 1. 21. Gal. 1. 4. 1 John 3. 8.

s Exod. 20. 6. Lev. 26. 42. Mic. 7. 18—20. Mat. 10. 6. & 15. 24. ver. 54. Acts 3. 25, 26. Rom. 11. 28.

t Gen. 12. 3. & 17. 4, 7. & 22. 16—18. Ps. 105. 8, 9. Jer. 31. 3. Heb. 6. 13—18.

u Gen. 22. 17. Lev. 25. 18. Deut. 12. 10, 18. Is. 45. 17. Jer. 23. 6. Rom. 6. 18, 22. & 8. 15. Heb. 2. 15. & 4. 14. & 12. 28, 29.

x Jer. 32. 39, 40. Eph. 4. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 15. Tit. 2. 12.

ness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. 76. And thou, child, shalt [y] be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77. [z] To give knowledge of salvation unto his people * by the remission of their sins, 78. Through the [a] tender mercy of our God: whereby the [b] day-spring from on high hath visited us, 79. [c] To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. 80. And [d] the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was [e] in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

y Ver. 15—17. Is. 40. 3. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6. Mat. 11. 9—14. Mark 1. 2, 3. John 1. 23, 27. & 3. 28. Acts 13. 24, 25.
z Ver. 15—17. ch. 3. 3—18. Mat. 3. 1—12. John 1. 6. —36. & 5. 32—36.
* Or *for.*
a Or *bowels of the mercy.* Is. 63. 7. Eph. 2. 4—7.
b Or *sunrising*, or *branch.* Num. 24. 17. Is. 11. 1. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. Mal. 4. 2.
c Is. 9. 2. & 42. 7. & 49. 6. & 60. 1. & 43. 8. Mal. 4. 2. Mat. 4. 16. John 8. 12. & 1. 9. 1 Sam. 2. 9.
d Ch. 2. 40, 52. Judg. 13. 25. 1 Sam. 3. 19, 20.
e Mat. 3. 1. & 11. 7. Mark 1. 3, 4. John 1. 31.

Verses 67—80. Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost, among his other ascriptions of praise to the Lord, when his tongue was loosed, uttered the following prophetic song relative to the Messiah's incarnation and redemption, and the fulfilment of the everlasting covenant of grace to his people.

1. He blesses, adores, and praises the God of his Israel for the salvation to be obtained by the Messiah, *who hath visited and redeemed his people;* hath often done it before, but now more signally than ever, by that eternal redemption which his incarnate Son was about to obtain for his elect; *and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David:* one able to save to the uttermost, and before whom all his foes must fall: sprung from the royal race of David according to his faithful promises, *as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began;* from the promise made to fallen man in paradise had this Saviour been the constant subject of the prophetic word, as the seed of the woman, the descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and the family of David; and, lo, the event verifies all the predictions. The expected Saviour is now incarnate, and ready to appear, *that we should be saved from our enemies,* the worst of enemies, sin, Satan, death, and hell; *and from the hand of all that hate us;* from this present evil world, and all the wicked who inhabit it: not a temporal, but, what is infinitely better, a spiritual salvation from all the powers of darkness and corruption; *to perform the mercy promised to our fathers;* that mercy of all mercies, the sending the Messiah; *and to remember his holy covenant,* which from eternity was established, and is now about to be fulfilled by the obedience and death of Jesus in behalf of his people, whereby all our forfeited mercies might be restored, and our title to glory be recovered, according to *the oath which he sware to our father Abraham,* the father of all the faithful, both Jews and Gentiles, *that he would grant unto us,* in virtue of our divine Redeemer's undertaking, *that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies,* those spiritual enemies by whom we were enslaved, and must have for ever continued under the bondage of corruption, unless the Son had made us free: but, blessed be his name! he hath brought us by his blood, his righteousness, and grace, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, that we *might serve him without fear;* no longer in the spirit of a slave, but under the influence of that free spirit of adoption, where love casteth out servile fear and enables us to walk willingly and cheerfully, *in holiness and righteousness before him;* in the universal discharge of the duties of piety towards God, and justice towards men; at least under a prevailing desire to do so with ceaseless prayer for divine assistance, *all the days of our life,* faithful and persevering until death in his blessed service: and they who have found this fulfilled to them, have reason indeed to praise God without ceasing.

2. He blesses God for the particular mercy shown to himself in giving him such a son, whose office and dignity he in spirit foresees. *And thou child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest;* of that divine Emmanuel, who is God over all blessed for ever: *for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord,* as the harbinger of the King of Glory, *to prepare his ways,* by preaching repentance, and directing sinners to him, as the only Saviour of lost souls: *to give knowledge of salvation unto his people,* of a spiritual and eternal salvation wrought out by Jesus, which he declared to them: a salvation not obtained by any personal righteousness of their own, as a matter of desert, but freely bestowed on them *by the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of our God,* the original fountain from whence all the great salvation flows, *whereby the day-spring,* or rising Sun of Righteousness, *from on high hath visited us,* with his reviving and refreshing beams of grace, *to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death:* to those who before through a veil darkly in types and figures caught the glimmering day; to diffuse his bright influences amidst the heathen world, covered with thickest darkness of idolatry and ignorance; and to shine into the minds of blind, stupid, and hardened sinners, dispelling the mists of error, and chasing the clouds of sin away, enlightening the conscience, and softening the heart, in order *to guide our feet into the way of peace;* to peace with God through the atoning blood; to peace within, through the application of it to our souls; to peace with men, through the spirit of universal love; to eternal peace, the consummation of our felicity.

3. The younger years of the Baptist strongly corroborated this prediction concerning him. *He grew, and waxed strong in spirit;* his parts and capacity increased wonderfully with his stature, and his soul was filled with uncommon wisdom, fortitude, and grace; *and he was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel;* living in solitude, retirement, and devotion, till the time appointed for his entering upon his prophetic office. *Note,* They who most carefully improve their younger days in the school of true wisdom, will be best qualified to appear, and most likely to be successful, when they are called forth to minister in public.

CHAP. II. year of the world, 4000.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The birth of Christ at Bethlehem.* 2. *The notifying of his birth to the shepherds in that neighbourhood by an angel, the song of praise which the angels sung upon that occasion, and the spreading of the report of it by the shepherds,* ver. 8—20. 3. *The circumcision of Christ, and the naming of him,* ver. 21. 4. *The presenting of him in the temple,* ver. 22—24. 5. *The testimonies of Simeon and Anna the prophetess concerning him,* ver. 25—39. 6. *Christ's growth and pregnancy of parts,* ver. 40—52. 7. *His observing the passover at twelve years old, and his discourse with the doctors in the temple,* ver 41—51.

Before the account called *Anno Domini, the 4th year.*

1. AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be * taxed. 2. (*And* this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of† Syria.†) 3. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto [a] the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was [b] of the house and lineage of David;) 5. To be taxed with Mary [c] his espoused wife, being great

* Or enrolled in the registers of the empire, in order to be taxed.
† Or, *This first register took effect when Cyrenius was president of Syria:* for at this time Quintilius Varus was governor of Syria. The enrolment was now made preparatory to the taxing, but the tax itself was not levied till Cyrenius was president some years afterwards.

a 1 Sam. 16. 4. & 17. 12. Mic. 5. 2. Mat. 2. 4, 5. John 7. 42. b Mat. 1. 1—16. ch. 3. 23—31. c Ch. 1. 27. Mat. 1. 18—20. Thus God protected her reputation.

with child. 6. ¶ And so it was, that, [d] while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, 7. And [e] she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and [f] laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

d Mic. 5. 2. Mat. 2. 1, 4—6, 8, 16.

e Gen. 3. 15. Is. 7. 14. Jer. 31. 22. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. John 1. 14. Gal. 4. 4. Mat. 1. 24, 25.

f Ps. 22. 6. Mat. 8. 20. ver. 12. 2 Cor. 8. 9.

Verses 1—7. The morning star being arisen, the Sun of Righteousness cannot be far behind; in the fulness of time God sends forth his Son, born of a woman. We have here,

1. The time of Christ's birth; in the reign of Augustus Cesar. When he had extended the Roman monarchy to the greater part of the known world, and was now in perfect peace throughout this vast empire, he orders a general enrolment to be made through the provinces, that every man, according to his ability, might pay a suitable tax; and this was done under the inspection of Cyrenius, the governor of Syria, with which Judea was joined as one province; so that it evidently appeared the sceptre was departed from Judah, by this badge of servitude, Gen. xlix. 10. the fourth monarchy was now risen to its glory, Dan. ii. 44. and therefore in this time of peace was the proper and appointed period fixed by the ancient prophecies for the appearing of the Prince of peace, the Messiah.

2. The place where Jesus was born; at Bethlehem: whither his parents were obliged to travel on account of this enrolment, they being of the lineage of David, and therefore called to appear at the seat of their ancestors. Augustus only meant his own glory and advantage in this matter, but God had designs to serve by him, he knew not; it was thus evident that our Lord sprung from David, and the Scripture was fulfilled which fixed his going forth from Bethlehem, Micah v. 2. By such mysterious ways doth God work, accomplishing the purposes of his own will, and making those who least intend it, subservient to his own designs.

3. The wretched circumstances in which Christ came into the world. Though a first-born son, and of royal extraction, not to mention his divine honours, yet was he born in the stable of an inn, and his cradle a manger: his parents being so poor as to be unable to procure better accommodations. Thus did the everlasting Father become an infant of days; He who bound up the deep in swaddling bands, was himself swathed as a babe; He whom the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain, was hid in a manger; He who, in uncreated glory on his eternal throne, was the object of adoration to all the angelic hosts, is thrust into a stable to dwell among the beasts of the earth: so low did he humble himself when he became man for us men and for our salvation, and took the form of a servant, as a prelude to his submitting to the death of a slave.

8. ¶ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping [g] watch over their flock by night. 9. And, lo, [h] the angel of the Lord came [i] upon them, and the [k] glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. 10. And the angel said unto them, [l] Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11. [m] For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12. And this *shall be* a sign unto you; [n] Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13. And suddenly there was with the angel [o] a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14. [p] Glory to God in the highest, and on earth [q] peace, good will toward men. 15. ¶ And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, [r] Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16. And they came [s] with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17. And when they had seen *it*, [t] they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18. And all they that heard *it* [u] wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19. But [x] Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart. 20. And the shepherds returned, [y] glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

g Or *the night watches.* It seems therefore it was not in the winter. Exod. 3. 1, 2. Prov. 27. 25.

h Ch. 1. 11, 26. Mat. 1. 20. & 2. 13, 19. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Ps. 91. 11.

i 1 Cor. 1. 17. Mat. 11. 25.

k Exod. 20. 18. Num. 16. 19, 22. ch. 9. 28—34. Rev. 18. 1.

l Judg. 13. 23. Dan. 10. 12. ch. 1. 13, 30. Rev. 1. 17.

m Gen. 3. 15. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15. Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 11. 1. & 4. 2. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 30. 9, 21. Ezek. 34. 23, 29. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 9. 9. Mat. 1. 21. ch. 1. 54. 68, 69. Acts 2. 36.

n Is. 53. 2, 3. Ps. 22. 6. Mat. 8. 20. ver. 7.

o Gen. 28. 12. & 32. 1, 2. 1 Kings 22. 19. Job 38. 7. Ps. 91. 11. & 68. 17. Dan. 7. 10. Rev. 3. 11.

p Ch. 19. 38. Rev. 5. 12, 13. Is. 44. 23. & 24. 15, 16. & 49. 3. Eph. 3. 6. & 2. 7. & 3. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. John 17. 4. & 12. 28.

q Ch. 19. 38. & 1. 79. Is. 49. 13. & 57. 19. & 2. 4. Rom. 5. 1. Eph. 1. 5. & 2. 14, 17. Mat. 11. 26.

r Exod. 3. 3. Ps. 11. 2.

s Ch. 1. 39. Eccl. 9. 10. Ps. 119. 60. & 19. 1.

t ver. 38. Ch. 8. 39. Ps. 11. 9, 10. & 66. 16. & 71. 17, 18. John 4. 28, 29. Mark 1. 46. & 5. 20. Gal. 1. 15, 16.

u Is. 8. 18. & 9. 6. ver. 33, 47.

x Ver. 51. ch. 1. 29, 66. Gen. 37. 11. 1 Sam. 21. 11, 12.

y Gen. 9. 27. 1 Kin. 8. 15. 1 Chr. 29. 10, 11. Ps. 34. 2. & 72. 18, 19. & 106. 48. & 107. 8, 15. & cxiv, cxlviii.

Verses 8—20. Amidst the deepest humiliations of Jesus, some bright displays of his uncreated glory still broke forth, that we might not stumble at the meanness of his appearing in the flesh, but be made to confess, truly this is the Son of God. We have here,

1. The appearance of an angelic minister to notify the birth of the Prince of peace; not to the mighty monarchs of the earth, that they should come and pay their homage before the King of kings, and Lord of lords, but to poor shepherds, who were by night watching their flocks. The things that are despised, from the beginning hath God chosen. They were employed in their honest calling, and then were favoured with this unexpected visit from above: God will put this honour upon industry. The angel *stood over them* in the air, and the earth shone with his brightness: a divine glory compassed him about, and fear seized their minds at the presence of this celestial messenger. Visits from the unseen world to men, conscious how ill they have deserved at God's hand, may well alarm us, and make even gracious souls afraid.

2. The heavenly visitant soon quieted their troubled minds, saying, *Fear not*, no danger is near, no evil portended, but the very contrary; *for behold* (with wonder and delight attend my message) *I bring you good tidings of great joy;* the happiest news that ever reached the sinful souls of men, and *which shall be to all people;* not to the Jews only but to the Gentiles also, alike interested in this message. *For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord,* the long expected *Messiah, the Lord of* life and glory, *the Saviour* to the uttermost, *to you,* and all those who come to God by him, and that without him must have been for ever undone. *And this shall be a sign unto you,* whereby you may assuredly know him, and a strange sign indeed it was; *ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger,* the last place surely where they would ever have sought the Messiah, after such a glorious

herald had proclaimed his birth and titles; but the most eminent *distinction* of God incarnate was his deep *humiliation*. *Note*, (1.) If there be a Saviour born we must seek him for ourselves, that we may obtain an interest in him. (2.) None perish in their sins, but they who will not come to him that they may have life; for he is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him, seeing he is Christ the Lord.

3. Suddenly a multitude of the angelic host joined this celestial messenger, to celebrate the divine glory, and to congratulate the sons of men on this auspicious occasion. The morning stars that sang together, and all those sons of God who shouted for joy to see the world's foundation laid, now join with greater transport to adore this more transcendent display of the divine benignity in the redemption of sinners by the incarnation of Jehovah. (1.) They ascribe to God *glory in the highest;* all his divine perfections are to the uttermost exalted: his infinite mercy that moved him to pity sinners: his surpassing wisdom that contrived, and his almighty power and grace that accomplished the wondrous means of man's salvation; his adorable justice; his matchless love; his unchangeable faithfulness to his promises, all shine with peculiar lustre in the redemption which is by Jesus Christ. (2.) They congratulate the sinful sons of Adam on the peace sent down from heaven to earth. Peace with God, as reconciled through his Son; peace in the sinner's conscience now undisturbed with fears of guilt; peace between the discordant sons of men; and all these blessings in time and eternity purely flowing from God's *good will;* not for the sake of any thing in us, but according to his good pleasure, and to the praise of the glory of his grace. If angels sing shall men be silent? How ought we to echo back the sound; for us, and not for them, is this salvation wrought; to us this mercy is extended; most bounden therefore are we for ever to bless and praise the God of all grace for this inestimable gift, the Son of his love.

4. No sooner had these angelic ministers finished the heavenly song, and returned to their shining realms of bliss, than instantly the shepherds resolved to go and see this wondrous child, fully persuaded of the truth of what they had heard, and acknowledging the distinguishing mercy of God in having thus revealed it unto them: hasting therefore to Bethlehem, they found every circumstance as it had been told them, and *the babe lying in the manger*. *Note*, When God sends us on his errands, we should make no delay: all must be left to go where he calls.

5. Fully confirmed in the persuasion that this was the promised Saviour, they failed not to spread the glad tidings, relating all they had seen and heard from the angel, or Mary, concerning this child. And as they were plain and undesigning men, concurred in the same report, were eye and ear witnesses of the facts they asserted, it exceedingly amazed all those to whom they told the story; they knew not how to question the truth, and yet that the Messiah should be born in a stable; that his parents should be persons so obscure; that poor shepherds only should be favoured with the notice of his birth, and not the chief priests and rulers of the nation; all these circumstances staggered them. Thus the report was the wonder of a day, and soon died away, and was forgotten; *but Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart*, comparing them with what had before passed; confirmed thereby in her faith and hope, and silently storing up every circumstance in her memory against some future occasion. Meantime the shepherds returned to their former occupation, blessing and praising God for what they had heard and seen, so exactly corresponding with all that the angels had told them; and waiting, no doubt, in hope for the day when this child should come to manhood, and publicly appear as Israel's Saviour.

[z] Gen. 17. 12. Lev. 12. 3. ch. 1. 59. Phil. 3. 5.

21. ¶ [z] And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called [a] JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. 22. ¶ And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord; 23. (As it is written in the law of the Lord, [b] Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) 24. And to offer a sacrifice according to [c] that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons. †

[a] Mat. 1. 21. ch. 1. 31. ver. 10, 11. Is. 43. 17. Before the account called *Anno Domini the 3d or 4th year.*

[b] Exod. 13. 2. & 22. 29. & 34. 19. Num. 18. 15. & 3. 13. & 8. 16, 17.

[c] Lev. 12. 2, 6.

† This was the offering required from the poor. Those in better circumstances were commanded to bring a lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering, and a turtle dove, or a young pigeon, for a sin-offering.—*Campbell.*

Verses 21—24. He who was made under the law for us, submitted not only to all the moral precepts, but to the ceremonial institutions.

1. He was circumcised the eighth day, binding himself thereby to the observance of the law; humbling himself to this painful rite, as born in the likeness of sinful flesh; owning himself of the seed of Abraham, and wearing this badge of the children of God, as under the instituted seal of the covenant devoted to him. At this time, as usual, his name was also given him, and he was called *Jesus*, having been so named of the angel before his conception, to signify his glorious character as *a Saviour* from sin, Satan, death, and hell.

2. He was, at the end of the time appointed for his mother's purification, or forty days, *their* purification, as some copies read, Lev. xii. 4. presented in the temple as holy to the Lord, Exod. xiii. 12. God having reserved to himself the first-born of Israel, in commemoration of his sparing them when he slew the Egyptians, and they were to be redeemed at the price of *five shekels*, about twelve shillings and sixpence, Num. xviii. 16. whilst his mother also brought an offering for herself, according to the prescription of the same law, a pair of turtle doves, or young pigeons, which in case of poverty were accepted instead of a lamb and a dove, Lev. xii. 6—8. the one as a sin-offering or atonement, in testimony of her unworthiness of the mercy she had received: the other as a burnt-offering, expressive of her thankfulness.

25. ¶ And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* [d] just and devout, [e] waiting for the consolation of Israel: and [f] the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26. [g] And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen [h] the Lord's Christ. 27. And he came [i] by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, [k] to do for him after the custom of the law, 28. Then [l] took he him up in his arms, and [m] blessed God, and said, 29. Lord, [n] now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30. For mine eyes have seen [o] thy salvation, 31. Which thou hast [p] prepared before the face of all people: 32. [q] A light to

[d] Ch. 1. 6. Gen. 6. 9. Acts 24. 16. & 10. 2.

[e] Ver. 38. Mark 15. 43. Tit. 2. 13. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Is. 25. 9. & 40. 10. ch. 19. 10, 11. Acts 1. 6.

[f] Num. 11. 25. 2 Sam. 23. 2. 2 Chr. 20. 14. Rev. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 1. 21.

[g] Ps. 25. 14. Amos 3. 7.

[h] Dan. 9. 24, 26. Is. 61. 1. Acts 10. 38.

[i] Acts. 16. 6, 7. Ps. 48. 14. & 73. 24. & 143. 10. Prov. 3. 5, 6.

[k] See ver. 22.

[l] Mark 10. 16.

[m] See ver. 14, 20, ch. 1. 46—55, 64—79. Ps. 103. 1.

[n] Gen. 15. 15. & 46. 30. Num. 20. 29. 1 Cor. 15. 54, 55. Phil. 1. 23. Rev. 14. 13. Ps. 37. 37.

[o] Ch. 3. 6. Ps. 98. 2. Is. 52. 10. Mat. 1. 21. ver. 10, 11. Acts 4. 10, 12. & 49. 6. Acts 13. 47. & 28. 28. Rom. 15. 8. Is. 60. 19.

[p] Prov. 8. 23. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Eph. 2. 14.

[q] Is. 42. 6.

lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. 33. [r] And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. 34. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the [s] fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for [t] a sign which shall be spoken against; 35. (Yea, [u] a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also; *) that [x] the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. 36. ¶ And there was one [y] Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: [z] she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37. And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years; which [a] departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day. 38. And she, coming in that instant, [b] gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that [c] looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

r Is. 8. 18. & 9. 6. Ps. 35. 10.
s Is. 8. 14. Mat. 21. 44. Rom. 9. 32. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. John 3. 20. & 9. 39.
t Acts 28. 22. Is. 8. 18. John 7. 7. & 15. 18, 24.
u John 19. 25.
* Some have inferred from these words that the mother of our Lord suffered martyrdom, and perished with the sword; but they probably allude, as our commentator understands them, simply to that excessive grief which pierces like a sword, and which Mary especially endured, when she stood by the cross of her expiring Son.
x 1 Cor. 11. 19. 1 John 2. 19.
y Exod. 15. 20. Judg. 4. 4. 2 Kin. 22. 14.
z Ps. 91. 16. & 92. 14. Job 5. 26.
a Exod. 38. 8. 1 Sam. 1. 22. 1 Tim. 5. 5. 2 Chr. 22. 11.
b Ver. 28—32. ch. 1. 46—55, 64—79. 2 Cor. 9. 15. Ps. 107. 8.
c Ver. 25. Mark 15. 43.

Verses 25—38. Amidst all the meanness and poverty of Jesus, very glorious were the testimonies borne to him from heaven and upon earth. We have here,

1. The public declarations of Simeon; a man it seems, of distinguished note in Jerusalem, who just then came, by divine direction, into the temple.

[1.] The account here given concerning him is greatly to his honour. *He was just*, towards men, *and devout*, eminently religious towards God, *waiting* in faith and patience *for the consolation of Israel*, the promised Messiah; whose coming in the flesh was to be the great joy of all his people, Gentiles as well as Jews, the time of whose appearing fixed in the prophetic writings was now at hand: *and the Holy Ghost was upon him*, not only as a spirit of holiness, but as a spirit of prophecy. *And it was revealed unto him by* the secret inspirations of *the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ*, whom his eyes should behold before they were closed in the dust. *And* accordingly just at that instant, *he came by the Spirit into the temple*, under some divine warning of what was doing there: *and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law*, to present him to the Lord, and pay the price of redemption, *then took he him up in his arms*, in a transport of joy, as having found him whom he had so long and so earnestly expected; *and blessed God*, and broke forth into the following prophetic song of praise. *Note*, (1.) We must not be weary of waiting; though the Lord may for a while exercise our patience, all his promises are sure. (2.) Christ is the consolation of his Israel, he makes all those happy who by faith embrace him. (3.) They who have Jesus in their arms, in their hearts, can look death in the face with confidence.

[2.] His discourse on this occasion was solemn and joyful. He said, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word*, farewell life, welcome death! He is now content to be gone, since God hath thus graciously fulfilled his promise to him, and cheerfully resigns his soul in confidence of exchanging a perishing world for an eternity of glory: *For mine eyes have seen thy salvation*, that Messiah, who is come to be the author of eternal salvation to his redeemed; *which thou hast prepared before the face of all people*, provided according to the eternal counsels, and now manifested in the flesh to accomplish the glorious work; *A light to lighten the Gentiles*, who have long sat in darkness, ignorance, and idolatry, but now shall be made partakers, of the light of truth and the grace of the gospel, *and the glory of thy people Israel*, among whom his personal ministry was employed; who were spectators of his miracles; from whom he descended after the flesh; by whom, as his apostles and evangelists, he first propagated the knowledge of his salvation; and in him all the spiritual Israel are justified, and shall glory, Isa. xlv. 25. *Note*, (1.) A believing sight of Christ, and of the great things he hath prepared for his people, will not only enable us to overcome the terrors of death, but to triumph in its approach. (2.) We may not leave our posts till the Lord grants us our dismission, our time is in his hand; whilst he hath work for us to do, we must be content to be here, till he calls us to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better. (3.) Christ is the Sun of Righteousness; there is nothing but darkness and death in the spiritual world, till he arises with healing in his wings.

[3.] Simeon concludes with his benediction on the parents of Jesus, and a prediction for their notice. They marvelled at these transcendently glorious testimonies which were borne to their infant son, whilst Simeon congratulated them on their distinguished felicity, and prayed that the best of blessings might descend upon them. *He blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother*, as more especially the parent of Jesus, and interested in what he was about to say; *behold*, with wonder and confidence of the truth which I declare, *this* child *is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel;* he will be to many native Jews a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, Isa. viii. 14—18. whilst by his power and grace others shall be raised up to newness of life, even many who at first were offended at him: and he shall quicken all his spiritual Israel throughout the world, and bring them to a state of happiness and glory: *and for a sign which shall be spoken against;* his humiliation and sufferings will give a handle to his persecutors to blaspheme and revile him; *yea*, and so bitter will the enmity be against him, that it will extend to all his relations and friends, *a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also*, such anguish and pain you will endure from the view of his insults and sufferings, and those you may be called to endure for the profession of your faith in him, *that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed*, these times of persecution most effectually serving to discover the faithful disciples from the hypocrites and apostates. *Note*, (1.) The same gospel is to some the savour of death unto death, which to others is the savour of life unto life. (2.) They whom Jesus raises, must first be laid low in the dust of humiliation. (3.) All our comforts in this world have some bitterness annexed to them; we must look only for perfect happiness in a better.

2. Anna the prophetess confirms, just at the same instant, what Simeon had spoken concerning the glory of the child Jesus.

[1.] Her person and character are described. Her name was Anna, whom the Lord had endued with a spirit of prophecy. She was the daughter of Phanuel, a person probably of some note, and of the tribe of Aser; a very aged woman, having lived seven years with a husband, and ever since continued *a widow of about eighty-four years;* a great age, if comprehending the whole of her life: but if reckoned as her years of widowhood, will carry her age at lowest to above a hundred years. Yet though so old, she constantly attended the stated worship of the temple morning and evening, and on all solemn occasions; and was much in fasting and prayer, a singular instance of piety and devotion.

[2.] Her testimony concerning Jesus is recorded. Just at the instant that Simeon was discoursing concerning him, she came in: and with thanksgiving and praise to the Lord, con-

firmed what he had spoken concerning the child. And among all her religious acquaintance, who were expecting the Messiah's appearing, and looking for his redemption, she spoke of the Son of Mary, as the person raised up of God for this great design. *Note*, (1.) They who are constant at the temple, and careful to keep up communion with God, will find many a blessed and happy visit from him which they perhaps little expected. (2.) They who know Jesus themselves, are in duty bound to spread that knowledge far and wide, and to endeavour to bring others to an acquaintance with his salvation.

39. ¶ And when they had [d] performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they [e] returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. 40 [f] And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him. * 41. ¶ Now his parents went to Jerusalem [g] every year at the feast of the passover. 42. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast. 43. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*. 44. But they, supposing him to have been in [h] the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance. 45. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. 46. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him † in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both [i] hearing them, and asking them questions. ‡ 47. And all that heard him [k] were astonished at his understanding and answers. 48. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. 49. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that [l] I must be about my Father's business? 50. And they [m] understood not the saying which he spake unto them. 51. ¶ And he went down with them, and [n] came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother [o] kept all these sayings in her heart. 52. And [p] Jesus increased in wisdom and || stature, and in favour with God and man.

d Ch. 1. 6. Deut. 12. 32. ver. 21—24.
e Mat. 2. 22, 23. ver. 4.
f Ch. 1. 80. Is. 4. 2. & 11. 1—4. & 61. 1.
* The thing to which, in my judgment, the historian here particularly points, is that graceful dignity in our Lord's manner, which at once engaged the love, and commanded the respect of all who heard him. See Mat. 7. 28, 29. Mark 1. 22. Luke 4. 22, 32. John 7. 46. All these passages put together, indicate an authority in his manner superior to human, blended with the most condescending sweetness. With this distinguishing quality the evangelist here acquaints us that Jesus was attended from his childhood.—*Campbell.*
g Deut. 16. 1, 16. Exod. 23. 15, 17. & 24. 13. Lev. 23. 5. Num. 28. 16. cir. 9.
h Ps. 42. 4. & 84. 6, 7.
† In some chamber of the court.
i Is. 50. 4. & 11. 2—4. & 61. 1. & 49. 1, 2.
‡ It was both lawful and customary for the disciples, or any who were present, publicly to inquire, either of the doctor who was then reading, or of any in the synagogue, respecting any doubtful matter in which he was not well satisfied.—*Lightfoot.*
k Mat. 7. 28. Mark 1. 22. ch. 4. 22, 32. John 7. 15, 46.
l Mal. 3. 1, 2. Ps. 40. 8. John 4. 34. & 8. 29. & 2. 16.
m Ch. 9. 45. & 18. 34.
n Ver. 39. Mat. 2. 22, 23. Mark 6. 3. Mat. 3. 15.
o Ver. 19. Gen. 37. 11. Dan. 7. 28. Ps. 119. 11.
p 1 Sam. 2. 26. ch. 1. 80. ver. 40.
|| Or *age*.

Verses 39—52. Our curiosity might have tempted us to wish for some more large and particular accounts of the infancy and childhood of Jesus; but as till his public appearance in the character of the Messiah we had no particular need of it, all that the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to record of the first twenty-nine years of his life, is contained in these few verses; where some beams of his glory, even from the earliest days, are seen to break forth, as presages of his future greatness.

1. After he was presented in the temple, till twelve years of age, he for the most part lived with his parents at Nazareth, whither they were directed to go, after their return from Egypt, Matt. ii. There he grew up as other children do; and as his stature increased, and reason began to dawn, he displayed the most uncommon natural abilities; was endued with wisdom far beyond his years; and instead of that foolishness which is bound up in the heart of all other children, and immediately begins to discover itself with the first dawnings of sense, in him nothing was seen of folly or perverseness. The grace of God eminently governed his spirit and conduct from his tenderest years, and the favour of God towards him appeared most evident and singular.

2. At the age of twelve, he gave some amazing evidences of his extraordinary wisdom, and some intimations of the great work he had in view.

[1.] At this time he went up to Jerusalem with his parents to the passover, where all the males, from that age, were commanded to appear to celebrate this solemnity. *Note*, It is highly incumbent on parents to acquaint their children betimes with their covenant relation to God, and to endeavour to engage them early, with their own free choice, to surrender themselves up to him as his willing servants.

[2.] When they had stayed during the seven days of the feast, and then set out on their return for Nazareth, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; probably when they went up to worship, on the morning before they proceeded on their journey, he left them in the temple; as the men and women travelled in different companies, each of his parents supposed he had been with the other, or with some of their kinsfolk; great numbers of which travelled together, till at even, when they met, to their surprise they missed their Son; and after a fruitless search among all their kinsfolk and acquaintance, they turned back to Jerusalem in the morning to seek for him. *Note*, (1.) They who have lost the presence of Jesus, after having ever tasted the blessedness of his company, cannot but be solicitous to find him again, and will inquire earnestly, *Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?* (2.) Our kinsfolk and acquaintance are too often unable to direct us to Jesus, we must go farther for our information.

[3.] At last they found him on the third day in the temple, in one of the chambers, probably where the Sanhedrim sat, or where the wise men instructed their catechumens; there Jesus was, among other young persons, hearing their discourses, answering their questions with the most amazing acuteness, and proposing others to them, which showed uncommon wisdom and penetration, insomuch that they were all astonished at the sagacity of his replies, and the depth of his understanding, so exceedingly beyond his years; and such as made him appear worthy a place among the highest rabbins, instead of a seat at their feet as a catechumen.

[4.] Having found him, they were amazed to see him thus admired and esteemed by the doctors; and his mother began tenderly to expostulate with him on his stay, which had given them such anxiety and grief; but he gently rebukes her solicitude, who, after all that had passed, ought not to be surprised at finding him there. Where should he be so properly as in the courts of his Father's house, and what so fit an employment for him, as to be thus *about his Father's business?* But they *understood* not his meaning: his regal office, as the Messiah, the Son of David, they believed; but his prophetical character, and the nature of his spiritual kingdom, they seem not yet to have known.

3. He returned to Nazareth, submitting to his parents in every instance of filial duty, and his mother stored up his sayings in her mind; expecting, that though she now understood them not, hereafter they would be explained more fully. Till he was near

thirty years of age, he continued in this obscure abode, and under the government of his parents, probably working as a carpenter for their maintenance and his own: and as he advanced to manhood, his attainments in wisdom and understanding were amazing, his faculties most enlarged, and his soul filled with all those gifts and graces which the human nature, by its union with the divine, was prepared to receive. Thus he grew highly in God's favour, and admired and esteemed by all who were acquainted with his singular excellences. *Note*, (1.) Let children, when grown up, learn of Jesus subjection to their parents: that is a duty we must ever pay. (2.) Though the truths of God which we are taught may not at first be understood by us, yet the knowledge of them will prove highly useful, when afterwards God gives the spiritual understanding. (3.) Those children are indeed their parents' glory and joy, whose wisdom and graces increase with their years, and exceed them.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 27.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The beginning of John's baptism, and the scope and intention of it*, ver. 1—6. *His exhortation to the multitude*, ver. 7—9. *And the particular instructions he gave to those who desired to be told of their duty*, ver. 10—14. 2. *The notice he gave them of the approach of the Messiah*, ver. 15—18. *to which is added (though it happened after what follows) the mention of his imprisonment*, ver. 19, 20. 3. *Christ coming to be baptized of John, and his entrance therein upon the execution of his prophetical office*, ver. 21, 22. 4. *His pedigree and genealogy recorded up to Adam*, ver. 23—38.

1. NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias Cesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being * tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the * tetrarch of Abilene, 2. [a] Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, [b] the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the [c] wilderness. 3. [d] And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; 4. As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, [e] The voice of one crying in the wilderness, [f] Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 5. [g] Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth; 6. And [h] all flesh shall see the salvation of God. 7. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, [i] O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from [k] the wrath to come? 8. [l] Bring forth therefore fruits † worthy of repentance; and begin not to say within yourselves, [m] We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of [n] these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 9. [o] And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 10. And the people asked him, saying, [p] What shall we do then? 11. He answereth and saith unto them, [q] He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. 12. [r] Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? 13. And he said unto them, [s] Exact no more than that which is appointed you. 14. And the [t] soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, [u] ‡ Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your ‖ wages.

* Governor of a fourth part of the country.

a John 11. 49, 51. & 18. 13. Acts 4. 6.

b Jer. 1. 2, 4. & 2. 1. & 7. 1. Ezek. 1. 3. Hos. 1. 1, 2. Mat. iii. Mark 1. 2—11.

c Ch. 1. 80. Josh. 15 61. *i. e.* a country thinly inhabited.

d Mat. 3. 1, 2. Mark 1. 4. John 1. 31. Acts 19. 4. & 13. 24, 25. Ezek. 18. 30.

e Is. 40. 3—5. Mark 1. 3. Mat. 3. 3. John 1. 23. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6.

f Mal. 4. 6. ch. 1. 16, 17, 76—79. John 1. 7, 26—36. & 3. 27—36. & 5. 33. Acts 13. 24, 25. & 19. 4.

g Is. 2. 14. & 62. 10. Zech. 4. 6, 7.

h Ch. 2. 11, 30—32. Ps. 98. 2. Is. 52. 10. Mark 16. 15, 16.

i Mat. 3. 7—10. & 12. 34. & 23. 33. ch. 10. 9, 11. Acts 23 8.

k 1 Thes. 1. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Rom. 5. 10.

l Acts 26. 20. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 4—10. 2 Cor. 7. 11. Is. 1. 16, 17.

† Or *meet for.*

m John 8. 33, 39. Acts 13. 26. Jer. 7. 4.

n Josh. 4. 3, 8. Mat. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 43. ch. 19. 40.

o Mat. 3. 10. & 7. 19. ch. 19. 42. & 23. 31. John 15. 2, 6. & 12. 35. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Ezek. xv. Heb. 2. 1, 3. & 4. 1. & 6. 8.

p Acts 2. 37. & 16. 30. John 6. 28.

q Jam. 2. 15, 16. & 1. 27. 1 John 3. 17. & 4. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 8. 2 Cor. 8. 14. ch. 11. 41. 1 Tim. 6. 18.

r Mat. 21. 31, 32. & 8. 10. ch. 7. 29 30. & 15. 1, 2. & 5. 27—32.

s Ch. 19. 8. Mic. 6. 8. Mat. 7. 12 1 Tim. 6. 8.

t Mat. 8. 5. & 27. 54. Acts x.

u Lev. 19. 11, 13. 1 Tim. 6. 8—10.

‡ Or *put no man in fear.*

‖ Or *allowance.*

Verses 1—14. Great expectations had been raised concerning the son of Zacharias from his infancy, and now he appears to answer them.

1. The time of his entering publicly on his ministry, is here observed. It was in the reign of Tiberias, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip of Iturea, and Lysanias of Abilene. They were called tetrarchs, either as having each the fourth part of what was under the dominion of Herod the Great, or as standing in the fourth rank of governors, which are reckoned thus; the emperor, proconsuls, kings, tetrarchs. They were all foreigners, a mark of the sad subjection of the Jewish people, now reduced entirely under the Roman yoke, the sceptre being finally departed from Judah, and the very kingly office abolished in Judea. *Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests*, not that they both bore that office at the same time, but Annas had been, and Caiaphas was now, in that station; or as some suppose, Annas was the *sagan*, or chief of the priests, who stood next to the high priest in rank and honour.

2. The origin and tendency of his ministry is declared. *The word of God came to him in the wilderness*, he was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to go forth, being endued with extraordinary gifts and graces, and possessed of the spirit of prophecy, and hereupon leaving the solitude where he had hitherto abode, he came into a more populous part of the country near to Jordan, preaching publicly the necessity of repentance, and admitting to his baptism those who made profession of it, as the sign and seal of the remission of their sins. *Note*, All who by faith turn to Jesus, and repent them truly of their sins, are assured of their pardon.

3. John herein eminently fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. xl. 3—5. He was *the voice of one crying in the wilderness*, loud and vehement, *prepare ye the way of the Lord* into your hearts, by a deep and humbling sense of your sins *make his paths straight*; let every obstruction from pride and ignorance be removed, as the harbinger clears the way for the entry of the king. *Every valley shall be filled*, the lowly and depressed with sin shall be raised up by pardoning grace and divine consolations; *and every mountain and hill shall be brought low*, the proud and self-righteous shall be humbled into the dust of humiliation, or sunk into the belly of hell; *and the crooked shall be made straight*, the perverse disposition and conduct of sinners shall, by divine grace, be rectified; *and the rough ways shall be made smooth*, the

most untractable spirits softened and subdued, or every difficulty in the way of men's receiving the Messiah shall be removed. *And all flesh*, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, *shall see the salvation of God;* many of all nations, ranks, and ages shall embrace the gospel of Jesus, and partake of his eternal redemption.

4. He addressed himself with very awakening language to the multitude who came to him. He charges them as *a generation of vipers*, full of venom, hypocrisy, and Satanical subtilty; and asks, *who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* from the national judgments ready to descend upon them, or the more terrible and eternal vengeance hanging over every guilty sinner's head. He warns them therefore of the necessity of a speedy and real change of heart and life, evident in the fruits of all holy conversation and godliness; without which, their boasted privileges as Abraham's descendants would profit them nothing, but rather aggravate their guilt. God wanted them not; he could, and would, from stones, from Gentiles, raise up a more illustrious and numerous race, the heirs of Abraham's faith, his spiritual children, who should supply their place, if they continued hypocritical and impenitent; now therefore the call of mercy was sent to them, that they might prevent their impending doom, before the axe of divine vengeance was laid to their roots; and they, as barren trees, cut down and cast into the fire, utterly destroyed as a nation; and as the sinners of old, suffering also the vengeance of eternal fire. *Note*, (1.) The sinner hath no moment to lose, death and judgment are at his heels. (2.) No outward privilege can profit those, whose hearts remain unrenewed and unholy. (3.) True repentance will be seen by its fruits; the change will be internal, universal, evident, abiding. (4.) It is a fearful thing for an impenitent soul to fall into the hands of the living God.

5. The Pharisees and Sadducees were probably disgusted at these hard sayings, and left him; but the people, the publicans and soldiers, were deeply affected, and earnestly solicitous to know what those fruits of repentance were, which they were required to produce: and a blessed symptom it is of real conversion, when we are thus diligent to inquire what is the mind of God, and really disposed through grace to follow it. To these, therefore, John directs his instructions suited to their several circumstances and temptations.

[1.] To the people in general he recommends a liberal distribution to the necessities of their brethren; supplying them, according to their ability, with food and raiment: and where the call was urgent, straitening themselves rather than suffer their neighbours to perish with cold, or be famished with hunger; and a truly charitable soul is not only to his power, but sometimes above his power willing.

[2.] To the publicans, the collectors of the public taxes, many of whom were Jews, he gave in charge that they should use no exaction, nor levy more than the government demanded. Their employment, though in general odious to the people, was not in itself unlawful, whilst they demeaned themselves in it with justice and integrity.

[3.] To the soldiers, who seem to have been also Hebrews, perhaps the guards of Philip or Herod, he said *do violence to no man*, extort nothing from the people by threatening, behave not insolently, nor outrageously in your quarters; when employed in war, use no unnecessary devastations, nor wanton cruelty; *neither accuse any falsely*, neither their comrades to their officers, or the people where they might be stationed, through malice, or for the sake of money; *and be content with your wages*, neither increasing them by plunder, nor seeking to advance them by mutiny; a caution well deserving the notice of all servants, who, if once they give way to discontent, will soon be tempted to use unlawful means to gratify their covetousness.

15. ¶ And as the people were [x] in expectation, and all men [*] mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; 16. John, answered, saying unto *them* all, [y] I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: [z] he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire; 17. [a] Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. 18. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.[*] 19. ¶ [b] But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife,[†] and for all the evils which Herod had done. 20. Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

[x] Or *in suspense.* John 1. 19—24.

[*] Or *reasoned*, or *debated.*

[y] Mat. 3. 11, 12. Mark 1. 7, 8. John 1. 15, 26, 33. Acts 13. 24, 25. & 19. 4. & 1. 5. & 11. 16.

[z] Is. 44. 3, 4. Joel 2 28. Mal. 3. 2, 3. John 7. 38. Acts 1. 5. & 2. 4, 17. & 10. 45. & 11. 16. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Prov. 1. 23.

[a] Mat. 3. 12. & 13. 30. Mic. 4. 12. Mal. 3. 3. & 4. 1. Ps. i, xxi, cx.

[*] Or, *And with many other exhortations, he published the good tidings unto the people.*

[b] Mat. 14. 3, 4. & 11. 2. Mark 6. 17, 18.

cir. 30.

[†] Not the Philip mentioned ver. 1.

Verses 15—20. We have here,

1. The general expectations which the people were in of the Messiah. The sceptre was departed from Judah, and the prophecies of Daniel concerning him now required his coming; which made many turn their eyes to John, who appeared with marks of such singular distinction, and spoke with such authority and zeal, that they began to suspect this might be the long expected Messiah.

2. John immediately undeceived them, disclaiming all pretensions to that honour, and directs them to expect shortly the *Great Prophet*, whose forerunner he was. The meanest office under him he acknowledges himself unworthy to discharge; and his baptism was not worthy to be compared with the more powerful and efficacious influences of the Holy Ghost, that under the ministry of Jesus, should be abundantly dispensed, and act, like fire, with resistless energy upon the souls of men. By *his gospel* he would make a thorough separation between the faithful and the hypocrites, and by *his judgments* on the Jewish people sweep them away as the chaff before the fan; and, when he hath gathered in his chosen, the wheat, into his garner; the wicked, the self-righteous, and the apostate, will be cast into the everlasting burnings. An awful declaration, which deserves the most awakened attention.

These and many other things did John with great freedom and fidelity, deliver, preaching the glad tidings of the gospel (*ευηγγελιζετο*) to the people, and urging upon their consciences the importance of the truths he declared. Such ought all ministers, who are put in trust with the gospel, to be; warm, zealous, indefatigable, free, copious, evangelical. Then may we expect to reap the fruit of our labours, in a harvest of immortal souls.

3. After a short but glorious course of about a year and a half, a sudden stop is put to the Baptist's ministry by a most unjust imprisonment. Unable to flatter, yea, zealous to reprove the most exalted sinners, Herod the tetrarch escaped not his sharp rebukes for the complicated crime of taking his brother Philip's wife, and marrying her even during his life, and though she had children by him; thus joining incest to adultery; *and for all the other evils which Herod had done*, which were many and notorious. Exasperated at this plain and faithful dealing, he added this to all his other wickedness, that he shut up John in prison, and after a while was prevailed upon to take away his life. *Note*, (1.) When God's ministers are thus compelled to an involuntary

silence, their sufferings speak as loud as their sermons. (2.) Mysterious are the ways of Providence. The excellent of the earth become a prey to persecutors, who triumph at their fall. Where, will some say, is the God of judgment? Wait a moment. The mystery will soon be unfolded.

cir. 29.

21. ¶ Now, when all the people were baptized, [c] it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, 22. And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him; and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art [d] my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23. ¶ And Jesus himself began to be about [e] thirty years of age,* being (as was supposed,†) [f] the son of Joseph, which was *the* [g] *son* of Heli,‡ 24. Which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph, 25. Which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge, 26. Which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda, 27. Which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri, 28. Which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er, 29. Which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, 30. Which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim, 31. Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of [i] Nathan, which was *the son* of David, 32. [k] Which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson, 33. Which was *the son* of Amminadab; which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda, 34. [l] Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, [m] which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor, 35. Which was *the* † *son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* [n] of Sala, 36. Which was *the son* of † Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, [n] which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech, 36. Which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which * was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan, 38. Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam,* [o] which was *the son* of God.

c Mat. 3. 13—17. Mark 1. 9—11. John 1. 29—34. Mat. 7. 7, 11. Is. 11. 2. & 61. 1. John 12. 28.

d Ps. 2. 7. Is. 42. 1. Mat. 3. 17. & 16. 16. & 17. 5. & 12. 18. ch. 9. 35. 2 Pet. 1. 17. Col. 1. 13.

e Gen. 41. 46. Num. 4. 3, 35.

* Or rather, *Now Jesus was himself about thirty years in subjection.*

† For Jesus was not really the son of Joseph, as St Luke had before explained in his account of the miraculous conception.—*Campbell.*

f Mat. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3. John 6. 42. ch. 4. 22.

g Son-in-law. The 40 men here mentioned from Joseph to David, were Christ's natural progenitors by his mother: whereas those mentioned by Matthew, ch. 1. 6—16. were ancestors in office, and progenitors of Joseph his supposed father.

‡ It appears that Luke, composing his gospel for the use of the Gentiles, and intending to prove that Christ was 'the seed of the woman,' necessarily reckoned by the line of his mother, Mary the daughter of Heli. Matthew, on the other hand, intending to deduce his legal descent from David and Abraham, reckoned by the line of Joseph, the espoused husband of Mary, through whom the legal descent was to be carried.—*Lightfoot.*

h Whether Zorobabel and Salathiel are the same as those in Mat. 1. 12, 13. 1 Chr. 3. 17, 19. Ezra 3. 2. is uncertain.

i 1 Chr. 3. 5. & 14. 4. 2 Sam. 5. 14. Zec. 12. 12.

k 1 Chr. 2. 4, 5, 9—15. Mat. 1. 3—6. Ruth 4. 18—22.

l Mat. 1. 2. 1 Chr. 2. 1. & 1. 34. Gen. 21. 3. & 25. 26. & 29. 35. Acts 7. 8. Heb. 11. 8—21.

m Gen. 11. 10—26 1 Chr. 1. 24—28.

† This name ought to be thrown out, as it is not found in the correspondent lists.

n Gen. v. 1 Chr. 1. 1—4.

o Gen. 1. 26, 27. & 2. 7. & 5. 1, 2. Acts 17. 26. 1 Cor. 15. 45. 1 Tim. 2. 14. Is. 64. 8. Gen. 3. 15.

* In thus tracing our Lord's lineage up to Adam, Luke intimates that he is 'the Seed of the woman,' promised to our first parents, and the common Saviour of Jew and Gentile, bond and free.

Verses 21—38. The Evangelist finishes the history of John's ministry, which continued near a year after Christ's baptism, before he enters upon the public appearance of Jesus.

1. After a multitude of others had been baptized, at last Jesus also comes to John, and is baptized of him in Jordan; when, looking up in prayer to his Father, instantly the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost in a bodily shape descended upon him, both to qualify him for his mediatorial work, and to be a sign to John that he was the Messiah; which was further confirmed by an audible voice from heaven, God the Father testifying his delight in this Son of his love, and his perfect satisfaction in his undertaking. *Note*, (1.) Christ prayed, to set us the example. In this way the communion between earth and heaven is to be maintained. (2.) If God be well pleased in his Son, then may we confidently rest our souls on him as our Saviour, and never doubt of the fulness of the redemption he hath obtained for us.

2. The age and pedigree of Jesus are recorded by the Evangelist. He was about thirty years of age when he entered upon the mediatorial office. Descended from David by his mother's side, whose genealogy is here given, as well as by Joseph's his reputed father. Some difficulties occur, in comparing the genealogies. Joseph, said in Matthew to be the son of Jacob, is here said to be the son of Heli, which some avoid by reading the words (*as was supposed the son of Joseph*) in a parenthesis, intimating that in reality Jesus was the son of Heli, Mary's father. Or Joseph, being her husband, might be called, in right of his wife, Heli's son.

Some have observed also, that the words (ὡς ἐνομίζετο) *as it was supposed*, may be rendered, *as it was found in the record* of the genealogy, which the Evangelist copied, and none at that time ever contradicted.

The inserting the name of Cainan between Sala and Arphaxad is of more difficult solution, it not agreeing with the Hebrew copies, nor any ancient version except the Septuagint, and is thought not to have been there originally; but that some early transcriber of Luke's gospel inserting this name by mistake, it afterwards crept into that translation. The matter indeed is of little moment, and doth not in the least affect our salvation.

Some, to whose sentiments I accede, choose to carry the name of Jesus through all his ancestors, instead of connecting each with his immediate predecessor. As thus, *Jesus*, the son of Heli, of Matthat, &c. till we come to the top of the line, as the son of Adam in his human, the son of God in his divine, nature; uniting both in his own person, and yet not two but one Christ.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

We left Christ newly baptized, and owned by a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him. Now in this chapter we have, 1. *A further preparation of him for his public ministry by his being* tempted in the wilderness. 2. *His entrance upon his public work in Galilee,* ver. 14, 15. *particularly,* (1.) *At Nazareth, the city where he had been brought up,* ver. 16—30. *which we had no account of before in Matthew.* (2.) *At Capernaum, where having preached to admiration,* ver. 31, 32. *he cast a devil out of a man that was possessed,* ver. 33—37. *Cured Peter's mother-in-law of a fever,* ver. 38, 39. *And many others that were sick and possessed,* ver. 40, 41. *And then went and did the same in other cities of Galilee,* ver. 42—44.

1. AND [a] Jesus, being [b] full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was [c] led by the Spirit into the [d] wilderness, 2. Being forty days [e] tempted of the devil. And [f] in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward [g] hungered. 3. And the devil said unto him, [h] If thou be the Son of God, [i] command this stone that it be made bread. 4. And Jesus answered him, saying, [k] It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. 5. [l] And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6. And the devil said unto him, [m] All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. 7. If thou therefore wilt * worship me, all shall be thine. 8. And Jesus answered and said unto him, [n] Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, [o] Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 9. [p] And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, [q] If thou be the Son of God, [r] cast thyself down from hence: 10. [s] For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; 11. And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 12. And Jesus answering, said unto him, [t] It is said, [u] Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 13. And [x] when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

a Mat. 4. 1—11. Mark 1. 12, 13.
b Ch. 3. 22. Mat. 3. 16. Mark 1. 10. John 1. 32. & 3. 34. Is. 61. 1. & 11. 2—4.
c 1 Kin. 18. 12. Ezek. 3. 14. & 8. 3. & 11. 1, 24. & 40. 2. & 43. 5. Acts 8. 39.
d Ch. 1. 80. & 3. 2. Josh. 15. 61.
e Heb. 2. 18. & 4. 15. Gen. 3. 15.
f Exod. 34. 28. Deut. 9. 9, 18. 1 Kin. 19. 8.
g Mark 1. 13. Mat. 4. 2 & 21. 18. John 4. 6.
h Mat. 4. 3. & 3. 17.
i Ch. 3. 8. Gen. 18. 14.
k Deut. 8. 3. Exod. 23. 25. ch. 12. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 5. Prov. 10. 22. & 30. 8.
l Mat 4. 8, 9. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 1 Cor. 7. 31. 1 John 2. 15, 16. Eph. 6. 12.
m John 8. 44. 2 Cor. 11. 14. Rev. 20. 2, 3. & 13. 2, 7.
* Or *fall down before me.*
n Mat. 16. 23. Jam. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 9.
o Deut. 6. 13. & 10. 20. 1 Sam. 7. 3. Mat. 4. 10.
p Job. 1. 11—19. & 2. 6.
q Mat. 3. 17. & 8. 29. Heb. 4. 15. & 2. 17, 18.
r John 8. 44. 1 Pet. 5. 8.
s Ps. 91. 11, 12. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Heb. 1. 14.
t Ver. 3, 8. Rom. 15. 4. Eph. 6. 17.
u Deut. 6. 16. Mat. 4. 7. 1 Cor. 10. 9. Heb. 3. 8, 9.
x Mat. 4. 11. Mark 1. 13. Jam. 4. 7. John 14. 30

Verses 1—13. As the great enemy of souls had foiled the first man in the midst of a paradise of delights, the second man, the Lord from heaven, who came to destroy the works of the devil, that he might render his victory more illustrious, gives the tempter every advantage. Though deep retired in a dreary desert, without human converse, without food, during forty days, to satisfy his hunger, he stood like a rock in the midst of the sea, defying the impotent attacks of the raging fiend of darkness. *Being full of the Holy Ghost,* and just then anointed for his mediatorial office, and furnished with the fulness of divine grace, Satan, to his bitter shame and vexation, found him immoveable, and every attack he made but signalized his own defeat.

1. He tempted him to distrust his Father's care, and insinuated his suspicions of the character he assumed as the Son of God; seeking to shake the faith of the Redeemer, and challenging him to give a proof of it by working so needful a miracle for his own supply. But Jesus refused to gratify him; and by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, foiled his assault, testifying his confidence in his Father's provision for him; refusing to take the matter out of his hands, and persuaded that he could by other means than by bread alone preserve his life and satisfy his hunger, hereby teaching us, (1.) Under every temptation to have recourse to the word and promises of God. (2.) Not to give place to the devil, by harbouring for a moment his suggestions. (3.) Never to desire to be our own carvers, or think by our own contrivance and wisdom, exclusive of God, to extricate ourselves from our own difficulties, or gain our own ends, but quietly to resign ourselves to him, submissive to his providences, and constantly depending upon his blessing and support. (4.) That we should not estimate God's favour by his outward dispensations, nor call in question our adoption of him, though never so severely exercised. Many of God's dearest children have known the pinchings of hunger, to prove their faith and try their patience.

2. He tempted him with the enticing offers of temporal grandeur. This St Matthew places the last, and such it seems to have been; though Luke inverts the order. Taking him up into a mountain, the devil in a moment caused all the kingdoms of the world in their greatest glory, to pass in review before our Lord, as if to dazzle and charm him with their united splendour: then boldly challenging them as his own, as if delivered to him, either by the Most High, which was false; or by the willing subjection of these nations and their kings, who yielded themselves up to the devil's power; and, as Lord of all, he pretends therefore a right to dispose of them at his pleasure; on one condition he proffers to lay them all at the feet of Jesus, and constitute him the universal sovereign, *If thou wilt worship me, all shall be thine.* With indignation and abhorrence at such insolence and impiety, he rejects the tempter's offer; and, still drawing his weapons from the sacred magazine of Scripture, condemns the daring attempt of this hateful spirit thus to invade the divine prerogative, and confounds him with producing that eternal and invariable rule of worship, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Note,* All adoration of saints, angels, and the Virgin, is in fact but the worship of Satan, and as much a *sacrifice to devils,* 1 Cor. x. 20. as the religious services of Paganism.

3. Once more the devil returns to the charge, and, since Christ is unmoved with grandeur, and unshaken with distrust, he tries to fill him with unwarrantable presumption; and, setting him on a pinnacle of the temple, bids him cast himself down into the court of worshippers below; and, if he was really the Son of God, to prove it by such a sign from heaven as the Jews sought, which, he suggests, would not fail of engaging them to receive him as the Messiah; nor could there be danger in the experiment, since God hath given him an express promise of protection, and he was under angelic care, Psalm xci. 11, 12. Christ seemed to lay such stress upon the Scripture, therefore Satan quotes it too to support his cause. The word of God in the hands of wicked men, is thus often perverted and wrested to serve the vilest purposes. But Jesus detects Satan's fallacy. God is to be trusted, not to be tempted, as it is written, Deut.

vi. 16. In the way of duty he will hold us up: if, without any warrant from him, we expose ourselves to needless danger, we have not the least ground to hope for preservation.

Utterly defeated now, the devil quits the field, covered with shame; in malice still inveterate. Waiting therefore for a more favourable season, he departed, resolving to seize the first occasion of returning with sharpened malignity; see Luke xxii. 53.

14. ¶ [y] And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. 15. And [z] he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. 16. ¶ And he came to [a] Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and [b] stood up for to read.* 17. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18. [c] The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; 19. To preach the [d] acceptable year of the Lord. 20. And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, † and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. 22. And all bare him witness, ‡ and wondered at the [e] gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, [f] Is not this Joseph's son? 23. And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. 24. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No [h] prophet is accepted in his own country. 25. But I tell you of a truth, [i] many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; 26. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, § *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow. 27. [k] And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them [l] was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. 28. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, [m] were filled with wrath, 29. [n] And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the * brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. 30. [o] But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way,

y Mat. 4. 12. Mark 1. 14. John 4. 43. Mat 4. 23—25. Acts 10. 37, 38.

z Is. 61. 1—3. & 25. 13. & 54 13. & 48. 17. & 50. 4. cir. 30.

a Mat. 13. 54. ch. 1. 26, 27. & 2. 39, 51. Mat. 2. 23. Mark 6. 1.

b Neh. 8. 5, 6. Acts 13. 15, 16. & 17. 2.

* The service of the synagogue consisted of prayer, reading fixed portions of Scripture, of expositions of Scripture, and addresses similar to our sermons. It was customary for the different members of the synagogue to take a part in these services, according to their age or reputation, and the portion of Scripture which our Lord read was that which occurred in the establishedorder of the sections. It was also usual for the person who read the lesson, to stand while reading it, and to sit while addressing the assembly in his own words. —*Stebbing.*

c Is. 61. 1—3. & 42. 1—7. & 50. 4. Ps. 45. 2, 7. Dan. 9. 24. Acts 10. 38. Mat. 11. 5. John 3. 16, 17. & 5. 24, 25. & 6. 27, 40. Is. 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6, 8, 24—26

d Lev. 25. 8. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Is. 63. 4. & 49. 8. ch. 19. 42.

† To the person whose office it was to carry the book, as he was directed by the ruler of the synagogue.—*Pearce.*

‡ Or rather, *all extolled him.*

e Mark 6. 2, 3. Mat. 13. 54. Ps. 45. 2, 4. Prov. 10. 32. Is. 50. 4. ch. 46. 47. John 7. 46. & 1. 14.

f Mark 6. 3. Mat. 13. 55. John 6. 42.

g Mat 4. 13. & 13. 54. John 7. 3, 4.

h Mat. 13. 57. Mark 6. 4, 5. John 4. 4. & 6. 42.

i 1 Kin. 17. 9. & 18. 1. Jam. 5. 17, 18.

§ Sarepta, a city of Phœnicia, on the coast of the Mediterranean.

k 2 Kin. 5. 14.

l Elisha. 1 Kin. 19. 19—21, 2 Kin. ii—viii, xiii.

m 2 Chr. 16. 10. Acts 7. 54. & 22. 22.

n John 15. 24, 25. & 10. 32. & 8. 37, 40, 59.

* Or *edge.*

o John 8. 59. & 7. 30. & 10. 39. Ps 31. 15.

Verses 14—30. Having vanquished his infernal foe in the wilderness, Jesus enters upon his ministerial office, and publicly appears, destroying, by his doctrine and miracles, the power of Satan over the bodies and souls of men.

1. *In the power of the Spirit he returned into Galilee,* strengthened with might in the inner man for the arduous work which he had undertaken; and immediately he set himself to discharge his high commission, preaching in their synagogues the gospel of the kingdom; and such power accompanied his word, and such miracles confirmed his doctrine, that the people in general admired and extolled him, and his fame quickly spread through all that country.

2. After passing through other parts of Galilee he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, *as his custom was,* he went into the synagogue on *the sabbath-day, and stood up to read* some section of Scripture, as was usually done on that day: and a most laudable custom is this, in every worshipping assembly to read the word of God. The volume, which was delivered to him for this purpose by the minister of the synagogue, contained the prophecy of Isaiah; and, unrolling the parchment on which it was written, he found the place, Isa. lxi. 1, 2. which spoke so evidently of himself. Whether it was the portion of Scripture for the day, or that he chose it as the properest introduction to his discourse, is uncertain; but, whichever was the case, it gave him the fairest opportunity to describe his own office and character, and left them inexcusable who should reject him, notwithstanding the voice of the prophets read every sabbath-day.

(1.) The text gave a full account of the Redeemer's undertaking. 1. He was eminently qualified for his arduous work by that plenitude of gifts and graces conferred upon him by the Spirit of the Lord; and fully commissioned by this unction from the Holy One for the discharge of his mediatorial office. 2. The great end of his mission is set forth. (1.) *To preach the gospel to the poor,* to *evangelize* them; not only to speak to their ears, but to make his work effectual, to convert their hearts. And by *the poor* are meant not merely the indigent and common people, though of such were Christ's disciples chiefly taken, but *the poor in spirit,* who, convinced of their spiritual wants and wretchedness, would gladly embrace that free pardon, righteousness, and salvation, which the gospel revealed to them. (2.) *To heal the broken-hearted,* whose sins pierced their souls with sorrow, and whose troubled consciences and corrupted hearts nothing but the balm of his blood and grace could relieve and cure. (3.) *To preach deliverance to the captives,* to sinful souls enslaved by Satan's power. Their chains of guilt are broken through the atonement of Jesus, and by his Spirit they are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. (4.) To preach *recovering of sight to the blind,* to open the darkened understanding of fallen man, and to shine into his heart, communicating the knowledge of the salvation which is by grace. (5.) *To set at liberty them that are bruised,* to break off the galling yoke of the law from the necks of those who, under a spirit of bondage, continued miserable and unhappy; and, in its stead, to give them the spirit of adoption, and liberty from every slavish fear. (6.) *To preach the acceptable year of the Lord,* that joyful year of gospel jubilee, when insolvent sinners shall obtain free remission of all their sins, deliverance from

their miseries, restoration to the divine favour, and their forfeited inheritance in the heavenly Canaan.

(2.) Having read this text, and delivered the roll again to the minister, he sat down, as was the custom of the Jewish doctors, and began to discourse at large on all the various particulars; showing how the words referred to the Messiah and his office, and were that very day fulfilled in himself.

3. The audience hung with attention on his lips, their eyes eagerly fastened on him, and admiration seized every hearer; such eminent wisdom, such energy of diction, such majesty and grace, appeared in all his words and his address, that they were astonished above measure, especially considering the meanness of his birth and education. *Is not this Joseph's son*, the carpenter? Which, though it increased their wonder at his discourse, prejudiced them against his person, and would not suffer them to admit the application to himself of this high office of the Messiah. *Note*, (1.) To have our eyes directed to the minister serves often to fix the attention to his discourse. (2.) Many admire the preaching, and are pleased with the orator, whose hearts are never truly converted by what they hear.

4. He anticipates and answers the objection he saw rising in the hearts of many against him. *Ye will surely say to me this proverb, Physician, Heal thyself:* if thou art the wondrous Personage, as reported, show it, by working the same miracles at home *which we have heard done in Capernaum.* But in answer hereunto, he assures them, that if he did the same or greater wonders amongst them, he knew their prejudices against him were such, they would notwithstanding reject him, *no prophet being accepted in his own country:* they would still think meanly of him who had known his parentage and education, and been used for so long a time to regard him as vastly their inferior. But he shows them, that though he withheld his favours from them it would be no proof against him, since he had the examples of former prophets to plead, and God was the sovereign disposer of his own gifts, and bestows them not on those whom men judge most fit, but on such as he pleases. Thus Elijah supported miraculously a widow of Sarepta, a Gentile city, during the famine which raged, whilst many as necessitous remained in Israel without any such relief; and Elisha also, passing by the multitude of his own leprous countrymen, cleansed only Naaman the Syrian, a Gentile, a hereditary enemy of Israel. As great, or greater objections would therefore lie against these prophets than they suggested against him.

5. The people were highly exasperated at the reproach which they apprehended was couched under these instances, as if they of Nazareth were as wicked as the Israelites in the days of Ahab, and that even Gentiles would be preferred before them in the divine regard. Though so lately they admired his gracious words, this application cut them to the heart: and, rising in a popular tumult, they cast him out of the synagogue, hurried him through the city, and, dragging him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, intended to hurl him headlong down, and dash him to pieces. *Note*, It is a mercy that even the madness of the people is under a divine restraint: else how many of God's faithful ministers had met an untimely death.

6. Jesus disappoints their malice. His time to suffer was not yet come, and therefore by his divine power, either holding their eyes, or rendering himself invisible, or striking them to the earth, as the guard who afterwards came to arrest him, he passed safe through the midst of them, leaving them to their impenitence and ruin. *Note*, They who reject Jesus and his gospel are justly given up to a reprobate mind.

[p] Mat. 4. 13. Mark 1. 21.

[q] Mat. 7. 28, 29. Mark 1. 22. ch. 5 17. John 6. 63. Tit. 2. 15. 1 Thes. 1. 5.

31. [p] And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. 32. And they were astonished at his doctrine: [q] for his word was with power. 33. ¶ [r] And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, 34. Saying, ‡ Let *us* alone; [s] what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; [t] the Holy One of God. 35. And [u] Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had [x] thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. 36. [y] And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power he commandeth ‖ the unclean spirits, and they come out. 37. [z] And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about. 38. ¶ [a] And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. 39. [b] And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: [c] and immediately she arose and ministered unto them. 40. ¶ [d] Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick § with divers diseases brought them unto him: and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. 41. ¶ [e] And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he, rebuking *them*, suffered them not to * speak: for they knew that he was Christ. 42. ¶ [f] And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place. [g] And the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. † 43. And he said unto them, [h] I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. 44. [i] And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

[r] Mark 1. 23—28. I Pet. 5. 8.

‡ Or *away.*

[s] Mark 1. 24, 34. & 5. 7. Mat. 8. 29. ver. 41.

[t] Ps. 16. 10. Dan. 9. 24. ch. 1. 35. Acts 4. 27. & 2. 31.

[u] Ver. 14. Mark 1. 25, 34. & 3. 11, 12. Acts 16. 17, 18. Ps. 50. 16.

[x] Mark 1. 26. & 9. 26. ch. 9. 39, 42. & 11. 22.

[y] Mat. 12. 23. & 9. 33. Mark 1. 27. & 7. 37. & 9. 25.

‖ Or, *What meaneth this? that with authority and power he commandeth, &c.*

[z] Mat. 4. 23—25. & 9. 31. Song 1. 3. Mic. 5. 4. Is. 52. 13.

[a] Mark 1. 29—31. Mat. 8. 14, 15.

[b] Exod. 15. 26. Rev. 16. 9. Ps. 103. 3. & 147. 3. & 107. 20.

[c] Ps. 103. 1, 2. & 116. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 14. ch. 8. 3.

[d] Mat. 8. 16, 17. Mark 1. 32—34. with 21. 1. & 3. 2. Luke 14. 1. Gen. 49. 10. Mat. 11. 5. & 4. 23.

§ *After sunset all they who had any sick,*—because then the sabbath was ended, and the people were at liberty to carry their sick.—*Campbell.*

[e] Mark 1. 34. & 3. 11, 12. see ver. 34, 35. Acts 16. 17, 18.

* Or, *to say that they knew him to be Christ.*

[f] Mark 1. 35. Eccl. 3. 10. John 4. 34.

[g] Mark 1. 45. John 6. 24. ch. 24. 29.

† More simply, *urged him not to leave him.*

[h] Mark 1. 14, 15. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Acts 10. 38. Rom. 15. 8. Is. 61. 1—3. & 42. 1—7. & 49. 1—8. & 50. 4.

[i] Mark 1. 39. Mat. 4. 15, 17, 23.

Verses 31—44. When Jesus departed from Nazareth he returned to Capernaum, and, as usual, on the sabbath-day he taught the people in their synagogues, to the astonishment of all who heard him; such divine authority and commanding energy accompanied his word. In proof of the doctrine he advanced, we have here,

1. A notable miracle performed in the presence of the congregation where he preached; see Mark i. 23. A man with the spirit of an unclean devil was in the synagogue. Filled with enmity against Christ and his gospel, and terrified with just fears that Jesus would dispossess him, the devil, using the man's

organs of speech, cried out, *Let us alone*, &c. These wicked spirits dread their doom, and fearfully look forward to their terrible judgment. They know the power of Jesus of Nazareth, for they have proved it in the wilderness; and fully satisfied concerning his mission, they confess him to be *the Holy One of God*, though with no kind intention; malice dictated here the language of truth, and they would fain fix upon him the suspicion of a confederacy with them, by bearing such an honourable testimony to him. But Jesus in a moment silences this foul fiend, and with a word rescued the miserable sinner from his power. With rage, compelled to depart, the devil vented his last efforts, throwing the man down with violent convulsions, as if he would have torn him in pieces; but his power was broken, he was unable to hurt him, and the cure was complete. Amazed, the whole congregation beheld and questioned with each other concerning a miracle so wondrous and incontestable. Never had such power and authority appeared before, that with a word the infernal spirits should be thus dispossessed, without the least ability to make resistance. And immediately the fame of the cure spread far and wide. *Note*, The power of Satan, as an unclean spirit, over the souls of men is still exceeding great, and nothing but the powerful word of gospel grace can cast him out.

2. No sooner was he returned from the synagogue than Peter's wife's mother, who lay ill of a fever, experienced his healing grace. At the request of some of the company, who mentioned her disorder, he arose, stood by her bedside, rebuked the fever with a word, and instantly she was so perfectly restored to health as to be able to wait on the guests who were in the house. *Note*, (1.) When they who are near and dear to us are sick, we must beseech Jesus on their behalf; and the prayer of faith still availeth much. (2.) They who are restored to spiritual health by the Saviour's grace, will be ready to discharge every kind office of love and service to the least of his people.

3. A multitude of other cures were performed by him the same day at even. All who had friends or relations diseased applied to him, and, whatever was their malady, he with a touch healed them all: even devils, unable to stand before his word, came out of those that were possessed, confessing him to be the Messiah: but he silenced them, refusing to receive any testimony from such as they were. *Note*, When they who we know bear enmity towards us speak us most respectfully, their civilities are to be most suspected of design.

4. Early next morning he departed from Capernaum to a solitude for retirement. Thither the people followed him, and entreated him to return to their city: but he chose to diffuse the savour of his gospel, and dispense his miracles of mercy in the country around; for this was the design of his mission, to be a general blessing. *Note*, (1.) They who have much public work have especial need of seasonable retirement also. To be *alone with God* is the best preparative for the pulpit. (2.) They who have found Christ's presence so desirable, naturally wish for its continuance. And though he refused his bodily presence to *them*, he hath engaged to his people who seek him, that he will abide with them for ever.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 30.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's preaching to the people out of Peter's ship*, ver. 1—3. 2. *The miraculous draught of fishes*, ver. 4—11. 3. *His cleansing the leper*, ver. 12—15. 4. *A short account of his private devotion and public ministry*, ver. 16, 17. 5. *His cure of the man sick of the palsy*, ver. 18—26. 6. *His calling Levi the publican, and conversing with publicans on that occasion*, ver. 27—32. 7. *His justifying his disciples in not fasting so frequently as the disciples of John and the Pharisees did*, ver. 33. ad finem.

1. AND [a] it came to pass, that, as the people [b] pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he [c] stood by the lake of Gennesaret, 2. And saw two ships standing by the lake: * but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets. 3. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. 4. ¶ Now, when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and [d] let down your nets for a draught. 5. And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and [e] have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net. 6. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and [f] their net brake. 7. And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and [g] help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. † 8. When Simon Peter saw *it*, [h] he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9. [i] For he was astonished, ‡ and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: 10. And so *was* also [k] James and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt [l] catch men. 11. And when they had brought their ships to land, they [m] forsook all, and followed him.

[a] Mat. 4. 18—22. Mark 1. 1, 16—20.

[b] 1 Sam. 3. 1. Mat. 9. 36. & 11. 12. & 13. 2.

[c] Acts 16. 13. ch. 8. 4. Mark 4. 1. *Chinnereth*, Josh. 12. 3. *Chinneroth*, Mat. 14. 34.

* *Aground*, or *at anchor near the edge.*

[d] John 21. 6.

[e] John 21. 3. Hag. 1. 6. Ps. 127. 1. Eccl. 9. 11.

[f] John 21. 11.

[g] Acts 16. 9. Phil. 4. 3. Gal. 6. 2. Heb. 13. 1.

† *So that they were near sinking.*

[h] 1 Sam. 6. 9. 1 Kin. 17. 18. Mat. 8. 8. Job 42. 5, 6. Is. 6. 1—5. Dan. 8. 17. & 10. 8, 16, 17.

[i] Ch. 4. 32, 36.

‡ The word signifies a degree of astonishment, amounting to *terror*. Peter discovered in his Master, on this occasion, something so much superior to human, that he was quite overwhelmed with awe and fear.

[k] Ch. 6. 14. & 5. 51. & 9. 28. Mat. 26. 37.

[l] Mat. 4. 19, 20. Mark 1. 17, 18. Ezek. 47. 9, 10. Mat. 13. 47. 2 Tim. 2. 26. 1 Tim. 4. 16.

[m] Mat. 19. 27. & 16. 24. Phil. 3. 7, 8 ch. 18. 28 29. & 14. 33. Mat. 10. 37. Ps. 73. 25.

Verses 1—11. Vast was the concourse that attended the preaching of Jesus; and whilst the Scribes and Pharisees, the wise doctors of the law, despised him, the common people were eager to hear him, and pressed through the crowd to get nearer. Hereupon,

1. Christ desired the use of a fisherman's boat, for the greater convenience of being heard, and to be less incommoded with the throng; and there he sat down and taught the people who stood before him on the shore.

2. When he had done preaching he desired Simon, in whose boat he was, to launch out farther into the lake, and let down their nets. Simon told him the ill success they had met with; but, though they had wearied themselves all night, and washed their nets, if he bid them they would cheerfully make another trial. *Note*, (1.) The most diligent and laborious sometimes meet with disappointments, and are apt to be discouraged by the little fruit they see of their labours; but they must persist in the way of duty, and leave the event to God. (2.) If our bread be easily earned, and our rest sweet to us, we should remember

charitably those who labour hard for little gain, and wake at their toils when they are sleeping.

3. Most amazing was the quantity of fishes they inclosed: their net began to give way with the weight; and, unable to draw them up themselves, they beckoned to their partners to come to their assistance, and loaded both their boats so deep that they were in danger of sinking. Peter was now abundantly repaid for the loan of his boat; and in this display his Master's power in the sea, as well as on the land, might be confirmed in his faith of the doctrine which he delivered.

4. Peter, deeply affected with what he saw, and perceiving the danger they were in, *fell down at Jesus' knees*, and under the deepest sense of his own unworthiness, cried out, *saying, Depart, from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.* Conscious of his guilt and sinfulness, he trembled, lest the Lord was come to punish instead of blessing him; and was afraid of his very mercies: *for he was astonished, and all that were with him at the draught of fishes they had taken;* though brought up to the business from their youth, they had never seen any thing at all to be compared with this in their whole lives. *Note*, (1.) The best of men are *sinful men*, and need continually to fall at Jesus' feet in deepest self-abasement. (2.) Though we have grievously offended our Lord, we may not say, *Depart from me*, but, Stay with me, or, Return to me in mercy; for nothing but his presence and grace can keep us from sinking.

5. Jesus quiets their fears. He is not come to them in anger, but in mercy: and he hath still greater kindness in store for them than this cargo of fishes: therefore *he said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men*, and be more successful in casting the gospel-net, and drawing greater multitudes out of the depths of sin and misery to life and salvation. Which was eminently fulfilled, Acts ii. 41.

6. No sooner were they come to land than Simon and Andrew, and the sons of Zebedee, their partners, obeying his call, immediately left their boats, and all they had, quitting their employment at the time when it appeared most successful, and commenced thenceforward constant attendants on the Lord Jesus. *Note*, They who know the blessedness of Christ's service will count nothing too much to part with for his sake.

12. ¶ [n] And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy; who, seeing Jesus, fell on *his* face, and [o] besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou [p] canst make me clean. 13. And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, [q] I will; be thou clean. And [r] immediately the leprosy departed from him. 14. And he charged him to [s] tell no man: but go, and [t] shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. 15. [u] But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. 16. ¶ [x] And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

n When he came down from the mount, (Mat. 8. 1.) and was about to enter Capernaum. Mark 1. 40—45. 2 Chr. 26. 21. Lev. xiii. 2 Kin. 5. 25.

o Ch. 18. 1—14. Mat. 7. 7, 11. Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15.

p Gen. 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27. Heb. 7. 25. Is. 63. 1.

q Hos. 13. 9. Is. 46. 12, 13.

r Ch. 4. 39. & 8. 55. Mat. 15. 28. John 4. 50, 54. Ps. 33. 9.

s Mat. 8. 4. & 9. 30. & 12. 16. Mark 1. 44. & 5. 43. & 7. 36. & 8. 26.

t Lev. xiii, xiv.

u Mat. 4. 23—25. & 9. 26. & 14. 35. & 17. 14. Is. 52. 13. & 35. 5, 6. Mark 2. 1, 2. cir. 31.

x Mark 1. 35, 45. Mat. 6. 6. ch. 6. 12.

Verses 12—16. We have here,

1. The cleansing of the leper. This story both the former evangelists have recorded. It affords us,

(1.) A striking emblem of our true state. So corrupt is our nature; so spotted are our souls; so loathsome in the eyes of God; and by all human means so utterly incurable is the disease of sin.

(2.) It directs us where our only hope lies, even in Jesus, the great physician. To him with deep humiliation and confusion of face in the sight of our own vileness, should we make application; crying earnestly for his healing grace; depending on his power to save to the uttermost; and casting ourselves wholly on his mercy.

(3.) Christ appears a gracious Saviour ready to hear the prayer of the destitute poor, and able to save to the uttermost all who come to him; both to pardon the sinner's guilt, however aggravated; and to deliver him from the power of his corruptions, however inveterate.

(4.) Every cleansed sinner will immediately follow the commands of Jesus; will offer up himself a living sacrifice to God; and in the blessed, evident, and universal change wrought upon him, will leave those without excuse, who will not acknowledge the divine power and grace magnified in such a conversion.

2. Great multitudes resorted to him from every quarter to hear him and to be healed. The more he sought to be hid the more his fame spread. The gratitude and transport of joy this poor man felt on his cure would not permit him to hold his tongue and conceal the glory of his great benefactor. Modest worth, that wishes to be concealed, shines the brighter.

3. He withdrew, after the labours of the day, from the crowd, and, retiring into a solitary place, spent some time alone in prayer; to teach us this necessary duty, which nothing should entrench upon or interrupt.

17. ¶ And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were [y] Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem; and [z] the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them. 18. [a] And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him. 19. And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the [b] house top, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst before Jesus. 20. And when he [c] saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, [d] thy sins are forgiven thee. 21. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, [e] Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? [f] Who can forgive sins, but God alone? 22. But when Jesus [g] perceived their thoughts, he, answering, said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? 23. Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? 24. But that ye may know that the [h] Son of man hath [i] power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) [k] I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house. 25. And im-

y Ver. 21, 30. ch. 7. 30. & 11. 53, 54. & 15. 2.

z Ver. 15. Jer. 18. 18. Mat. 11. 5. & 4. 23, 24. & 9. 35. & 12. 15. Heb. 7. 25.

a Mat. 9. 2—8. Mark 2. 3—12. Acts 9. 33. John 5. 3, 5. Deut. 28. 22. 1 Cor. 11. 30. Jam. 5. 15, 16.

b Deut. 22. 8. 2 Sam. 11. 2. Jer. 19. 13. Mat. 10. 27. Acts 10. 9. Mark 2. 4.

c Gen. 22. 12. John 2. 25. & 21. 17. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23.

d Mat. 9. 2. Mark 3. 5. Acts 5. 31. Is. 38. 17. & 44. 22. & 53. 11. Eph. 1. 7. John 5. 14. Ps. 103. 3.

e Mat. 9. 3. & 26. 65. John 5. 13. & 10. 33, 36.

f Ps. 32. 5. Is. 43. 25. & 44. 22. & 1. 18. Ps. 103. 3. Rom. 8. 33. Job 14. 4.

g 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chr. 29. 17. Ps. 7. 9. & 139. 1—4. Jer. 17. 10. John 2. 25. & 21. 17. & 6. 64. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23.

h Dan. 7. 13. Ps. 80. 17. Zech. 7. Mat. 16. 13. Rev. 1. 13. 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. & 3. 16.

i John 5. 22, 23. Is. 53. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16. John 17. 2. Acts 5. 31. Mat. 28. 18.

k Ver. 13, 17. Gen. 1. 3. Ps. 33. 9. John 6. 63. & 5. 8, 9. Ps. 107. 20.

Ps. 103. 1—3. & 107. 1, 8, 15, 32. & 115. 1. ch. 18. 43.

immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and depart-

m Ch. 7. 16. & 17. 15, 18. Mat. 9. 8, 33. & 15. 23. Mark 2. 12. & 1. 27. & 5. 26. ch. 7. 16. Acts 5. 5, 11.

ed to his own house, [l] glorifying God. 26. [m] And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things* to-day.

* *Incredible things.*

Verses 17—26. Christ ceased not his indefatigable labours.

1. He preached in a house on a week-day at Capernaum, for no day, no place, is unsuitable or unseasonable when an opportunity offers to speak a word for God, and for the good of men's souls. Among others of his audience, were a large number of Scribes and Pharisees; who, with no good intention, were come from the distant places, not to hear and learn, but to *sit by*, to make remarks and cavil; *and the power of the Lord was present to heal them*, not the Pharisees, but many of the multitude who came to him with their several diseases; thus at least to leave without excuse those who refused the evidence of such incontestable miracles. *Note*, (1.) When persons come to hear the word of God, not to profit themselves, but to prejudice others against it, great is their guilt. (2.) Though we know the malice of those who watch for our halting, we must not be discouraged from persevering in the way of duty. (3.) The power of the Lord is present to heal wherever his gospel is preached, but they who reject the counsel of God against their own souls, have only themselves to blame for their destruction.

2. Just at that time a paralytic man was brought to Jesus. Unable to gain access by the door, because of the multitude, his friends carried him to the top of the house, and let him down through the roof into the room where Jesus was. Beholding their faith, he pronounces the pardon of his sins; and notwithstanding all the cavils of the Pharisees which he knew, Jesus confirms the divine authority he assumed, by the immediate cure of the paralytic man; proving thereby that he who could thus sovereignly, by his own power, remove the effects of sin, had an undoubted right to pardon it. The cure was instantaneous and perfect to the amazement of all, who were struck with sacred reverence and awe, when they saw him, who the moment before lay stretched so helpless, now rise with full strength and vigour, take up his own bed, and go away glorifying God for the astonishing mercy; and the people in general acknowledged, that no such strange miracles were ever before seen or heard of. *Note*, (1.) All our diseases are the fruit of sin, and that should ever humble us under them before God. (2.) Jesus hath power to forgive sins, and they who by faith come to him, shall know it by blessed experience. (3.) If our sins be pardoned, the bitterness of sickness and death is passed away: a soul rejoicing in God, as his Saviour, hath nothing to complain of. (4.) When we have received mercy at God's hand, we are bound to ascribe to him the glory due unto his name, and to speak to his praise.

n Called also Matthew the Evangelist. Mat. 9. 9—13. Mark 2. 13—17.

o Mat. 4. 19, 21. & 16. 24. & 11. 28—30.

p See ver. 11. John 6. 63. 1 Kin. 19. 19—21.

q Mat. 9. 10. Mark 2. 15. 1 Kin. 19. 21. ch. 15. 1, 2.

r Ver. 17, 21. ch. 7. 29, 30. & 11. 53, 54. & 14. 1, 3. & 15. 2. & 19. 7. & 16. 14. Mark 7. 2. Mat. 23. 23.

* That is, the scribes or lawyers of the Jews, who inhabited that place. —*Hammond.*

27. ¶ And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican named [n] Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, [o] Follow me. 28. [p] And he left all, rose up, and followed him. 29. ¶ [q] And Levi made him a great feast in his own house; and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. 30. But [r] their scribes and Pharisees * murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? 31. And Jesus answering, said unto them,

s Mat. 9. 12, 13. Mark 2. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16. Is. 1. 18. & 55. 7. & 45. 22. Hos. 13. 9. ch. 19. 10. Acts 5. 31. ch. 18. 10—14. Rom. 5. 6, 8, 20, 21.

[s] They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. 32. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. 33. ¶ And they said unto him, [t] Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? 34. And he said unto them, Can ye make [u] the children of the bride-chamber fast while the [x] bridegroom is with them? 35. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be [y] taken away from them, and then [z] shall they fast in those days. 36. ¶ And he spake also a parable unto them; [a] No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not with the old. 37. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. 38. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. 39. No man also having drunk old *wine* [b] straightway desireth new; for he saith, [c] The old is better.

t Mat. 9. 14—17. Mark 2. 18—22. ch. 18. 12. John 3. 25. Mat. 6. 5, 16. Rom. 10. 2, 3. & 9. 31. & 2. 17—24.

u Song 1. 4, 17. & 2. 3—6. & 3. 10, 11. Mat. 22. 1—12. & 25. 1—10. Rev. 19. 7, 9.

x Christ. Mat. 22. 2. & 25. 1, 5, 6, 10. Rev. 19. 7, 9. Song 3. 4, 11. & 7. 5. & 8. 5, 6. Is. 62. 5. Zeph. 3. 17.

y Dan. 9. 26. Zech. 13. 7. John 7. 33, 34. & 12. 8, 32. & 13. 33. & 14. 2, 12. & 16, 7. & 17. 11, 13. Acts 1. 9. & 3. 21.

z Acts 1. 14. & 13. 2, 3. & 14. 23. 1 Cor. 7. 5. 2 Cor. 11, 27. Zech. 12. 10—14.

a Mat. 9. 16, 17. Mark 2. 21, 22. Deut. 33. 25. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Ps. 103. 9—13. Is. 63. 9, 15.

b But. Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. 2 Pet. 3. 18. & 1. 4—10.

c Col. 2. 23. 1 Tim. 4. 8.

Verses 27—39. The conversion of a sinner's heart to God is equally a matter of wonder, and as great an evidence of divine power, as cleansing the leper, or raising the dead. We have here,

1. The calling of Matthew, or Levi, the publican, and his ready obedience to the command of Jesus; instantly leaving all, he followed him. The vilest sinners, and those who have the greatest obstacles lying in the way of their salvation, are; when Jesus speaks to the heart, effectually wrought upon. Nothing is above his almighty grace.

2. The gracious condescension of the Lord to the publicans, whom Matthew invited to his house. Our Lord disdained not to sit down with them; and vindicates his conduct from the envious, malicious, and censorious suggestions of the Pharisees. He associated not with them as approving their ways, or countenancing them in evil, but as a physician visits the diseased; the whole, at least they who fancy themselves so, need not his care. The business of the Saviour in the world was not with the righteous, or those who were vainly puffed up with a conceit of their own excellence, as was the case of the Pharisees, he came to call poor sinners, as the publicans were, to repentance; and would kindly receive them, when, sensible of their guilt and sinfulness, they turned to him. And he is still the same gracious Lord; no miserable sinner need despair; let him look unto Jesus and be saved; only those perish who know not their need of him, or proudly fancy they are righteous.

3. He vindicates his disciples from the censures of the Pharisees, respecting their fasting. It was not fit they should fast whilst their Master was with them; they were not prepared to endure this discipline. Such austerities might tempt them to draw back, as new fermenting wine would burst old bottles; their exercises must be proportioned to their strength. At present they could not bear it; but hereafter the time would come

when losing their Master, and called out to labour in his cause, they would learn to fast, 1 Cor. iv. 11. Not that the Pharisees need lay such a stress upon their own bodily services: though, like new fermenting wine that sparkles high, they made a fair show in the flesh, their form of godliness was not to be compared with the life and power of religion, *the old wine*, which the disciples possessed, and which every spiritual person, who hath a true relish for the things of God, far prefers.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A proof of the lawfulness of works of* necessity *and* mercy *on the sabbath-day*, ver. 1—11. 2. *Christ's retirement for secret prayer*, ver. 12. 3. *His calling his twelve apostles*, ver. 13—16. 4. *His curing the multitudes of those under various diseases who made their applications to him*, ver. 17—19. 5. *The sermon that he preached to his disciples and the multitude, instructing them in their duty both to God and man*, ver. 20—49.

1. AND [a] it came to pass on the * second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields: and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. 2. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, [b] Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days? 3. And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, [c] what David did, when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him; 4. How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shew-bread, and gave also to them that were with him; [d] which it is not lawful to eat, but for the priests alone? 5. And he said unto them, [e] That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath. 6. ¶ [f] And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue, and taught: and there was a man whose [g] right hand was withered. 7. And the scribes and Pharisees [h] watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. 8. [i] But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, [k] Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. 9. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; [l] Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy *it?* 10. And, looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, [m] Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. 11. [n] And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

[a] Mat. 12. 1—8. Mark 2. 23—28. Deut. 23. 25.

* Commentators are divided as to the precise meaning of *the second Sabbath after the first*, or more literally, *the Sabbath called second-prime*. The explanation subjoined in the body of the present commentary is probably the correct one.

[b] Mat. 12. 2. & 15. 2. Mark 2. 24. & 7. 2. ch. 5. 33. & 13 14. & 15. 2. Mat. 7. 5. & 23. 23, 24. with Exod. 20. 10. & 31. 15. & 35. 2. Num. 15. 32, 35.

[c] 1 Sam. 21. 3—6. Mark 2. 25, 26. Mat. 12. 3, 4.

[d] Exod. 25. 30. & 29. 23, 32, 33. Lev. 8. 13. & 24. 5—9.

[e] Mat. 12. 8. Mark 2. 28. Exod. 20. 10. ver. 9. ch. 13. 16. John 5. 9. & 9. 14.

[f] Mat. 12. 9—14. Mark 3. 1—6.

[g] Judg. 3. 15. 1 Kin. 13. 4.

[h] Ps. 37. 32. & 38. 12 ch. 13. 14. & 11. 53, 54. & 14. 1, 2. & 20. 20. John 9. 16, 26.

[i] See ch. 5. 22. 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chr. 28. 17. Ps. 7. 9. & 139. 1—4. Heb. 4. 3. Rev. 2. 23. John 21. 17.

[k] Dan. 6. 10. Phil. 1. 14.

[l] Mark 2. 27. ch. 13. 14—17. & 14. 3—6. John 7. 23.

[m] Mark 3. 5. Mat. 12. 13. 1 Kin. 13. 6. Ps. 107. 20.

[n] Ps. 2. 1, 2. ch. 4. 28. Acts 7. 54. Mat. 12. 14. & 22. 15. John 5. 16. & 7. 1. & 8. 59. & 10. 32. & 11. 47. & 12. 53. & 15. 24, 25. Prov. 4. 16.

Verses 1—11. These passages we had before in the other evangelists. The time when the first of these events happened is said to be *the second sabbath after the first*, or rather *the first sabbath after the second* day of the Passover, from whence were reckoned the seven weeks of the feast of Pentecost.

1. Our Lord vindicates his disciples from the censure of the Pharisees; and proves, by the example of David, the lawfulness of rubbing out the ears of corn, and eating them on the sabbath, when hunger called for food. *Note*, (1.) Works of necessity are always allowable. (2.) The greatest censurers of the innocent actions of others are often most indulgent to their own iniquities.

2. He vindicates himself from the same malignant cavillers. As he preached in the synagogue on another sabbath, there was a man present who had a withered hand. Jesus bid him stand forth in the midst of the congregation; and, knowing the malicious purposes of his watchful enemies, who, from such a gracious work as he was about to do, intended to ground an accusation against him as if he was a sabbath-breaker, he appeals to themselves whether they thought the fourth commandment could possibly forbid the doing good, or saving a man's life on the sabbath-day. Unable to reply, yet resolved to find fault, they were silent. On which he, with a word, restored the withered hand. And thereat his enemies were so enraged, that, with fury rising to madness, they consulted how they might destroy him. *Note*, (1.) They who would be cured of their spiritual infirmities must be found in the assembly of the faithful, where Christ usually dispenses his healing grace. (2.) Man's perverseness and wickedness must not deter nor discourage us from the work in which the Lord would have us employed. (3.) All passion is temporary madness: during its fury neither reason nor conscience are regarded.

12. ¶ And it came to pass in those days, that [o] he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. 13. And [p] when it was day, he called unto *him* his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; 14. [q] Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, 15. Matthew and Thomas, James the *son* of Alpheus, and Simon called Zelotes,† 16. And [r] Judas *the brother* of James, and [s] Judas Iscariot, which was also the traitor. 17. ¶ And he came down with them, and stood [t] in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and [u] a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; 18. And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. 19. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

[o] Ps. 109. 4. & 22. 2. Heb. 5. 7. Mat. 14. 23. Acts 14. 23. & 1. 24. & 13. 3.

[p] Mat. 10. 1—4. Mark 3. 13—19. John 15. 16. Acts 1. 24. & 14. 23. Gal. 1. 1. Heb. 5. 4. This calling was some time before their mission. Mat. x. Mark 6. 7. ch. 9. 1. with Heb. 5. 4.

[q] See on Mat. 10. 2—4. Mark 3. 16—19. Acts 1. 13.

† There was about this time a party in Palestine distinguished by the title of *Zealots*. Probably Simon had belonged formerly to this particular sect.

[r] Jude 1. Acts 1. 13. John 14. 22.

[s] See Mark 3. 19. Mat. 10. 4. John 6. 70, 71.

[t] Not as Mat. 5. 1

[u] Mat. 4. 23—25. & 12. 15. & 9. 35. & 14. 35, 36. & 15. 30. Mark 3. 30. Mat. 11. 5. Is. 35. 5, 6. Ps. 147. 3. Exod 15. 26. Gen. 49. 10. Is. 61. 1—3.

Verses 12—19. We have here,

1. Our Lord's retirement. *He went out to a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God,* (εν τη προσευχη του Θεου) which may signify the object to whom his prayer was directed,

or the fervency of his requests, or, as some suppose, the house of prayer, or *proseucha*, to which he retired, such oratories, it seems, being common in that country. The length of the time he spent there bespoke the importance of the occasion: he being about to choose and ordain his twelve apostles. *Note*, When matters of deep concern lie upon our souls, we are especially called to spread the case before God for his direction and blessing.

2. The calling and appointment of the twelve apostles. These he ordained to be his chief ministers in that kingdom which he was come to establish, putting them in trust with his gospel, and empowering them to work miracles in confirmation of their mission. The names of the apostles are the same as before; only he who was called Lebbeus, and surnamed Thaddeus, is here called Judas the brother of James, these names belonging to the same person; and Simon the Canaanite is here named *Simon Zelotes*, being probably, before his conversion, of the sect of the Zealots.

3. Having finished this work, he came down with the twelve to the plain, where great multitudes attended from the most distant parts of the country, to hear his discourses and to partake of his wondrous cures. Nor were they disappointed: he graciously taught them, and richly dispensed his favours, healing all the diseased, and casting out the unclean spirits from such as were possessed; yea, such virtue went out of him, that *the whole multitude* of miserable patients, who came to him *sought* but *to touch him*, fully persuaded that this would be effectual to heal them; and found according to their faith, that their cure was instantly effected.

x Mat. 5. 2—12. Ps. 80. 19.
y Mat. 5. 3. Ps. 51. 17. Is. 35. 3, 4. & 42. 3. & 57. 15, 16. & 61. 1. & 66. 2. Prov. 16. 19. & 29. 23. ch. 14. 21, 33. John 7. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 26—31. Jam. 2. 5. Mat. 11. 5. Ps. 113. 7, 8.
z Ch. 1. 53. Ps. 42. 1, 2. & 63. 1, 2. & 27. 4. & 84. 2. & 17. 15. & 65. 4. John 14. 14. & 6. 35. & 7. 37, 38. 1 Cor. 4. 11. Is. 44. 3, 4. & 65. 13. & 66. 10. & 25. 6.
a Ezek. 7. 16. & 9. 4. Rev. 11. 3. Is. 61. 3. & 57. 18. & 30. 19. & 51. 11, 12. & 35. 10. Eccl. 7. 2, 3. ch. 16. 25. John 6. 20. 2 Cor. 1. 4, 7. Jam. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rev. 7. 14—17. & 21. 3, 4.
b Mat. 5. 10, 11. John 9. 22. & 12. 42. & 16. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 19. & 3. 14. & 4. 13, 14. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 8—17. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7, 10.
c Acts 5. 41. Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 7, 26—28. & 3. 5, 21. & 7. 14—17. 2 Tim. 2. 12. & 4. 7, 8.
d Neh. 9. 26. Mat. 23. 31, 34. Acts. 7. 51. 2 Chr. 36. 16. Mark 12. 3—5. Jer. xx, xxvi, &c. Heb. 11. 36—38.
e Job. 21. 7, 13. Amos 6. 1. & 4. 1. Jam. 5. 1. ch. 12. 15—21. Mat. 19. 23, 24.
f Mat. 6. 2, 5, 16. ch. 16. 25. & 12. 15—21.
g Is. 65. 13. Jam. 5. 5. & 4. 9. Prov. 14. 13. Eccl. 2. 2. & 7, 3.
h Is. 30. 10. Mic. 2. 11. John 7. 7. 1 John 4. 5.

20. ¶ [x] And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, [y] Blessed *be ye* poor; for yours is the kingdom of God. 21. [z] Blessed *are ye* that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. [a] Blessed *are ye* that weep now; for ye shall laugh. 22. [b] Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake: 23. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, [c] your reward *is* great in heaven: [d] for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. 24. [e] But woe unto you that are rich! [f] for ye have received your consolation. 25. [g] Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. 26. [h] Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Verses 20—26. Some have supposed this is an abridgment of the same discourse preached Mat. v—vii. others that it was delivered at a different time and place, though the matter be similar. And this seems most probable, as there it is said he went up into a mountain and sat; here, that he came down and stood in the plain.

As the disciples of Jesus would, for their attachment to him, be called to endure many hardships and sufferings, he here, fixing his eyes upon them, addresses them for their encouragement.

1. He pronounces those blessed whom the world in general counts to be of all men most miserable. (1.) *Blessed are ye poor*, destitute of all earthly substance, or who have left all to follow me, and whose spirits are humbled into the dust under the sense of your sinfulness and spiritual poverty: *yours is the kingdom of God;* the present riches of grace are your treasure, and the eternal inheritance above is reserved for you as your exceeding great reward. (2.) *Blessed are ye that hunger now*, either wanting necessary food for the sake of Christ and his gospel, or so earnest after spiritual blessings as the hungry crave for meat; *for ye shall be filled* with food to satisfy the cravings of hunger, or better, with that supply of righteousness and grace which the soul desires. (3.) *Blessed are ye that weep now*, under afflictions for Christ's sake, or mourning over sin in yourselves and others: *for ye shall laugh*, filled with eternal consolations in that kingdom where every tear shall be wiped away from your eyes. (4.) *Blessed are ye when men shall hate you* for your attachment to Christ and his gospel, *and when they shall separate you* from their company, counting it infamous to associate with a person so obnoxious, as well as from their religious assemblies; *and shall reproach you*, branding you with every malicious slander, and treating you with insult and contempt as the vilest of mankind; *and cast out your name as evil*, never mentioning you but with malignity, obloquy, and virulence, abusing you wherever they go; and all this *for the Son of man's sake*, because you espouse his interests, profess your faith in him, and live to his glory; which is indeed the cause of all their enmity at the bottom, with whatever specious pretences they cloak their malevolence. Notwithstanding their curses, ye are truly blessed. *Rejoice ye in that day*, therefore, *and leap for joy;* such reproach is your highest honour, and will prove your eternal advantage; *for behold your reward is great in heaven;* and this reward in glory will infinitely overpay all your losses and sufferings; *for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.* In every age, the faithful, from the beginning have met the same treatment from the world of the ungodly. It is your honour to be made vile in such company; and to partake of the same cross they endured is the way to the crown they have won. Let us weigh well these things and we shall say, welcome reproach, welcome every opprobrious name, welcome enmity, reviling, insolence. This is the way to glory.

2. He pronounces fearful woes on those whom the world calls happy; so different are God's thoughts from man's thoughts. (1.) *Wo unto you that are rich*, who, possessed of affluence, idolize the creature, seek your happiness from worldly enjoyments, and trust in these vanities; *for ye have received your consolation;* you have your all in hand, and have nothing to hope for in eternity. (2.) *Wo unto you that are full*, living in all fleshly gratifications, and faring sumptuously every day; *for ye shall hunger*, emptied of all your present abundance, and left to the rage of craving appetite, that can never be satisfied, and to raging thirst, where not a drop of water is granted to cool a flaming tongue. (3.) *Wo unto you that laugh now*, spending your days in mirth, pleasure, and sensual joy; *for ye shall mourn and weep*, where the sorrow will be as unavailing as the torment which occasions it will be intolerable and eternal. (4.) *Wo unto you when all men shall speak well of you*, a sure sign that you do nothing to reprove them, either by your profession or Christian conversation, flattering them in their sin, and never offending them by your fidelity to their souls; then you will gain their approbation; *for so did their fathers to the false prophets*, whose smooth and deceitful prophecies obtained them the caresses of their countrymen, whilst the faithful prophets, who knew not how to flatter, were abhorred and persecuted. All these things are eminently verified and verifying every day.

27. ¶ [i] But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, 28. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. 29. [k] And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not *to take thy* coat also. 30. [l] Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again. 31. [m] And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. 32. [n] For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. 33. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. 34. [o] And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35. [p] But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again;* and your reward shall be great, and [q] ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he [r] is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil. 36. [s] Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

i Mat. 5. 44. Exod. 23. 4. Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 11, 19, 20. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 9. ch. 23. 34. Acts 7. 60.

k Mat. 5. 39, 40. Is. 50. 6. 1 Cor. 6. 7. Rom. 12. 17, 20. Lam. 3. 30.

l Deut. 15. 7—10. Ps. 41. 1. & 112. 9. Prov. 3. 27, 28. & 11. 24, 25. & 21. 26. & 22. 9.

m Mat. 7. 12. & 22. 39, 40. Rom. xii, xiii. Gal. 5. 14, 22, 23. Col. 3. 8—15. Eph. 4. 25—32. Phil. 4. 8.

n See Mat. 5. 46, 47.

o Mat. 5. 42. Deut. 15. 8—11.

p Ver. 27—31. Deut. 15. 8—11. Lev. 25. 35—37. Ps. 37. 26. Prov. 19. 17. & 22. 9. Heb. 6. 10.

* That is, Do good not only to those from whom you expect a temporal recompense, but to those also who will never return you any kindness, as your enemies, and those who never can make any recompense, as the poor and needy. —*Dr S. Clarke.*

q Mat 5. 45. John 13. 35. 1 John 3 1, 14.

r Acts 14. 17. Ps. 145. 9.

s Eph. 5. 1, 2. & 4. 31, 32. Col. 3. 8—15. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Ps. 68. 15. Mat. 5. 48.

Verses 27—36. The same truths are here delivered as Matt. v. 38—44. Our Lord inculcates that universal charity which is the eminent characteristic of his religion. Our love must extend even to our bitterest enemies, and make us ready to every good word and work for their service, rendering to them blessings for curses. Love will make us return prayer for despiteful usage. Christian charity must lead us to put up with affronts without resentment, and to suffer wrongs without avenging them, or seeking litigious redress, ver. 29. Charity must open our hearts to feel the distresses of the indigent, and our hand liberally, according to our ability, to relieve them; often lending without the hope of repayment, and willing to cancel the debts of the insolvent, whom unforeseen providences have disabled from the power of discharging, ver. 30. Charity teaches us to put ourselves in the place of others, and act towards them in such a manner as, in their circumstances, we could with reason have expected from them, ver. 31. And there are three reasons urged for this gracious conversation.

1. That this is the distinguished badge of our profession. To love, serve, and to lend to those who make us a return in kind, is no more than the most self-interested worldling doth: and the faith which worketh by love must carry us much farther than these.

2. Our reward will be great in heaven, whatever ungrateful returns we may meet from men on earth.

3. As we shall herein most strikingly resemble the Father of mercies, *who is good to the evil and unthankful.* He will acknowledge us as his children, which is the most exalted honour and dignity.

37. [t] Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: [u] forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: 38. [x] Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. [y] For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. 39. And he spake a parable unto them; [z] Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch? 40. [a] The disciple is not above his master; but every one† that is perfect shall be as his master. 41. [b] And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 42. Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, [c] let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. 43. [d] For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 44. For every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. 45. [e] A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. 46. ¶ [f] And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47. [g] Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: 48. He is like a man which [h] built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when [i] the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and [k] could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock. 49. But [l] he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and [m] immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.†

t Is. 65. 5. Mat. 7. 1—5. Rom. 2. 1, 2. & 14. 3, 4, 10, 13. 1 Cor. 4. 3—5. Jam. 4. 11, 12. & 2. 13 Gal. 6. 1, 2.

u Mat. 6. 14. & 18. 35. Prov. 10. 12. 1 Cor. 13. 7.

x Prov. 10. 22. & 19. 17. & 22. 9. Eccl. 11. 1.

y Judg. 1. 7. Ps. 18. 25, 26. & 41. 2. Mat. 7. 2. Mark 4. 24. 2 Cor. 9. 6. Jam. 2. 13.

z Mat. 15. 14. Jer. 6. 15. & 5. 31. Is. 56. 10, 11. & 9. 16. & 42. 19, 20, 25. 2 Thes. 2. 10—12. 2 Tim. 3. 13.

a Mat. 10. 24, 25. John 13. 16. & 15. 20.

† Or *shall be perfected as his master.*

b Mat. 7. 3—5. Lam. 3. 40. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

c Prov. 18. 17. Mat. 7. 4, 5. & 6. 22. 23.

d Mat. 7. 16—23. & 12. 33—35. & 3. 10. 1 John 4. 1—5. 2 Pet. i, ii. Gal. 5. 19—23. Rom. 2. 7—10. Jude 1—20. 2 Tim. 3. 1—9. Tit. 2. 11—14.

e Ps. 37. 30. Prov. 10. 20, 21. Mat. 7. 17, 20. & 12. 34, 35. & 13. 32. Rom. 8. 5—8.

f Mat. 7. 21—23. & 25. 11. Mal. 1. 6. Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 22. ch. 13, 25. Mark 3. 35. John 13. 17. & 14. 15. & 15. 14.

g Mat. 7. 24—27. Ps. xv. & 24. 3—6. ch. 11. 28. 1 John 3. 7. Rev. 22. 14. Jam. 1. 27.

h John 3. 3, 5. Is. 28. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 4—6. 1 Cor. 10. 4. & 3. 11. Mat. 16. 18.

i Acts 14. 22. John 16. 33. 1 Cor. 4. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 11. 25—27. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

k Ps. 34. 19. & 125. 1, 2. 2 Tim. 2. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude 1. Rev. 7. 14.

l Mat. 23. 3. Jam. 2. 21—24. ch. 8. 5—7. ver. 46.

m Mat. 13. 18—22. & 11. 20—26. Heb. 10. 28—31. & 6. 4—8. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. Mat. 12. 43—45.

† The rains in Judea being often extremely violent, and the country very hilly, considerable inundations frequently occur, which are dangerous to buildings that happen to be placed within their reach, by washing away the soil from under them, and thus occasioning their fall.—*Harmer.*

Verses 37—49. These wise sayings we have considered before, Matt. vii. and in other places. They give us the most noble

directions whereon to form our judgment and conduct; happy they who observe them.

1. In judging we must ever be candid, and lean to the most favourable side; interpreting the words and actions of others with those allowances which we wish and need for our own: and then we shall find the same candour from others which we exercise towards them.

2. We must give and forgive, ready to relieve the necessitous, and to pass by the offences of our brethren: charitable and merciful, as we ourselves expect mercy from God and live pensioners on his bounty. And this will engage others the more readily to forgive us, and even in this life we shall often reap the fruits of our liberality.

3. As we deal with others, we may expect to be dealt with ourselves. Our rigour and severity to others, will provoke men to treat us with the same, when we fall into their power, Judg. i. 7. whilst our known benevolence will usually engage a like return.

4. Ignorant and blind guides, who know not the way of salvation themselves, can never lead others aright; they who follow such, will perish with them. It is hardly possible they should teach others the bitterness and burden of sin who have never felt either, nor acquaint them with the unsearchable riches of Christ, who have not experimentally found him precious to their own souls.

5. Christ's followers may not expect kinder treatment from the world than their master met. The highest perfection of the disciple lies in conformity to his example; and when, like his Lord, he is enabled to lead a life of self-denial and deadness to the world, then will he be prepared to suffer whatever for his sake he may be called to.

6. They who set up for reformers of others, need first look well to their own souls; to be quick sighted to others' faults, and blind to our own, must make our rebukes absurd, and they would be justly retorted. When we are enabled to keep our own conscience void of offence, then our reproofs will come commended by the weight of example, and be doubly weighty.

7. Men's actions will be good, or evil, according to their inward principles. As a tree may be known by its fruit, so may a man by his conduct and conversation: according to the good or evil treasure in the heart, such will be the produce. *A good man*, by divine grace, truly renewed in the spirit of his mind, brings forth the genuine fruits of righteousness and true holiness: *an evil man*, whose heart is unchanged, and under the power of native corruption, can do nothing truly pleasing to God; his words and ways are all corrupt before God, either grossly vicious, or he habitually forgets God; or if he pretends to serve him, pride and hypocrisy stamp his duties as an abomination.

8. It is not pompous professions, but real fidelity, which makes a man a true disciple of Jesus. They who call him Lord, must give a proof of their sincerity by their obedience; it is not merely *hearing*, but *doing*, which he requires. They who believe indeed to the saving of their souls, whose practice evidences their faith unfeigned, are like the wise builder, whose house, founded on a rock, defied the floods and storm. They stand fast in the hour of temptation, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel; they persevere in God's holy ways, and are kept by his power unto salvation. But the careless hearer, on whose soul the word of Jesus doth not take effect, builds his hopes of heaven on a sandy foundation, and flatters himself to his ruin. The hour of temptation here often proves him an apostate, or at least in death the hope of the hypocrite perisheth. Let us look well then to the ground on which we stand, that we may not too late perceive our irretrievable error.

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's curing the centurion's servant*, ver 7—10. *and raising one to life that was dead, the widow's son at Nain*, ver. 11—18. 2. *Christ's answer to John's question*, ver. 19—23. *To which he adds an honourable testimony concerning John, and a just reproof to the men of that generation for the contempt they put upon him and his doctrine*, ver. 24—35. 3. *Christ comforting and pardoning a poor penitent, and justifying himself in the favour he showed her, against the cavils of a proud Pharisee*, ver. 36—50.

1. NOW, when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, [a] he entered into Capernaum. 2. And a certain [b] centurion's servant, who [c] was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. 3. And when he heard of Jesus, [d] he sent unto him the elders of the Jews,* beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. 4. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: 5. For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.† 6. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent [e] friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; for [f] I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: 7. Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: [g] but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. 8. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers; and I say unto * one, [h] Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. 9. When Jesus heard these things, he [i] marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not [k] in Israel. 10. [l] And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

[a] Mat. 8. 5—13.
[b] Mat. 8. 5. & 27. 54. Acts 10. 1. & 27. 1.
[c] Eph. 4. 31, 35. Job 31. 13. Rom. 12. 15, 16. Heb. 13. 3.
[d] Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. Rom. 10. 15—17.
* Probably the elders of the synagogue, which he had built, ver. 5. It is stated by Matthew, (ch. 8. 5.) that the centurion came to Jesus, but it is a very usual and common form of expression with the sacred writers, to represent a person as doing that himself, which he does by means of others. See examples of this, Exod. 18. 6. 1 Kin. 5. 7. Mark 10. 35. compared with Mat. 20. 20.
† More emphatically, *it was he who built our synagogue.*
[e] He first sent some of the Jewish elders, and then some of his own friends. Mat. viii.
[f] Gen. 32. 10. Mat. 3. 11. & 15. 27. ch. 15. 19, 21. ver. 4. Prov. 27. 2.
[g] Ps. 33. 9. & 41. 4. & 107. 20. & 147. 3. Exod. 15. 26. Rev. 16. 9. Deut. 7. 15.
* Gr. *this man.*
[h] Deut. 7. 15. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Deut. 32. 39.
[i] Or, *admired him.* Mat. 15. 28. & 8. 10. & 9. 2.
[k] Ps. 147. 19, 20. Rom. 3. 1—3. & 9. 4, 5.
[l] Mat. 8. 13. & 15. 28. Mark 9. 23. John 4. 50, 54.

Verses 1—10. When Jesus had finished his discourse in the audience of the people, an occasion offers to confirm by a miracle, the truths he had been declaring. The same story we had, Matt. viii. 5. different circumstances are here inserted, such as the sending of the elders of the Jews, and afterwards his friends, before the centurion came himself, as it seems probable he did at last; but his application by them was in fact the same as if he had come in person at last.

1. Hearing the fame of Jesus, and having faith in him, he greatly desired his help in behalf of a sick servant, whose fidelity and diligence had endeared him to his master; and supposing that he, who was a Gentile and a Roman officer, might not so easily obtain the favour, he engaged the elders of the Jews to be advocates for him, who readily undertook to serve him, as being under great obligations to him. They earnestly therefore besought Jesus for him, as one worthy his regard, having ever tes-

tified a great respect for the Jewish nation and religion, and at his own expense built them a synagogue for divine worship. *Note*, (1.) A servant truly faithful and industrious deserves that esteem he thus studies to engage. (2.) It is good having an interest in their prayers whom the Lord Jesus respects.

2. As Christ was in the way to the centurion's house, he no sooner heard of his condescension, than, in great humility, he sent other friends in his name, as unwilling to give the Lord this trouble, and counting himself unworthy of such a guest, and himself undeserving of his honoured presence, which was indeed the reason he did not in person at first make the application. He professes his faith to be such in Christ's power, that all diseases would obey his orders, more readily even than the soldiers the word of their commanding officer; and that he need not be present to perform the cure; if he spoke, he believed it would instantly be done.

3. Christ expresses his admiration and approbation of such uncommon faith; even among all the Jewish people had never yet appeared so remarkable an instance of humble assured faith, as in this Gentile; therefore he puts honour upon him, and with pleasure grants his request. The disease immediately departed, and the persons who had been sent from the centurion's house, on their return found the servant perfectly restored to health. *Note*, True humility, and firm trust in his power and love, above all things commend us to the Saviour's regard.

11. ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain: and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. 12. Now, when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, * the [m] only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. 13. And when the Lord saw her, he [n] had compassion on her, and said unto her, [o] Weep not. 14. And he came and touched the † bier; and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, [p] I say unto thee, Arise. 15. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother. 16. [q] And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That [r] a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath [s] visited his people. 17. And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about. 18. ¶ [t] And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

* Carried out of the city. As all dead bodies were unclean by the Jewish law, it was not permitted to bury within cities.

m Zech. 12. 10. 1 Kin. 17. 18. 2 Kin. 4. 27. 2 Sam. 14. 7.

n Is. 63. 7, 9. 15. Ps. 86. 5, 15. Judg. 10. 16. Hos. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 20. Heb. 2. 17. & 4. 15. Mat. 9. 36. John 11. 33, 35. Lam. 3. 32, 33.

o 1 Thes. 4. 13. Mark 5. 39. John 11. 4, 23, 25.

† Or *coffin*.

p Ps. 33. 9. Rom. 4. 17. John 6. 63. & 5. 21. ch. 9. 54, 55. John 11. 43, 44. Mat. 27. 52, 53. & 11. 5. 1 Kin. 17. 17—23. 2 Kin. 4. 20—30. & 13. 21. Acts 9. 40, 41. & 20. 9—11. Ezek. 37. 5, 9, Eph. 5. 14.

q See ch. 5. 26. Acts 5. 5, 11. Gal. 1. 24.

r John 4. 19. & 6. 14. & 9. 17. ch. 24. 19.

s Ch. 1. 68. Ps. 106. 4.

t Mat. 11. 2—15.

Verses 11—18. Another notable miracle wrought the day after the former, is here recorded.

1. The place where it was done was in the gate of the city, in the presence of all the multitude who followed Jesus, and of the company who attended the funeral, so that there was no want of evidences to attest the certainty of the fact.

2. The subject of the miracle was the dead corpse of a young man then carrying to his grave, the only son of an afflicted widow, and all the circumstances of the case rendered it peculiarly affecting. (1.) He was *a son, an only son*, probably the staff of her old age, and the support and comfort of her widowhood. (2.) He was a young man cut down in the flower of his age; a warning to every one who looked on his bier not to promise themselves continuance here, for childhood and youth are vanity. (3.) His mother was a *widow*; one terrible stroke of death had separated her from the partner of her bosom. This son alone remained to cheer her solitude, the staff of her age, and now he too is taken away; so numerous, so repeated, are our troubles in this vale of misery and tears: like Job's messengers of evil, scarce the sound of one is out of our ears, before another more grievous follows. May every pang we feel, but disengage us from the world, and teach us to seek more earnestly our rest above; then shall our severest losses prove our truest gain.

3. Compassion moved the Saviour's bosom. He ever tenderly felt for human wo, and unasked he brings relief. It was kind in those who attended this poor disconsolate widow, to condole with her, and endeavour to alleviate her sorrows. They could but weep with her, Jesus alone was able to say unto her, *weep not*; and by removing the cause, to wipe away the tears from her eyes. Approaching the bier whereon the corpse lay, the bearers halted, and with a word of power, in all the majesty of essential deity, he said, *Young man, I say unto thee, Arise*; instantly the spirit returned; *he that was dead sat up* on the bier where he was stretched out, all his senses were perfectly restored, *and he began to speak*: when with delight Jesus *delivered him* back *to his* transported *mother*. *Note*, (1.) The bowels of Jesus yearn over the miserable, and in all the afflictions of his people he is afflicted. Let the mourners remember, that Jesus compassionates their sorrows; and if he doth not appear to restore those dear pledges which are gone from our arms, he will bring us together at a resurrection day. (2) Power accompanies the word of Jesus. Though dead sinners cannot of themselves hear or arise, the gospel call is not therefore in vain; but by the Redeemer's grace is made effectual to quicken the soul, and raise it from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness. (3.) Though Jesus might justly have claimed a right in him whom he had thus restored to life, he delivered him to his mother, intimating to us the great obligation lying on children to be dutiful to their parents, and a comfort and support to them in their old age.

4. Amazement and fear seized on the beholders. Astonished at this evidence of divine power, they *glorified* God for such an eminent instance of his goodness, and more especially that at last he had sent the *Great Prophet*, the expected Messiah, and in mercy visited his people, for these works of wonder proclaimed aloud, that this was he that should come. Swift the fame of Jesus spread through Judea, and the country around; this amazing miracle bespoke his character, and among the rest John's disciples carried the report to their master, now bound in prison for his zeal and fidelity. *Note*, When dead souls are raised up to newness of life, we must give the glory to God of his great work: and these miracles, blessed be his name, are not yet ceased.

19. And John, calling *unto him* [u] two of his disciples, sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou [x] he that should come? or look we for another? 20. When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? 21. And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight. 22. Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things

u Eccl. 4. 8. 2 Cor. 13. 1. Rev. 11. 3.

x Gen. 3. 15. & 22. 17. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15—18. Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6, 7. & 11. 1. & 35. 4. & 53. 2—12. & 52. 13—15. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 30. 21. & 31. 22. Ezek. 21. 27. & 17. 22—24. & 34. 23, 29. Dan. 9. 24—26. Mic. 5. 2. Hag. 2. 7. Zech. 9. 9. Mal. 3. 1—3. with John i. & 6. 14.

ye have seen and heard; [y] how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. 23. And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not [z] be offended in me. 24. ¶ And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the [a] wilderness for to see? [b] A reed shaken with the wind? 25. But what went ye out for to see? [c] A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. 26. But what went ye out for to see? [d] A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. 27. This is *he* of whom it is written, [e] Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 28. For I say unto you, [f] Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is [g] greater than he. 29. * And [h] all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. 30. [i] But the Pharisees and lawyers † rejected the counsel of God ‡ against themselves, being not baptized of him. 31. ¶ And the Lord said, [k] Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? 32. They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. 33. For John the Baptist came [l] neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. 34. The Son of man is come [m] eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a glutton-ous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! 35. But wisdom is [n] justified of all her children.

y Ver. 21. Mat. 11. 5. ch. 4. 38—44. & 5. 12—25. & 6. 17—19. ver. 10, 15, 21. with Is. 35. 5, 6. & 29. 18. & 42. 6, 7. & 51. 1—3. & 66. 2. Ps. 146. 8. Zeph. 3. 12. Zech. 11. 7. Jam. 2. 5.

z Is. 8. 14, 15. Rom. 9. 32, 33. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 14. ch. 2. 34. John 6. 60—66.

a Ch. 1. 80. & 3. 2.

b An unstable man? No. Eph. 4. 14. Tit. 1. 10. Col. 2. 4, 8. 2 Pet. 2. 3, 17. & 3. 17.

c A complaisant gentleman? No. Gal. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 26.

d Ch. i, iii. John 1. 6—36. & 3. 26—36. & 5. 35.

e Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6. Is. 40. 3. Mat. 3. 3. & 11. 10. Mark 1. 2.

f Ver. 26. ch. 1. 15—17. & 3. 16. John 1. 15—27. & 5. 35. Mat. 3. 2—17. & 13. 17.

g Eph. 3. 8, 9. & 1. 9. Col. 1. 26, 27. Rom. 16. 25, 26. 2 Tim. 1. 1, 10. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 12.

* This and the following verses are the words of Jesus. This is evident from the fact that John was then in prison, (Mat. 11. 2.) where he remained till his death, and so had it no longer in his power to baptize any.—*Campbell.*

h Mat. 11. 12. & 21. 31, 32. ver. 35. Rom. 3. 4. Mat. 3. 5.

i Ch. 10. 16. Mat. 21. 31, 32. John 12. 48. Acts 20. 27.

† Or *frustrated.*

‡ Or *within themselves.*

k Mat. 11. 16—19. Rev. 3. 15—17. Is. 28. 9—13. Jer. 5. 1—5. They rejected every form of instruction.

l Mat. 3. 4. ch. 1. 15. † Cor. 9. 27. 1 Pet. 5. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 10. with John 10. 10. Mat. 10. 25.

m Mat. 11. 19. & 9. 11. ch. 5. 29. ver. 36. ch. 11. 37. & 14. 1. & 15. 2. & 19. 7.

n Phil. 2. 15, 16. & 3. 7—14. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. ver. 29. Rom. 3. 4.

Verses 19—35. This passage of history was before recorded. It contains,

1. The message sent by John from his prison, ver. 19. not so much for his own satisfaction, as for the sake of his disciples, whose faith needed every confirmation, when combated by all the national prejudices so early imbibed. They found nothing of that grandeur and earthly greatness about Jesus, which they expected in the Messiah.

2. The answer of Jesus. His works as well as words, sufficiently bespoke his real character. In the presence of the messengers from John, he performed a multitude of miraculous cures, and dispossessed many evil spirits: then bid them report to their master what they had heard and seen, *that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised,* evidences incontestable of his mission as the Messiah, and figures of the more beneficial works which he came to perform on the souls of men; opening the eyes of the understanding, strengthening the impotent, curing the most inveterate habits of sin, and the desperate wickedness of the heart, and quickening the dead in trespasses and sins; for which end, *to the poor the gospel is preached,* wherein were fulfilled the prophecies which had gone before concerning him, Isa. lxi. 1. xxxv. 5, 6. Psalm lxxii. 13. and lest, notwithstanding, they should be in danger of stumbling at the meanness of his appearance, and the enmity wherewith he was treated by the most respected characters of the Jewish people, the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, he cautions them against being offended at these things; since he alone was happy and blessed, who through all this cloud of prejudice, received him as the Christ, and believed in his word.

3. When the disciples of John were departed, Jesus began to give him just and high commendations. He was a man of unshaken fortitude and unwavering fidelity, uniformly bearing testimony to Christ, and not plying like a reed under the contradiction of sinners, but boldly testifying against their iniquities: dead to the delights of sense and the glory of the world, he affected not soft raiment as a courtier, but as a mortified prophet lived what he preached: greater in one sense than any of the former prophets, as the immediate forerunner of the Messiah, and as seeing him appear of whom they spoke. His success also was great; multitudes who heard him, and many of the vilest sinners, even publicans, affected by his discourses, glorified God; acknowledging their own sins, and the just punishment due to them; and in humble penitence sought for pardon, submitting to John's baptism, and professing thereby for the future to devote themselves to God's service. But the proud and self-righteous Pharisees, puffed up with the vain conceit of their own excellence, fancied they were just persons who needed no repentance; therefore in general they rejected his preaching, and refused to submit to his baptism, thereby sealing themselves up under wrath; and the case is much the same to this day. Those who are converted by the ministry of the word, are chiefly of the common people, and many whom the relf-righteous despise as vile and abandoned; whilst the rulers pay little regard to the gospel-word, the wise men of this world disregard it as foolishness, and the persons of most admired goodness cannot bear to be set on a level with the chief of sinners, cannot stoop to receive the grace of Jesus freely, and thus perish in their pride.

4. Christ upbraids the perverseness of the men of that generation. No similitude could sufficiently describe their wilfulness and obstinacy; like froward and surly children, they neither would join their companions when in their play they imitated a feast or a funeral. Thus the austerities of John, his life of self-denial, and doctrine of repentance disgusted them, and they reproached him as melancholy, or demoniac. The Son of man, on the other hand, more familiarly associated with others, refused not an invitation to a wedding, or a feast, and they reviled him as a glutton, a drunkard, and a loose companion. *But wisdom is justified of all her children;* those who are truly made wise unto salvation, justify God in those methods he uses for their conversion, and approve and honour the Lord Jesus who is the wisdom of God in all his works and ways. *Note,* (1.) They who resolve to cavil, will never want a handle. (2.) Different men and ministers have different tempers and manners; some are naturally more austere and reserved, others more free and open; some more powerfully urge the thunders of Sinai upon the sinner's conscience, others dwell upon the softer accents of gospel grace. And this diversity of dispensations in which men are led is beautiful, though malice will find a like manner

of objection against both. (3.) We must take care not to judge of others by ourselves; not branding on the one hand the reserved, as morose; nor on the other, charging innocent freedom as licentiousness; but ever put the most candid constructions on men's tempers and manners.

36. ¶ [o] And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. [p] And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. 37. And, behold, a [q] woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an [r] alabaster-box of ointment, 38. And [s] stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment. 39. Now, when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, [t] This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that [u] toucheth him: for she is a [x] sinner. 40. [y] And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, [z] Master, say on. 41. There was a certain creditor which had two [a] debtors: the one owed [b] five hundred [c] pence, and the other fifty. 42. And when they [d] had nothing to pay, he [e] frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore which of them will love him most? 43. Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he* [f] to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. 44. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou [g] gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head. 45. Thou gavest me no [h] kiss: but this woman since the time I came in * hath not ceased to kiss my feet. 46. [i] My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. 47. Wherefore I say unto thee, [k] Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; [l] for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little. 48. And he said unto her, [m] Thy sins are forgiven. 49. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, [n] Who is this that forgiveth sins also? 50. And he said to the woman, [o] Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

o Not that Mark 14. 3. Mat. 26. 6.
p Ch. 11. 37. & 24. 1.
q Perhaps Mary Magdalene. Ch. 8. 2. & 24. 10.
r Not that John 12. 3. Mat. 26. 7. Mark 14. 3.
s Zech. 12. 10. 2 Cor. 7. 11. 1 Tim. 5. 10. Gen. 18. 4. & 19. 2. Judg. 19. 21. 1 Sam. 25. 41.
t Ch. 15. 2. & 23. 2. John 7. 12. Mat. 16. 14.
u Lev. xv. Num. xix.
x Ver. 37. Gen. 13. 13. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21.
y Ch. 5. 22, 31. & 6. 8.
z John 13. 13. & 11. 4, 28. & 3. 2. Mat. 7. 21.
a Mat. 6. 13. ch. 11. 4.
b 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16.
c See Mat. 18. 28.
d Ps. 49. 7, 8. Rom. 3. 23. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Eph. 2. 1. Tit. 3. 3.
e Hos. 14. 2. Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. Rom. 3. 4. & 5. 20, 21. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16. Rev. 1. 5. Ps. 103. 3.
f Ver. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 14. Phil. 3. 7—9. with 1 Tim. 1. 13.
g Gen. 18. 4 & 19. 2. 1 Tim. 5. 10.
h Rom. 16. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 26. 1 Pet. 5. 14.
* The reading supported by several MSS. *since she entered*, agrees better with the context, which represents the woman as coming to Simon's house, (ver. 37.) after she had learned that Jesus was there.
i Ps. 23. 5. & 104. 15. Eccl. 9. 8. Mat. 6 17.
k Ver. 37, 39, 43. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16. 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. Eph. 1. 7. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Mic. 7. 18, 19. 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16.
l Or *therefore*. Ps. 103. 1—3. & 116. 12—19. 2 Cor. 5. 14. Ps. 119. 32. ver. 43.
m Mat. 9. 2. Is. 43. 25. & 44. 22. & 55. 7. & 1. 18. Col. 1. 14. Acts 5. 31. Eph. 1. 7.
n Ch. 5. 21. Mat. 9. 3. Mark 2. 7. with ver. 23, 39. Is. 53 3.
o Mat. 9. 22. Mark 5. 34. & 10. 52. ch. 8. 48. & 18. 42.

Verses 36—50. Our Lord behaved himself courteously to all, and though the Pharisees had shown themselves his bitter enemies, he refused not the invitation of one of them, and readily went to eat at his house. And we are told,

1. A singular circumstance which happened on that occasion. A woman, whose character had been notoriously infamous, but by the preaching and grace of the Redeemer was become a real penitent, and true believer, came in, urged by her deep affection for our Lord, and standing behind him as he lay along (which was their custom at meals) with penitential tears she bedewed his feet, wiped them with her once braided, but now dishevelled hair, and kissing them in humble adoration, anointed them as a token of her high respect, with precious ointment from an alabaster box. *Note*, (1.) They who truly draw near to Jesus, cannot but feel their hearts bleed, and their eyes overflow, in the remembrance of past gratitude. (2.) A soul that loves the Lord Jesus counts nothing too good to employ in his service. (3.) When the eyes full of adultery, become fountains of tears, and all the ornaments of pride, the lures of lust, are laid aside, these are blessed symptoms of a happy change.

2. The Pharisee was highly offended at Christ, for suffering such a woman to approach him, and thought within himself, if Jesus were the prophet he pretended to be, he must have known, and spurned from his feet a creature so infamous. Thus whilst persons of a proud and self-righteous spirit are looking with contempt on a poor harlot, and saying, *Stand by thyself, come not near me, I am holier than thou*, they are not aware that this high conceit of themselves and despising others, is in God's sight an abomination far greater even than those outward evils which they condemn in others.

3. Christ justifies the woman from Simon's censures. The Pharisee questioned Christ's prophetical character; therefore the Lord, by answering his thoughts, will give him an evidence of it, and draw the poor woman's vindication from his own lips; and this he doth by an apposite parable; having informed Simon he had something of importance to say to him, to which he professes himself all attention.

(1.) The parable respected two debtors, the one of whom owed ten times more than the other; but being both insolvent, the creditor freely forgave them. Christ thereupon appeals to Simon for an answer, which of the two will love their gracious benefactor most? The reply was evident, he to whom most was forgiven. *The debt is sin*, and sinners are deep in arrear to God; they have never paid him the obedience they owe, and are become liable to the arrests of judgment. All are guilty; but some are more notorious offenders, and have sinned with greater aggravations than others; yet the least transgressor is an insolvent debtor, he can never make God a compensation for the least of his iniquities, and must perish eternally with the vilest, unless he is convinced of his sinfulness, and flies to the free grace of God in Jesus Christ. In him there is plenteous redemption, the chief of sinners are sure of finding pardon through the ransom he hath paid, and none who come to him shall be in any wise cast out. A sense of this abounding grace will not fail to engage the believing sinner's heart; and in proportion to the discovery he hath of his own guilt, should his gratitude be for the rich mercy vouchsafed to him. The chief of sinners are bound to become the chief of saints; to love much because the Lord hath forgiven them much.

(2.) Christ applies the parable to the case before him. This woman was the debtor who owed the five hundred pence, and she had been forgiven; no marvel, therefore, her expressions of gratitude were singular; for which, so far from being condemned, she rather deserved to be commended. All she had done flowed from this source, and herein she had exceeded Simon in

her returns of love, as much as she hath done in the offensiveness and notoriety of her transgression. 1. Instead of the water, which he had neglected to bring, she had with penitential tears, bedewed his feet and wiped them with her hair. 2. The kiss of peace and salutation Simon had not given to his sacred guest, but this poor sinner had not ceased to express her humble gratitude of love, by repeatedly kissing even his feet. 3. The common civility of oil to anoint his head the Pharisee had withheld, but she had poured this costly ointment on his feet, the expression of her faith in him as the Messiah, and of that unfeigned regard which made her account the greatest cost well employed in his service; therefore he seals afresh the pardon which he had bestowed upon her, on account of which she loved him so greatly, whilst such as Simon, who were less acquainted with their own guilt and sinfulness, and did not see their great need of a pardon, would feel themselves less obliged to the Saviour's grace, and testify, as Simon had done, less regard for him.

(3.) He particularly addresses himself to the poor woman, to silence her fears, and encourage her under the Pharisees' frowns. He repeats his assurances, *Thy sins are forgiven thee;* and though he knew the murmurs this raised, and the offence it gave among the Pharisaical tribe who were at the table, as if his arrogating such a power was impious, nay, blasphemous, he, so far from receding, confirms her salvation; to which, through faith in him, she was now assuredly entitled, and therefore he bids her *go in peace;* every fear of guilt removed, her conscience at ease, regardless of the reproaches of the proud, and waiting confidently for the eternal rest that remaineth for the people of God. *Note,* (1.) As nothing renders us so fearful as the consciousness of guilt, we need promise upon promise to encourage our trust and hope. (2.) Faith alone can pacify the conscience, and produce that genuine love and evangelical sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation never to be repented of.

CHAP. VIII.—anno domini, 31.

Here is, 1. *Christ's preaching, and subsistence by the charitable contributions of good people,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The parable of the sower,* ver. 4—18. 3. *The preference which Christ gave to his obedient disciples, before his nearest relations according to the flesh,* ver. 19—21. 4. *His stilling a storm at sea with a word's speaking,* ver. 22—25. 5. *His casting a legion of devils out of a man that was possessed by them,* ver. 26—40. 6. *His healing a woman that had a bloody issue, and raising Jairus' daughter to life,* ver. 41—56.

1. AND it came to pass afterward, [a] that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the [b] twelve *were* with him, 2. And [c] certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, * out of whom went seven [d] devils, 3. And Joanna the wife of Chuza, [d] Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which [c] ministered unto him of their substance.

a Mat. 4. 17, 23. ch. 4. 14. 15, 43, 44. & 6. 17. Mark 1. 14, 15. Acts 10. 38. Is. 63. 1. & 61. 1—3. & 48. 17.

b Ch. 6. 14—16. Mat. 10. 2—4. Mark 3. 16—19. Acts 1. 13.

c Mat. 27. 55, 56. John 19. 25. Mark 16. 9.

* That is, from the town or district of Magdala.

d Ch. 3. 19, 20. & 9. 7—9. Mark 6. 14—28. Mat. 14. 1—11. ch. 13. 31, 32. & 23. 7—12.

e Mark 15. 40, 41. 1 Cor. 9. 11, 14.

Verses 1—3. With unwearied labours the divine Redeemer went about doing good.

1. He visited round all the cities and villages in Galilee, preached the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, and opened the nature, blessings, and privileges, of that gospel church which he came to erect. His twelve apostles attended him to be witnesses of his miracles, and to learn from his lips the doctrines they were afterwards appointed to preach.

2. His support arose from the contributions of some pious women who followed him, who had experienced his healing grace both in their bodies and their souls. Among many others, three are particularly mentioned: Mary Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils; Joanna, the wife, perhaps now the widow, of Chuza, Herod's steward, probably a person of considerable rank and fortune; and Susanna. These with many others, furnished him with a subsistence; and he in great humility, condescended to be thus supported, rather than by exerting his own miraculous power. *Note,* (1.) Christ lived upon alms, to teach us never to despise the poor; nor, if we are reduced, proudly to scorn being obliged to others for a maintenance. (2.) They who love the gospel, cannot but delight to contribute liberally for the support of it. (3.) If we have been truly healed by the grace of Jesus, we shall commence thenceforward his inseparable followers in all holy conversation and godliness.

4. ¶ [f] And when much people were gathered together, and were come to [g] him out of every city, he spake by a parable: 5. [g] A sower went out to sow his seed: and, as he sowed, some fell [h] by the way-side and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. 6. And some fell upon [i] a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. 7. And some fell among [k] thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. 8. And other fell on [l] good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he [m] cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. 9. ¶ And his disciples asked him, saying, [n] What might this parable be? 10. And he said, [o] Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that [p] seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. 11. ¶ [q] Now the parable is this; The [r] seed is the word of God. 12. Those by the way-side are [s] they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh [r] away the word [t] out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13. [u] They on the rock *are they* which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. 14. And [x] that which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection. 15. [y] But that on the good ground are they

f Mat. 13. 2—23. Mark 4. 1—20.

g Mat. 13. 3, 19, 37. Mark 1. 14, 15. Heb. 2. 3.

h Ver. 12. Jam. 1. 23, 24.

i Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26. ch. 14. 28—30. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. Heb. 6. 4—8. Hos. 6. 4. ver 13.

k Jer. 4. 3. ch. 21. 34. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. ver. 14.

l 2 Cor. 5. 11. Eph. 2. 10. John 15. 4. Rom. 7. 4. Col. 1. 10. Phil. 1. 11. Gal. 5. 22, 23. with Gen. 26. 12.

m Prov. 1. 20—23. & 8. 1, 4. Jer. 6. 21. Deut. 29. 4. Mat. 11. 15. & 13. 9. ch. 9. 44. 1 Kin. 22. 28. Rev. 2. 7, 11, &c.

n Mat. 7. 7. Mark 4. 10, 34. Mat. 13. 36. Prov. 3. 5, 6. Hos. 6. 3.

o Mat. 11. 25. & 13. 11. & 16. 17. Ps. 25. 8, 9. 14. Is. 29. 14. 1 Cor. 4. 7. & 2. 7—16. Eph. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 1. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. 1 John 2. 20, 27.

p Ps. 6. 9, 10. & 44. 18. Jer. 5. 21. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8. see Mat. 13. 14. Deut. 29. 4.

q Mat. 13. 18—23. Mark 4. 14—20.

r 1 Pet. 1. 23. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Acts 20. 27. Mark 1. 14, 15. & 16. 15. Is. 8. 20. Mat. 23. 19, 20. Jam. 1. 18, 21.

s Jam. 1. 22—24. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. & 2. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

t Rom. 10. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 10.

u Is. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31. Hos. 6. 4. John 5. 35. 2 Tim. 1. 15. Mat. 13. 20, 21 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. Mark 6. 20.

x Ver. 7. ch. 18. 24. & 21. 34. & 16. 13. Mat. 6. 24. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10, 17. 2 Tim. 4. 10, 16. Jer. 4. 3.

y Eph. 2. 19, 20. Rom. 7. 4. Gal. 5. 21—24. 2 Pet. 1. 5—10. Ps. 1. 3. & 92. 14. John 15. 4. Col. 1. 6. Mat. 24. 13.

† *Persevere in bringing forth fruit.* The original denotes something more than a virtue merely passive, namely, constancy in purpose and practice.

which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.† 16. ¶ [z] No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. 17. [a] For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. 18. [b] Take heed therefore how ye hear: [c] for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have. 19. ¶ [d] Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press. 20. And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. 21. And he answered and said unto them, [e] My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

z Mat. 5. 15. Mark 4. 21—23. ch. 11. 33. with Mat. 5. 15. Phil. 2. 15, 16.

a Job 12. 22. Mat. 10. 26, 27. ch. 12. 2, 3. Mark 16. 15. Eph. 3. 8.

b Ch. 9. 44. Is. 42. 23. Jer. 9. 12.

c Mat. 13. 12 & 25. 29. ch. 19. 26. Mark 4. 25. & 10. 42. John 15. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 12. & 14. 37, 38. Rev. 22. 11.

d Mat. 12. 46—50. Mark 3. 31—36. Mat. 13. 55. John 2. 11. & 7. 3. Acts 1. 14. 1 Cor. 9. 5. Gal. 1. 19.

e Ch. 11. 27, 28. Mat. 7. 21. & 12. 49, 50. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11. Ps. xv. & 24. 3—6. John 13. 17. & 14. 15. & 15. 14. Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. 2 Pet. 1. 4—10. 2 Cor. 5. 14—17.

Verses 4—21. Great multitudes being collected together from all the neighbouring cities and villages, he took occasion to represent the nature of the gospel dispensation by the parable of the sower, which he had, Matt. xiii. 3. the explication of which, he vouchsafes to give to his inquisitive disciples in private; it being their peculiar mercy, that what was left mysterious to others, should be explained to them. And a singular favour is this, if, whilst others are left in darkness, we are brought into the marvellous light of gospel truth.

1. Concerning the parable we may observe, (1.) How vigilant is our adversary the devil, in every place where the word of God is dispensed, to harden the heart against receiving it, lest *we should believe and be saved;* and this he doth, by distracting the attention, by suggesting some vain or worldly thoughts immediately after we have heard God's word preached, by instilling prejudices against the sower, or doubts about the Scripture itself; and thus preventing the admission or abidance of the truth in the minds of the hearers: the consequence of which is, that men neglect and despise the great salvation of God. (2.) Among the multitudes who appear from time to time to be affected with the gospel, and make some profession, the greater number fall short of the kingdom; discouraged by the frowns, or seduced by the smiles of this present evil world, they grow cold and careless; the love of pleasure and ease, anxious cares, or inordinate love of riches, destroy and choke the word; and they either openly apostatize, or in their hearts at least, depart from the living God. Hence out of many who are called, few are chosen. (3.) There is a remnant, according to the election of grace, to whom the seed of the gospel word becomes the power of God unto salvation. They seriously hear, sedately weigh, and faithfully embrace the truth, as it is in Jesus: their hearts, by divine grace, are made honest and sincere; and patiently persevering in well-doing, they hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end; not seduced by any enticements, nor deterred by any persecutions, which for the word's sake may arise. Thus their fruit abides and abounds, and they stand ready for the harvest of eternal glory.

2. By another parable of a lighted candle, Christ teaches his disciples, and others, what was expected from them, even to shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. This being the great design of all the private instructions he gave them, that they should afterwards plainly and fully declare to the world, the great truths couched under these similitudes. As therefore they must give a solemn account for the particular advantages they enjoyed, they must take heed how they hear, when so much was hereby intrusted to them, and expected from them; which, if they improved, farther assistances of spiritual light, and greater gifts should be given them; but if they neglected to profit by these means of wisdom and grace vouchsafed to them, the consequence would be, that the gifts and knowledge which they seemed to have, would decay, and be taken from them, and darkness and error succeed.

3. Christ acknowledges those who truly hear the word of God, and do it, as his nearest and dearest relations. His mother and his brethren desired to see and speak with him; but unable to approach him, because of the crowd, some of those who stood around him, informed him of their request; and he being otherwise engaged in his Father's work, took occasion hence to encourage those who were his diligent attendants, assuring them they shared his regards above the nearest relatives after the flesh.

22. ¶ [f] Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples; and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. 23. But as they sailed, he [g] fell asleep: and [h] there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water,** and were in jeopardy. 24. And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, [i] Master, Master, we perish! [k] Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25. And he said unto them, [l] Where is your faith? and they, [m] being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him. 26. ¶ [n] And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27. And when he went forth to land, [o] there met him out of the city† a certain man which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs. 28. When he saw Jesus, [p] he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, [q] What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. 29. [r] (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. [s] For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

f Mat. 8. 23—27. Mark 4. 36—40.

g Ps. 44. 22, 23. & 10. 1. Is. 45. 15. John 11. 14, 15. 1 Sam. 23. 26.

h Mat. 14. 24. Mark 4. 37. Ps. cxxiv. Is. 34. 11.

* The ship was filled with water, Mat. 8. 24.

i 2 Chr. 14. 11. & 20. 12. Ps. 63. 4. & 69. 1.

k Ps. 46. 1. & 116. 4—6. & 102. 13. & 104. 7. & 65. 7. & 89. 9. & 107. 25, 28, 29. Nah. 1. 4. Is. 5. 2.

l Mat. 6. 30. & 8. 26. & 17. 17, 19, 20. & 14. 31. ch. 9. 50. John 11. 40. ver. 50. Mark 4. 40.

m Mat. 8. 27. Mark 4. 41. & 6. 51. Ps. 89. 9. & 65. 7. & 107. 29. & 46. 2—4. & 29. 10. & 93. 4.

n Mat. 8. 28—34. Mark 5. 1—20.

o Mark 5. 2. 1 John 3. 8. Rom. 16. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6. Rev. 20. 1, 2. 1 Kin. 18. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44. Is. 65. 4.

† The import is evidently here, a man belonging to the city, not a man coming from the city.—*Campbell.*

p Acts 16. 16, 17. Phil. 2. 10, 11. Ps. 72. 4, 12—14.

q Mat. 8. 29. Mark 5. 7. & 1. 24.

r Mark 5. 8. & 1. 25. & 9. 25. & 7. 29.

s Mark 5. 4. & 9. 18, 20, 22. ch. 9. 39, 42. 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44.

30. And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said,* Legion: because many devils were entered into him. 31. [t] And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.† 32. And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. [x] And he suffered them. 33. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and [y] the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked. 34. When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they [z] fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country. 35. Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and [a] found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 36. They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. 37. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about [b] besought him to depart from them: for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again. 38. Now the man out of whom the devils were departed [c] besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39. [d] Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. [e] And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

* *i. e.* six or seven thousand.

t Ver. 30. Mark 5. 10. Phil. 2. 9—11. Ps. 72. 9. Job 1. 11. & 2. 5. ver. 28, 32. 1 Kin. 22. 22.

† *The abyss.* The meaning of the word *the deep* in u English, is invariably *the sea.* In this sense it occurs often in Scripture. But that the sea is not meant here is evident, for to it the demons went of themselves, when permitted, at their own request, to enter into the swine. —*Campbell.*

u Mat. 8. 30. Mark 5. 11. Lev. 11. 7. Deut. 14. 8. Is. 65. 4. & 66. 3.

x 1 Kin. 22. 22. Job 1. 12. & 2. 6. Rev. 20. 7.

y John 8. 44. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

z Mat. 8. 33. Mark 5. 14. John 10. 12, 13. Mat. 28. 11.

a 1 John 3. 8. Rom. 16. 20. & 12. 29. Is. 49. 24—26. Ps. 72. 2, 12—14.

b Mark 5. 17. Mat. 8. 34. 1 Kin. 17. 18. ch. 5. 8. Gen. 25. 34. Acts 16. 39. Job 21. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Deut. 5. 25. with ver. 28. Mark 1. 24. ch. 4. 34.

c Mark 5. 18. ch. 18. 43. Ps. 116. 12. & 104. 1—6.

d Ps. 50. 14. & 105. 1, 2. & 66. 16. & ciii—cviii, cxlvi, cxvi, xviii. Is. 63. 7—13. John 2. 1—10. & 4. 29.

e John 4. 29. Mark 1. 45. Mat. 4. 24. & 9. 26. & 14. 35. & 17. 14. Ps. 66. 16.

Verses 22—39. We had before an account of these two illustrious miracles, Mat. viii. We see,

1. Christ's wonders in the deep. He, at whose word the stormy waves arise, can in a moment also restrain their rage, and silence their roaring. Christ sent his disciples by sea, on purpose to give them this fresh evidence of his omnipotence. They embarked at his word, and little expected danger; but oftentimes, when we are lulled into security, our peril is most imminent: they had him with them however, and therefore need not fear: but he was asleep; for so regardless he sometimes appears towards his people in their distress; and their danger staggered their faith, and filled their hearts with fears, as their boat was filled with water. The strongest believers are sometimes shaken; prayer was now their resource; to Christ they fly, and awaken him with their cries. He slept with this design, to quicken their desires after him, to affect them with a deeper sense of their want of him, and testify towards them more abundantly his power and his love. When we feel ourselves undone and perishing, then is Christ truly precious to us; none ever perished who thus fled to him. He arose, and with a word stilled the raging sea, and quieted their fears. He delights to speak peace to the troubled conscience, and they who wait on him shall not be ashamed of their confidence. Their only shame will arise from their dishonourable distrusts of him; for these he justly reproves them, *Where is your faith?* Faith they had in habit, but not in exercise; their jeopardy for a moment suppressed its vigorous actings; their sudden deliverance amazed them; and filled with a reverential fear at such a display of divine power, they could not but conclude he must be more than man, whom winds and waves obeyed.

2. Christ's dominion over the powers of darkness; raging devils can no more resist his power, than raging winds; and this is an unspeakable comfort to all God's people, that Satan is a vanquished foe, and cannot harm even a swine, without permission. A legion here possessed one man; how numberless then these malignant spirits; how unequal a match must we be for them, if left to ourselves! No chains could hold this poor demoniac; in cold and nakedness, without clothes or covering, he was driven to the tombs; so ungovernable are we when under the influence of satanical tempers, a terror to others, a burden to ourselves. At the feet of Jesus he fell, whilst the foul spirit within cried out in terror, dreading to be dispossessed, and sent to the abyss, the place of torment. A slavish fear of hell sometimes drives men thus to their knees: they dread the punishment, but do not loath their sins; they cry for release from their pains, not for deliverance from their corruptions. When the devil is compelled to quit his hold of the man, he fain would be doing mischief, if but among the swine: and in correction to some, and as a warning to others, Christ permits this visitation on their property. But when they heard from the affrighted keepers, the loss they had sustained, they desired him to depart out of their coast, dreading the consequences of his stay; and he departed. The visitations which should humble, often serve but to harden the souls of sinners; instead of coming to Christ, they would get as far from him as possible. The poor man, however, who was now restored to his right mind, and sitting at Jesus' feet, would fain have followed him; but he is sent back to proclaim the mercy he hath experienced. When by divine grace a *right mind* is restored to us, and the power of sin and Satan is broken, we are called upon to acknowledge the mercy to the praise of Jesus, and to tell what great things he hath done for our souls, inviting others to come and taste how gracious the Lord is.

40. And it came to pass, that [f] when Jesus was returning, the people *gladly* received him: for they were all waiting for him. 41. ¶ [g] And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was [h] a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and [i] besought him that he would come into his house; 42. For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she [k] lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him. 43. ¶ [l] And a woman, having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, [m] neither could be healed of any, 44. [n] Came behind *him*, and [o] touched the border of his garment: [p] and immediately her issue of blood stanched. 45. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter, and they that were with him, said, Master, the multitude throng thee, and

f Mat. 9. 1. Mark 5. 21. & 1. 45. ch. 5. 1, 17. & 6. 17.

g Mat. 9. 18—25. Mark 5. 22—43.

h To wit, of Capernaum. ch. 13. 14. Acts 13. 15.

i Mat. 8. 15. John 4. 47—50. & 11. 6, 7. Mat. 8. 13. & 15. 28.

k Rom. 6. 23. Ezek. 18. 4. Job 30. 23. Heb. 9. 27. Eccl. 3. 2. & 12. 1, 7. & 11. 9. Rom. 5. 12.

l Mark 5. 25—34. Mat. 9. 20—22. Lev. 15. 25. John 5. 5.

m John 1. 13. Ps. 108. 12.

n Gen. 32. 10. Ruth 2. 10, 11. Ezra 9. 5.

o Mark 5. 27, 28. Acts 5. 15. & 19. 12.

p Exod. 15. 26. Ps. 147. 3. Mal. 4. 2. 2 Kin. 13. 21. ch. 13. 13. & 14. 4.

press *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 46. And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that [q] virtue is gone out of me. 47. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling; and [r] falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. 48. And he said unto her, [s] Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace. 49. ¶ [t] While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. 50. But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, [u] Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. 51. And when he came into the house, [x] he suffered no man to go in, [y] save Peter and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. 52. [z] And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; [a] she is not dead, but sleepeth. 53. And they [b] laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. 54. And [c] he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and [d] called, saying, Maid, arise. 55. And [f] her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. 56. And [f] her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

q Mark 5. 30. John 1. 16. ch. 5. 17. & 6. 19. Heb. 7. 25. Is. 63. 1.

r Mark 5. 33 & 4. 31. Ps. 89. 7. Josh. 7. 19. Ps. 116. 12. & 66. 16. ch. 17. 15, 16. Ps. 103. 1—4.

s Ch. 7. 47—50. & 17. 19. & 18. 42. Mat. 15. 28. & 8. 13. Acts 14. 9.

t Mat. 9. 23—26. Mark 5. 35—43. ver. 41, 42.

u 2 Chr. 20. 20. Is. 7. 9. & 41. 10. & 43. 1, 2. & 50. 10. Mark 9. 23. & 5. 23, 31, 36. & 11. 22—24. John 11. 25, 40. Rom. 4. 17—20.

x Is. 42. 2. 1 Kin. 17. 19—23. 2 Kin. 4. 33—35. Mat. 7. 6.

y Mark 3. 16, 17. & 5. 2. & 14. 33. ch. 6. 14. & 9. 28.

z Gen. 23. 2. 1 Sam. 25. 1. 2 Chr. 35. 25. Jer. 9. 17. Acts 9. 39.

a John 11. 4, 11, 13, 33. Acts 20. 10.

b Acts 17. 32. Gen. 19. 14.

c Mat. 7. 6. Acts 9. 40. see ver. 51.

d John 6. 63. Rom. 4. 17. see ch. 7. 14. John 11. 43. & 5. 21. Ps. 107. 20. Exod. 15. 26.

e John 5. 22. Ps. 35. 9. 1 Kin. 17. 23. 2 Kin. 4. 35. John 11. 44. Acts 9. 40.

f See Mark 5. 42, 43. ch. 7. 16. & 5. 14. Mat. 8. 4. & 9. 30.

Verses 40—56. Though the Gadarenes were glad to get rid of Jesus, the men of Galilee with open arms received him, eagerly waiting for his return. If in one place the gospel be despised and expelled, another door of utterance shall be opened, and some will be glad to welcome the ejected ministers of Christ.

No sooner was Jesus arrived, than we find an application made to him by a ruler in behalf of his daughter at the point of death; and whilst he goes to perform one miracle, by the way he works another.

1. A poor diseased woman, who was ashamed to make a public application to him, persuaded that a touch of his garment would effect that which all her physicians had attempted in vain, came in secret among the crowd; and touching his garment, found, according to her faith, a perfect cure. But it was neither possible nor proper that it should be hid: for the glory of Jesus, and the comfort of her own soul, she is called upon to make an acknowledgement of the mercy. Persuaded, that he who felt virtue go out of him, and wrought the cure, could not be at a loss to find out the patient, no sooner did she hear his inquiries, than she fell trembling at his feet, acknowledges her boldness, and owned the blessing she had received. Far from being displeased, he who healed her body now comforts her soul: and commending her faith, dismisses her in peace. *Note*, (1.) There is that fulness of grace in Christ, that whoever comes to him, shall be holpen. (2.) We cannot be hid from the eye of Jesus, and a gracious soul desires it not; he would tell him of all his wretchedness, and pour out his heart in simplicity before him. (3.) Christ delights to raise up the trembling sinner, and speaks comfort to his poor in spirit: such need not fear, the language of Jesus to them shall be the voice of peace and love.

2. The ruler's daughter had now closed her eyes in death, and therefore his friends imagined it useless to trouble Jesus farther. In lesser trials many thus pretend to trust him, who, in greater, are ready to despair; but he, who by a word can heal the diseased, can by the same power raise the dead; he encourages, therefore, the ruler's faith: not only whilst there is life there is hope, but even in death the case is not desperate, when he who is the resurrection and the life is the physician. With three of his disciples, and the parents of the child, he went into the room where she lay, sending forth those as unworthy to be spectators of his power, who, when he would dry up their tears with good words and comfortable, laughed at his saying that she only slept, because they knew that she was dead; but knew not that to him it was as easy to call her from the arms of death, as to awaken her from sleep. The bed of death is the place of repose for those who fall asleep in Jesus; there they sweetly rest, till they are awakened in the resurrection morn to rise in that eternal day, when sleep and death will be no more. At his word the damsel arose; his hand of grace, his word of power, communicated life, and brought back the spirit which had fled; in perfect health her astonished parents beheld her restored to their longing arms. He commanded them hereupon to give her some food, and charged them to conceal the miracle; he wanted not men to spread his fame, his works were sufficient heralds. By the effectual word of Jesus is the sinner, dead in trespasses, thus quickened to spiritual life; and when the union between the body and the soul is dissolved, he takes care of both in their state of separation, and will bring the spirit again in the resurrection day, and prepare for it a body glorified like his own.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The commission Christ gave his twelve apostles to preach the gospel, and confirm it by miracles,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Herod's terror at the growing greatness of our Lord Jesus,* ver. 7—9. 3. *The apostles return to Christ, his retirement with them into a place of solitude; the great resort of people to them notwithstanding, and his feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes,* ver. 10—17. 4. *His discourse with his disciples concerning himself, and his own sufferings for them, and theirs for him,* ver. 18—27. 5. *Christ's transfiguration,* ver. 28—36. 6. *The cure of a lunatic child,* ver. 37—42. *The repeated notice Christ gave his disciples of his approaching sufferings,* ver. 43—45. 8. *His check to the ambition of his disciples,* ver. 46—48. *and to their monopolizing of the power over devils to themselves,* ver. 49, 50. 9. *The rebuke he gave them for their resentment of an affront given him by a village of the Samaritans,* ver. 51—56. 10. *The answers he gave to several that were inclined to follow him, but not considerately or not zealously and heartily so inclined,* ver. 57—62.

1. THEN [a] he called his twelve disciples together, and [b] gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. 2. And he sent them to [c] preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. 3. And he said unto them,

a Mat. 10. 1—42. Mark 6. 7—13. ch. 6. 13—16.

b Ch. 10. 17, 19. Mark 16. 17, 18. John 14. 12. Acts 3. 6—8. & 9. 31.

c Mark 16. 15. & 6. 11, 12. & 1. 14, 15. Tit. 1. 3, 14. & 2. 10—14. Heb. 2. 3, 4. Rom. 1. 16, 17. Col. 1. 23. 25—28. Ezek. 34. 3.

d Mat. 10. 9, 10. Mark 6. 8, 9. ch. 10 4. & 22. 35. 2 Tim. 2. 4. Ps. 37. 3, 5. Is. 33. 16.

[d] Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. 4. [e] And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.* 5. [f] And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. 6. [g] And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where. 7. ¶ [h] Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead: 8. [i] And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. 9. And Herod said, [k] John have I beheaded; but who is this, of whom I hear such things? [l] And he desired to see him.

e Mat. 10. 11—13. Mark 6. 8. ch. 10. 5, 6.

* More intelligibly, *continue in whatever house ye are received into, until ye leave the place.*

f Mat. 10. 14, 15. Mark 6. 11. ch. 10. 10—12. Acts 13. 51. & 18. 6. Neh. 5. 13.

g Mat. 11. 1, 5. Mark 6. 12, 13. ver. 1, 2. John 14. 12.

cir. 32.

h Mat. 14. 1—12. Mark 6. 14—28. Ps. 14. 5. & 53. 5. Job 18. 11, 12.

i Ch. 3. 1, 19. Mat. 16. 14. & 17. 10. Mark 6. 15. John 1. 21. ver. 19. Mark 8. 28.

k Mat. 14. 1—12. Mark 6. 14—28. see ver. 7.

l Ch. 13. 31, 32. & 23. 8.

Verses 1—9. Our Lord having called his twelve apostles to closer attendance upon himself that they might be qualified for the work in which he designed to employ them, now sends them forth in his name, and invests them with miraculous powers, as a proof of their divine mission.

1. He directs them *what* to say and do. The subject of their preaching must be the gospel of the kingdom; and by their beneficent acts of healing men's bodies, they would not only confirm, but recommend also their doctrine to men's souls.

2. He directs them how to go on this errand. They must make no preparation for their journey: but in their fishers' garments, without change of raiment, without money, or provision, they must go forth, trusting entirely on divine providence for the supply of all their wants; taking up their quarters with the first family who should receive them, and abiding in the same house during their stay, to avoid all appearance of fickleness or nicety. But if any refused them a welcome entertainment, leaving that city to its fate, they need only shake off the dust of their feet, and that should stand as an eternal testimony against them for rejecting the gospel, and insure their destruction.

3. They immediately obeyed, and executed their commission; for every gracious soul delights to be employed for Christ, and runs at his command.

4. Herod the tetrarch was exceedingly perplexed and terrified at the reports, which on this occasion reached his ears. The country rang with the miracles performed by Jesus and his apostles, and people offered various conjectures concerning this great personage; who not only wrought such wonders himself, but was able to communicate this extraordinary power to others. Some said it was John revived: others that Elias was come, the expected forerunner of the Messiah; others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. Herod's guilty conscience smote him, justly fearing that the murdered Baptist was indeed risen or some more mighty instrument of God to avenge his quarrel, *and he desired to see him.*

m Mark 6. 30. ch. 10. 17.

n Mat. 14. 13—21. Mark 6. 31—44. & 1. 45. & 3. 7, 20. John 6. 16. Is. 42. 2.

o John 1. 44. Mat. 11. 21.

10. ¶ [m] And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. [n] And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called [o] Bethsaida. 11. And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and [p] he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing. 12. ¶ [q] And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place. 13. But he said unto them, [r] Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people. 14. For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, [s] Make them sit down by fifties in a company. 15. And they did so, and made them all sit down. 16. Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. 17. [u] And they did eat, and were all filled: and [x] there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

p John 6. 37. ch. 15. 2. Is. 48. 17 & 61. 1. Mark 1. 14, 15. Acts 10. 38. Rom. 15. 8. Exod. 15. 26. Ps. 107. 20. & 147. 3.

q Mat. 14. 15—21. Mark 6. 35—44. John 6. 5—14. Ps. 78. 19, 20.

r 2 Kin. 4. 42, 43. Mark 6. 37. John 6. 6—10. Mat. 6. 33. Num. 11. 22.

s 1 Cor. 14. 33, 40. 1 Kin. 10. 5. Mark 6. 39, 40. & 7. 6.

t Ps. 121. 1, 2. Mat. 14. 19. & 15. 36. & 26. 26. & 24. 45. Rom. 14. 6. 1 Sam. 9. 13. Deut. 8. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. John 6. 11. Mark 6. 41. Exod. 23. 25.

u Ps. 37. 16. & 23. 1. & 145. 18. Prov. 13. 25.

x Prov. 6. 6. Mat. 16. 9. & 14. 20, 21. John 6. 12—14. Phil. 4. 8.

Verses 10—17. When they had finished their work, they returned to give their master an account. He is the chief shepherd to whom we are all responsible. The remembrance that we must appear before him shortly to answer for our own ministry, should quicken our diligence. Christ took them for a while into a retirement; he is a good master and desires not to weary out his servants: rest after labour is needful. But the people, eager to hear and be healed, broke in upon their retirement; and Jesus, unwearied in labours of love, preached to them, as usual, the gospel of the kingdom, and healed their diseases. He is so gracious, that none who come to him with their complaints, shall be in any ways cast out. Yea, he not only feeds their souls with heavenly manna, but their bodies with miraculous food: five thousand men, besides women and children, are made to feast on five loaves and two small fishes. This miracle is recorded by all the evangelists, and affords us still food for our faith. (1.) In times of want and distress, our care must be cast on the Lord; he feedeth the hungry. (2.) If we have but little, yet let us not fear to divide our morsel with the poor; like the widow's cruse, it shall not be diminished hereby. (3.) When we look up to heaven for a blessing from God, though we by our sins have forfeited all title to our creature-comforts, in Christ Jesus they will be restored to us; and then when we eat and drink, it will be to the glory of God.

18. ¶ [y] And it came to pass, as he was * alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? 19. They answering said, [z] John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias; and others *say* that one of the old prophets is risen again. 20. He said unto them, But [a] whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, [b] The

y Mat. 16. 13—23. Mark 8. 27—33.

* Privately.

z Ver. 8. Mark 8. 28. Mat. 16. 14. John 1. 21.

a Mat. 23. 42. & 16. 15.

b Mat. 16. 16. John 1. 29, 41, 49. & 6. 69. & 11. 27. & 4. 29, 42. 1 John 4. 14, 15. & 5. 5. Acts 8. 37. & 9. 20. Mat. 26. 63.

Christ of God. 21. [c] And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing; 22. Saying, [d] The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day. 23. ¶ [e] And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. 24. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. 25. [f] For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? 26. [g] For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels. 27. [h] But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

c Mark 8. 26, 30. & 7. 36. 1 Cor. 2. 8.
d Mat 17. 22, 23. & 16. 21. 22 & 20. 17, 18. Mark 8. 31. & 9. 31. & 10. 33. ch. 18. 31. & 24. 7, 26. Ps. 118. 22. Is. 52. 14, 15. & 53. 2—12. John 16. 1, 7. 1 Cor. 15. 4. Ps. xxii, lxix.
e Mat. 10. 38, 39. & 16. 24, 25. Mark 8. 34—36. ch. 14. 27. Phil. 3. 7—9. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12. John 16. 33. 1 Thes. 3. 3. Rom. 2. 7—10. ch. 17. 33. John 12. 25. Gal. 6. 12. Rev. 12. 11. Heb. 11. 35.
f Job 2. 4. Mat. 16. 26. ch. 12. 19, 20. Mark 8. 36. & 9. 43—48. ch. 16. 25, 26.
g Mat. 10. 33. Mark 8. 38. ch. 12. 8, 9. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 1 John 2. 22, 23. Rev. 3. 5. Mat. 24. 30. & 25. 31. 2 Thes. 1. 8—10. Dan. 7. 10. Jude 14.
h Mat. 16. 28. & 24. 30, 34. & 26. 64. Mark 9. 1. & 13. 26. ch. 22. 18. & 17. 20, 21.

Verses 18—27. Christ having dismissed the multitude whom he had fed, retired with his disciples, to pray with them and for them, as the master of this little family, and to teach us in our houses to follow his example. And when he had finished, we are told,

1. The *inquiries* he made concerning the general opinion formed of him. The disciples informed him the people were divided in sentiment: some said he was John, revived; others, Elias; others, one of the old prophets risen again. On putting the question to them, what they thought of him, Peter, the spokesman for his brethren, declared their faith in him as the Christ of God. He said the truth; but it was not proper that this should be publicly and expressly urged; lest tumults should ensue among the people who expected a temporal Messiah, he at present enjoined them silence on this head, till the great day of his resurrection should manifest the glory of his character.

2. The *warning* he gave them of his own sufferings and death, and this he immediately adds after the confession they had made of him as the Messiah, in order to prepare them for what might stagger them if it came upon them unawares, and to correct the common prejudices concerning the Messiah's temporal kingdom, which they as well as their countrymen had imbibed.

3. The *admonitions* he gave them of the sufferings they must expect to endure for his sake. Instead of the ambitious hopes they entertained, they must prepare by a course of habitual self-denial for the hardness and persecutions they would be called to endure in his service, and be ready to take up every cross which in the way of their duty was laid upon them; even if need be, of martyrdom itself. They might be tempted, indeed, by the terrors of suffering, or the allurements of the world, to save their lives by base compliances, but this was the way assuredly in eternity to lose what they meant to preserve; whilst a bold and faithful profession, though it exposed them even to death, would be recompensed with a better life in the eternal world. If they were unfaithful and apostatized, nothing could balance their loss; the gain of the whole world would be no compensation for the perdition of an immortal soul; and if they were ashamed of, and disowned him, their Master, the consequence would inevitably be, that they must be disowned by him, *when in his own glory*, as Mediator, and in his *Father's glory*, as having all power in heaven and earth delegated to him, and in the glory of *his holy angels*, the attendants of his triumphs, and the spirits that minister before his throne, he shall appear to judge the world. *Note*, The realizing views of a judgment-day are powerfully effectual to engage the believer to take up every cross, to hesitate at no loss, shame, or suffering for Christ's sake. He knows that these shall finally prove his eternal gain, his immortal honour.

4. The *encouragement* he suggests for his disciples' support; some of them then present shall live to see the kingdom of the Messiah erected, in defiance of all opposition: his gospel spread through the earth, and condign vengeance executed on the Jewish people their persecutors and his murderers. It is a comfort to every suffering saint of God, that the time is short; in a moment he shall be triumphant over every foe.

28. ¶ [i] And it came to pass about an eight days after these * sayings, he took [k] Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain [l] to pray. 29. And, as he prayed, [m] the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white *and* glistering. 30. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were [n] Moses and Elias: 31. [o] Who appeared in glory, † and [p] spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. 32. But Peter, and they that were with him, [q] were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, [r] they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. 33. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, [s] it is good for us to be here: and let us make three [t] tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. 34. While he thus spake, there came a [u] cloud, and overshadowed them: and they [u] feared as they entered into the cloud. 25. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, [x] This is my beloved Son: [y] hear him. 36. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. [z] And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

i Mat. 17. 1—13. Mark 9. 2—10.
* Or *things*.
k Ch. 6. 14. & 8. 51.
l Ch. 6. 12. Ps. 109. 4. Heb. 5. 7.
m Exod. 34. 29, 35. Is. 33. 17. John 1. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17. Dan. 7. 9.
n Exod. xi. to Deut. xxxiv. 1Kin. xvii—xix. 2 Kin. i, ii. Acts 10. 43. Rom. 3. 21.
o Mat. 28. 3. Col. 3. 4. Phil. 3. 21.
† In a glorious form.
p 1 Cor. 2. 2. Phil. 3. 8—10. Col. 2. 15. with ver. 22. ch. xxii, xxiii. Mat. xxvi, xxvii. John xviii, xix.
q Dan. 8. 18. & 10. 9. ch. 22. 45, 46.
r John 1. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17.
s Ps. 30. 6. Mark 9. 5, 6. Mat. 17. 4.
t Ps. 18. 9, 11. & 97. 2. Is. 19. 1. Rev. 10. 1.
u Rev. 1. 17. Dan. 8. 18. & 10. 10. Exod. 33. 20. Judg. 6. 22. & 13. 22. Ps. 53. 5.
x 2 Pet. 1. 17. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Mark 9. 7. Is. 42. 1. Ps. 2. 7. John 1. 14. & 3. 16. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. Col. 1. 13. Zech. 13. 7. ch. 3. 17.
y Exod. 23. 21. Deut. 18. 15—18. Acts. 3. 22, 23. Heb. 2. 3. & 1. 1. & 12. 25, 26. & 3. 15.
z Mat. 17. 9. Mark 9. 9, 10. Eccl. 3. 7.

Verses 28—36. The story of the transfiguration was recorded in the other evangelists. Some circumstances are here added,

1. Christ went up into this mountain to pray, and then his glory broke forth, which should be an engagement and encouragement to us to maintain communion with God in prayer; since by such approach to him the glory of transforming grace is derived from him, and we become changed into his image.

2. Moses and Elias *appeared in glory*, as all Christ's saints shall shortly do. They spoke of his departure, (ἔξοδον,) his Exodus, in allusion to the departure of Israel from Egypt; so happy an exit was Jesus shortly to make from this miserable world to the land of eternal rest and blessedness. The prophets had foretold

his sufferings, and they talk with him on this subject; the time being at hand, and Jerusalem the place where he must be put to death. The way to glory lies through the grave; in our happiest days on earth this should be ever in our view; and this will reconcile us to all the horrors of death, when we consider it as opening the door to eternal life.

3. The disciples were heavy with sleep; probably it was night, and they had been wearied with the labours of the day: but when they were awake, they beheld their Master and his two attendants beaming with irradiation, and bright as the light. *Note*, By our drowsy frame of spirit we are ready to lose many of those glorious visits from above, which the watchful and praying saints of God are favoured with; and it is a mercy that recovering grace suffers us not to sleep the sleep of death.

4. Peter charmed with the vision, is for taking up his abode there, and proposes erecting three tabernacles, *not knowing what he said.* The saints of God who have once quitted this miserable abode, wish not again to take up their dwelling here; they have an infinitely nobler place, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

5. Fear seized them, as the bright cloud, the emblem of the divine presence, overspread them, and separated Moses and Elias from their view; but the voice of God silenced their fears, enjoining them with solemn attention to hear and obey *his well beloved Son.* If he be with us, and we are following his revealed word, we need not be dismayed with any cloud which may come over us; he will bring us safely through.

6. The apostles kept the vision close, and *told no man in those days*, as Jesus had commanded them. The relation would meet with readier credence after his resurrection, for which time it was reserved.

37. ¶ [a] And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him. 38. And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, [b] I beseech thee, look upon my son; for he is mine only child. 39. And, lo, [c] a spirit taketh him and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and, bruising him, hardly departeth from him. 40. And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and [d] they could not. 41. And Jesus answering said, O [e] faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? [f] Bring thy son hither. 42. And as he was yet a coming, [g] the devil threw him down, and tare *him.* And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

a Mat. 17. 14—21. Mark 9. 14—29.
b Ch. 7. 8. & 8. 41. John 4. 47, 49. Mark 2. 3. & 6. 56. & 8. 22. & 10. 14. & 7. 26.
c 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44. Mat. 15. 22. Mark 9. 18. 20, 22, 26.
d 1 Kin. 4. 31. Mat. 17. 16. & 13. 58.
e Mat. 17. 16 & 6. 30. & 8. 26. & 14. 31. & 16. 8. & 13. 58. Heb. 3. 19. & 4. 2.
f Mark 10. 14. Mat. 11. 28. Prov. 8. 17. ch. 18. 27. Heb. 7. 25. Gen. 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27
g Mark 9. 20. & 18. 22, 26. & 1. 26. see ver. 39. Gen. 3. 15. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 12. 12.

Verses 37—42. It seems that Jesus and his three disciples continued all night on the mountain. The next day, descending to the multitude, he found his presence greatly needed. The people eagerly ran to him, and the father of a poor lunatic child earnestly besought that help from him, which his disciples had in vain attempted to give. The case was very afflictive: he was *an only child;* and so fearfully torn by the malicious spirit. What a mercy we are not left to his power; what an invaluable privilege that we have the almighty Jesus near, to whom we can apply, and who is able to save to the uttermost. Rebuking the unbelief of that perverse generation, particularly of the Scribes and Pharisees, who began to insult over the disciples, he gives them a convincing proof that his arm is not shortened, nor his power abated. With a word the raging devil is dispossessed, and the child is delivered to his father perfectly cured.

43. ¶ [h] And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But, while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples, 44. [i] Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. 45. [k] But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying. 46. ¶ [l] Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. 47. And Jesus, [m] perceiving the thought of their heart, took [n] a child, and set him by him, 48. And said unto them, [o] Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great. 49. ¶ [p] And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. 50. And Jesus said unto him, [q] Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us is for us.

h Ch. 4. 36. & 7. 9, 26. & 7. 16. & 8. 25.
i Mat. 17. 22, 23. & 16. 21. & 20. 18, 19, 28. & 26. 2. & 21. 38, 39. ch. 18. 31. & 24. 6, 26. ver. 22. John 2. 19. & 3. 14. & 10. 18. & 12. 32, 33. & 19. 11. Acts 2. 23. & 4. 27, 28. ch. xxii, xxiii.
k Ch. 5. 20. & 18. 34. Is. 42. 19, 20. John 12. 16. & 16. 16—18. & 12. 16. & 14. 5, 8, 22. Mark 9. 32.
l Ch. 22. 24—30. Mat. 18. 1—6. Mark 9. 33—37.
m Ps. 139. 1—4. & 7. 9. Jer. 17. 10. Heb 4. 13. John 21. 17. Rev. 2. 23.
n Mark 10. 14. Ps. 34. 11. & 45. 10. Prov. 8. 17.
o Mat. 18. 5. & 10. 40—42. & 25. 40, 45. ch. 10. 16. John 10. 30. & 5. 22, 23. & 12. 44. & 13. 20. & 14. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 8.
p Mark 9. 38.—40. ch. 11. 19. Num. 11. 27, 28. Job 5. 2. Eccl. 4. 4. Gal. 5. 26.
q 1 Cor. 12. 3. ch. 9. 50. & 11. 23. Mat. 12. 30. Phil. 1. 18. Num. 11. 29.

Verses 43—50. The words of the Lord are great, and worthy our admiration.

1. This miracle filled the people with amazement *at the mighty power of God.* His hand herein evidently appeared. Is any *soul* recovered from Satan's power, much more may we say, *This is the finger of God.*

2. Christ informs the disciples of his approaching sufferings They were very backward to receive what was so contrary to their ideas of the Messiah's kingdom, and so destructive of the ambitious hopes they had entertained. Therefore he prefaces his discourse with a solemn warning of them deeply to consider and carefully to remember what he said; but they understood not his meaning, blinded by their prejudices, and afraid to ask him, lest they should be reproached with their dulness, or meet the same reproof as Peter had before received, if they presumed to raise objections. *Note*, The plainest truths, when we are under the power of prejudice, are mistaken or perverted.

3. All that they heard had no effect upon them to cure their aspiring views. They disputed among themselves, as they travelled, who should have the first post of honour in that temporal kingdom which they expected. Jesus knew the subject of their reasoning, and, by a most apposite emblem of a little child, teaches them the only spirit and temper which would make a soul truly great in the eyes of God. So meek, so lowly, so free from ambition, envy and malice, should they be; delighting in and receiving with warmest affection, all who showed such a childlike temper; and every kindness shown to such persons, he tells them, he would receive as done to himself: yea, God the Father would regard it with highest approbation, and reward them. *Note*, (1.) Jesus is the searcher of our hearts, our hearts

are known to him; we need keep a strict guard over them. (2.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of a disciple of the lowly Jesus, than the affectation of earthly grandeur and the pride of life.

4. Christ checks the narrow party spirit which appeared in John and others of his disciples. They had forbade one whom he saw casting out devils in the name of Jesus, because he followed not with them; and for this probably expected his Master's approbation: but Christ said, *Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is for us.* Though he may not join us, if he concurs in carrying on the same design, he is to be encouraged rather than silenced. *Note*, Though others follow not exactly our mode of worship, or refuse to join in our communion, let us not therefore stamp them as heretical or schismatic, and oppress or silence them. Do they labour to pull down Satan's kingdom, and spread the savour of the Redeemer's name? then, however Christ is preached, it becomes us therein to rejoice.

r Mark 16. 19. Acts 1. 2. John 13. 1. & 17. 11, 13. & 16. 5, 28. & 14. 2, 3. Heb. 1. 3.

* Or, *as the time of his removal approached.*

s Ezek. 4. 3. Acts 21. 13. Phil. 3. 14.

t Mat. 10. 5. John 4. 4—42. Ezra iv, v. Neh. iv, vi.

u John 4. 4, 9.

x See ver. 28. Mark 10. 35—37.

y 2 Kin. 1. 10—12. 2 Sam. 21. 2. Gal. 4. 17, 18.

z Prov. 9. 8. & 27. 5. Mat. 16. 23.

a Mat. 26. 35. Rom. 10. 2. Jam. 3. 14—16.

b John 3. 17, 18. & 12. 47. Mat. 1. 21. & 20. 28. 1 Tim. 1. 15. ch. 19. 10. Heb. 7. 25.

51. And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be [r] received up, * he [s] stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, 52. And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the [t] Samaritans, to make ready for him. 53. And [u] they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. 54. And when his disciples [x] James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that [y] we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? 55. But he turned, [z] and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not [a] what manner of spirit ye are of. 56. For the Son of man [b] is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

Verses 51—56. Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of Christianity, which breathes universal love, than the fury of bigotry and the flames of persecution. We have here,

1. Our Lord steadfastly setting his face to Jerusalem, which was shortly to be the scene of his sufferings. The time fixed in the divine decree was come, when he should go up from Galilee, to return thither no more till after his resurrection; or this may refer to his ascension, when he should be received up into glory; and, knowing what sorrows awaited him, with unshaken courage and confidence he went forth to meet them. *Note*, (1.) When sufferings for Christ's sake stand in the way of duty, like him we should steadfastly set our face to meet them, and neither fail nor be discouraged. (2.) It is a comfort to look forward to the day when all our present troubles shall have an end, and we shall be *received up* to the place where Jesus is gone before.

2. As Samaria lay in his way, he sent some of his disciples forward to prepare some refreshment in one of the villages, that he might not be delayed in his journey. But as there was the most deadly feud between the Jews and Samaritans about the proper place for worship, each preferring their own, when they perceived that Christ and his disciples were bent for Jerusalem, probably to celebrate the feast of tabernacles there, they were incensed against him for thus preferring the temple in mount Zion to theirs on mount Gerizim, and therefore refused to grant him or his followers any entertainment among them. *Note*, If we are treated with rudeness and incivility, our Master was thus used before us.

3. John and James, fired at this indignity put on their Master, would instantly, with their Lord's permission, have poured vengeance on the place, consuming them with fire from heaven as Elias did, 2 Kings i. 9—12. They knew if Christ gave them leave one word would complete the overthrow of the city, and make it as Sodom and Gomorrah. But he rebukes their fiery spirit, and said, *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* They seemed to be actuated by zeal for his glory, but really were under the influence of pride, passion, and revenge. How different from that spirit of peace, love, patience, and forbearance, which his gospel breathed! *for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives*, by making his enemies monuments of vengeance, *but to save them*; not only by miracles of healing to cure their bodies, but by all meekness and long-suffering, and every mild and endearing method of grace to work upon their hearts, and melt them with these coals of love heaped upon them. *Note*, (1.) Even good men are sometimes carried away, and do not see the malignity and selfish passions which lurk under the guise of zeal for God. (2.) The examples of former saints are not placed as *precedents*, unless the cases be parallel, and we have the same warrant and authority under which they acted. (3.) The religion of Jesus is never to be propagated by fire and sword, but by means of persuasion, and every work and labour of love. Force may make men hypocrites; choice alone can make them Christians.

4. Christ hereupon patiently put up the affront, and quietly went with his disciples to another village, where they met a more hospitable reception. *Note*, To conquer our own spirit is a greater victory than to lay our bitterest enemy at our feet.

57. ¶ [c] And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 58. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests, [d] but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. 59. And he said unto another, [e] Follow me. But he said, [f] Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 60. Jesus said unto him, [g] Let the dead bury their dead; [h] but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. 61. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but [i] let me first go bid them farewell who are at home at my house. 62. And Jesus said unto him, [k] No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

c Mat. 8. 19—22. & 13. 20—22. John 6. 26. 1 Tim. 6. 3. Exod. 19. 8. & 24. 3.

d Mat. 8. 20. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Ps. 22. 6. & 109. 22. & 40. 17. & 69. 29. Phil. 2. 7, 8. Mat. 11. 29.

e Mat. 4. 19, 21. & 16. 24. & 9. 9.

f Mat. 8. 21. Heg. 1. 2 with 1 Kin. 19. 20. ch. 4. 22. & 19. 29.

g Mat. 8. 22. ch. 15. 32. Eph. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Lev. 21. 10—12. Num. 6. 6, 7.

h 2 Tim. 4. 2. Mark 16. 15. ver. 2. 1 Cor. 15. 10.

i 1 Kin. 19. 20. Mat. 22. 5. ch. 14. 20, 26. John 21. 16.

k Phil. 3. 14. Heb. 10. 38. 2 Tim. 4. 10. & 1. 15. Heb. 6. 8. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. 1 John 2. 19.

Verses 57—62. They who would follow Christ must count the cost, and be ready without hesitation, to part with all for his sake We have here,

1. The offer of one who, expecting the Messiah was about to set up his kingdom, professes his zeal to serve him, in hopes he shall be well rewarded for it. But Christ undeceives him. He would meet with none of the honours he expected, and innumerable hardships of which he seemed not to be aware. The Son of man, so far from providing for his followers, was more destitute than the foxes of the desert or the fowls of heaven, having neither house nor home. So poor, for our sakes, he became, to teach us contentment in the lowest station of life; never to aspire at this world's greatness; patiently to submit to every want we may be called to endure; to expect tribulations; and look for no

rest below, till the day comes that we shall rest in the dust, and then enter into our kingdom.

2. Another called to follow Christ, wanted to make excuse, and solicits a delay, pretending piety towards an aged parent, and desiring to perform the last offices to him before he commenced Christ's constant follower. But Christ denies his request: a more urgent duty lay upon him: there were enough dead sinners to bury the dead corpse; whilst he as a living soul, was needed to preach the everlasting gospel. *Note,* (1.) Delays are dangerous: many a soul hath been lost by plausible excuses for withdrawing from present duty, and putting off the concerns of eternity to a more convenient season. (2.) Religion teaches us to show piety at home, and to requite our parents; but, if the dearest relations in life would divert us from the service of Jesus and his gospel, then we must leave father and mother to follow the Master's call, and show our obedience to his commands.

3. A third person makes a voluntary tender of his service to Christ, and only begs that he may first bid adieu to his friends, and settle his worldly affairs. But Christ, who saw that his heart was entangled with worldly things, lets him know the impossibility of uniting the incompatible services of God and Mammon. *No man, having laid his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.* Whilst he hankers after the world, and parts from it with reluctance, he will not heartily discharge the gospel ministry. *Note,* (1.) Worldly things are the most dangerous snares to draw the heart from Christ: even those that we may lawfully mind are apt to engage unlawful and inordinate affections after them. (2.) When we have once set our faces heavenward, let us never look back. Remember Lot's wife.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's commission to the seventy disciples,* ver. 1—16. 2. *The reports which the seventy disciples made to their Master, of the success of their negotiation, and his discourse thereon,* ver. 17—24. 3. *Christ's discourse with a lawyer concerning the way to heaven, and the instructions Christ gave him by a parable to look upon every one as his neighbour,* ver. 25—37. 4. *Christ's entertainment at Martha's house, the reproof he gave to her for her care about the world, and his commendation of Mary for her care about her soul,* ver. 38—42.

1. AFTER [a] these things the Lord appointed other [b] seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself would come. 2. Therefore said he unto them, [c] The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few: pray ye therefore the [d] Lord of the harvest that [e] he would send forth labourers into his harvest. 3. [f] Go your ways: [g] behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. 4. [h] Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. 5. [i] And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house. 6. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. 7. [k] And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. [l] Go not from house to house. 8. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: 9. And [m] heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, [n] The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. 10. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, 11. [o] Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: [p] notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. 12. But I say unto you, that [q] it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. 13. ¶ [r] Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which have been done in you, they had a great while ago [s] repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14. [t] But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. 15. And thou Capernaum, [u] which art exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell. 16. [x] He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

a Mat. 10. 1. Mark 6. 2.
b Exod. 1. 5. Num. 11. 16. Mark 6. 7. Mat. 10. 6.
c Mat. 9. 37, 38. John 4. 35. Zech. 10. 2. & 11. 4, 7, 11. Acts 16. 9, 10. & 18. 10.
d 1 Cor. 12. 28. Acts 20. 28. & 13. 2. & 16. 6, 7.
e Jer. 3. 15. Eph. 4. 11—13. Acts ii—xix. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
f Mat. 10. 5—42. Mark 6. 7—13. ch. 9. 1—6.
g Mat. 10. 16. & 7. 15. Acts 20. 29, 30. Song 2. 15. Ezek. 2. 3.
h Mat. 10. 9, 10. Mark 6. 8. ch. 9. 3. Mat. 6. 31. Phil. 4. 6. 2 Tim. 4. 2. 2 Kin. 4. 29.
i Mat. 10. 11, 12. 1 Sam. 25. 6. Acts 13. 46. Ps. 35. 13. Is. 55. 11. 2 Cor. 2. 16.
k Mat. 10. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 10. 27. & 4—17. Gal. 6. 6—9. 1 Tim. 5. 18. Lev. 19. 13. Deut. 24. 14. & 25. 4.
l Phil. 4. 8. Eph. 5. 15. ch. 9. 4. Mark 6. 8.
m Ch. 9. 1. John 14. 12.
n Mat. 3. 2. & 4. 17. Tit. 2. 11. Rom. 10. 8. Is. 9. 7. & 2. 2—4. Dan. 2. 44.
o Mat. 10. 14. Mark 6. 11. ch. 9. 5. Acts 13. 51. & 18. 6. & 20. 26. & 22. 18. Neh. 5. 13.
p Acts 2. 36. & 3. 26. Rom. 10. 8. Tit. 2. 11. ver. 9.
q Mark 6. 11. Mat. 10. 15. & 11. 20—24. John 15. 22—24. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 1. Thes. 2. 16.
r Mat. 11. 20—24. Ezek. 3. 6, 7. with Is. xxiii. Ezek. xxvi—xxviii.
s 1 Kin. 21. 27, 29. Jon. 3. 10.
t Ch. 12. 47, 48. Amos 3. 2. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22.
u Gen. 11. 4. Deut. 1. 28. Is. 14. 13. Ezek. 26. 20. & 32. 18, 23. Jer. 51. 53. Lam. 4. 6. Mat. 11. 23, 24. ch. 12. 48.
x Ch. 9. 48. Mat. 10. 40. & 18. 5. Exod. 16. 18. Num. 14. 2, 11, 17. & 16. 11. Mark 9. 37. John 5. 22, 23. & 12. 44. & 13. 20. & 14. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 8.

Verses 1—16. The harvest was plenteous, but hitherto the labourers had been few. We have here seventy disciples ordained to the ministry, invested with miraculous powers, and sent as harbingers to prepare the way of Christ in all the adjacent country, whither he was preparing to go. Their number corresponds with the elders of Israel on whom the Spirit of the Lord rested in the wilderness; and they were sent two and two for their mutual comfort and encouragement.

1. They must address themselves in prayer to God for success upon their own labours, and that he will raise up and qualify many more to go forth and preach the gospel. And this must be still the constant subject of our requests to God: the more we look round on the world, and see immortal souls perishing for lack of knowledge, the more zealously should we labour, and the more fervently pray that the Lord would send forth labourers into his harvest.

2. He tells them what they may expect to meet. Though they were ever so harmless and inoffensive, and their discourses breathed nothing but peace and love, they would have enemies to encounter fierce and savage as wolves: but he who sent them would afford them protection, and minister strength and courage to them in their work. And, if God be with us, we need not fear who are against us.

3. He orders them to make no provision for their journey, but trust on providence for the supply of their wants: and, as their work required despatch, they must not lose any time in unnecessary discourse or civilities with any person whom they met. Not that Christ enjoined rudeness and incivility; but there was now no time for compliments, when the service was urgent.

4. Wherever they entered into a house, and were hospitably received, there he orders them to say, *Peace be to this house*, praying that all blessings, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, might rest upon those who dwelt there. *And if the son of peace be there*, any into whose hearts the Son of God hath put a desire to hear and receive the gospel of peace, then an answer of peace should be given to their prayers, *your peace shall rest upon it;* but *if not*, if there be no chosen vessels in the family, whose hearts are open to embrace the truth, *it shall return unto you again*, and your prayers for them shall be answered in blessings on your own souls. *Note*, (1.) They who preach the gospel of peace cannot but fervently desire, for all those among whom they minister, that God would speak peace by them to the consciences of their hearers. (2.) Some receive, but more reject, our preaching and prayers; yet even to those that perish our labours and prayers are not in vain: we are still a sweet savour of Christ; and, though they reject the salvation we bring, Christ will approve and reward our fidelity.

5. In whatever house they were first received, there they must abide; thankfully and cheerfully making use of the provision set before them, and not doubting but their labours would procure them that welcome they deserved. They must be content with the meanest fare, and never affecting nicety, change their lodgings for better accommodations, lest they should incur the suspicion of fickleness, or flesh-pleasers. *Note*, (1.) Christ's ministers have a right to a maintenance. (2.) When the love of souls, not of filthy lucre, draws men to labour in the gospel, they will learn in whatsoever state they are, therewith to be content, and put up with the poorest accommodations.

6. He directs them what must be the subject of their preaching. They must say, *The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you;* the kingdom of the Messiah, with all its inestimable blessings and privileges, is now ready to appear: prepare to receive him; and he empowers them to heal the sick, in confirmation of their preaching, as well as in return for the kind civilities which they received. *Note*, Nothing is ever lost by kindness shown to Jesus and his servants.

7. In case their ministry is rejected, and they are driven from their work, they are to leave the devoted city, publicly declaring the doom ready to light upon the place, and shaking off the dust of their feet for a testimony against its inhabitants, assuring them of the nearness of the Messiah's kingdom, and the dreadful consequences which must unavoidably ensue from their obstinacy and impenitence. And in a day of judgment it shall be more tolerable for Sodom than for that city, because they have rejected greater means of grace than were vouchsafed to that abandoned city. *Note*, (1.) None sink under such aggravated guilt as those who despise and reject the gospel. (2.) The day is near when these despisers will wonder and perish.

8. On this occasion our Lord turns his discourse to those cities where such multitudes of his miracles had been wrought, and who notwithstanding continued impenitent. Chorazin, Bethsaida, have their fearful doom read. Had the most wicked cities of the Gentiles enjoyed their blessings and privileges, and calls to repentance, even Tyre and Sidon had long ago been brought into the dust of humiliation. Therefore the judgment of the heathen in the day of vengeance, shall be more tolerable than theirs; and Capernaum, exalted to heaven in privileges, shall sink as low in hell under the wrath of God, provoked by their hardened infidelity. Let the lands and places that enjoy the gospel light hear and tremble at the denunciations.

9. He encourages the seventy to go forth. They are his ambassadors: he will reckon the treatment they meet with as shown to himself. Those who heard and respected them he would regard, as if they showed this attention and kindness to his own person; whilst they who despised their persons, and rejected their ministry, insulted him, and put contempt on God who sent him. *Note*, Many ill use, slight, and contemn Christ's ministers, and treat them as mean and despicable; but they will shortly feel, to their cost, that the King of glory will fearfully avenge the insults shown to his ambassadors.

17. ¶ And the [y] seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. 18. And he said unto them, I beheld [z] Satan as lightning fall from heaven. 17. Behold, [a] I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because [b] your names are written in heaven.* 21. ¶ In that hour Jesus [c] rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, [d] Lord of heaven and earth, that thou [e] hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. 22.† [f] All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he*† to whom the Son will reveal *him*. 23. ¶ And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, [g] Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see: 24. For I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

[y] Ver. 9. ch. 9. 1. Rom. 16. 20. 1 John 3. 8.

[z] John 12. 31. & 16. 11. Heb. 2. 14. Rev. 12. 8, 9. & 20. 10. 1 John 3. 8.

[a] Ps. 91. 13. Is. 11. 8. Mark 16. 18. Acts 28. 5. Rom. 16. 20.

[b] Exod. 32. 32. Is. 4. 3. Heb. 12. 23. Dan. 12. 1. Phil. 4. 3. Rev. 13. 8. & 21. 27.

* Allusion is here made to the custom of writing in a register the names of the inhabitants of a district or city.

[c] Ch. 15. 6, 9, 24, 32. Is. 62. 5. Zeph. 3. 17.

[d] Ps. 24. 1. Is. 66. 1.

[e] See Mat. 11. 25. & 13. 13. Ps. 25. 8, 9, 14. Is. 29. 14. & 32. 4. & 44. 18. 1 Cor. 1. 19, 21. 26. & 2. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 3. 14. & 4. 3.

† Many ancient copies add these words: *And turning to his disciples, he said.*

[f] Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18 Ps. 8. 8. Heb. 2. 8. John 1. 18. & 3. 35. & 5 27. & 6. 46. & 10 15. & 13. 3. & 14. 8, 9 & 17. 2. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Eph. 1. 21, 22. Phil. 2. 9—11.

[g] Mat. 13. 16, 17. & 16. 16, 17. ch. 2. 30. John 20. 29.

Verses 17—24. Having finished their ministry, we have here,

1. The return of the disciples to their Master, transported to find that even the devils were subject unto them, and ascribing the glory to him, in whose name they were enabled to work such stupendous miracles. *Note*, All our victories over Satan must be ascribed to the grace and power of the great Captain of our salvation, and in him we may and ought to rejoice greatly.

2. He received them very graciously.

(1.) He informs them it was no news to him that the devils were subject unto them. *I saw*, when I sent you forth to preach the gospel and work miracles, *Satan falling as lightning from heaven;* his power and kingdom began now to be shaken and totter; and this was the presage of his more irrecoverable ruin, when in the Gentile world the gospel should quickly spread, and, rooting up idolatry and spiritual darkness, turn the hearts of sinners from the power of Satan unto God.

(2.) He enlarges their powers, as the reward of their fidelity, and an encouragement to persevere. They shall tread upon serpents and scorpions unhurt; and the old serpent and his venomous associates, whether men or devils, should be bruised under their feet. *And nothing shall by any means hurt you.* Under almighty protection you may defy every danger. *Note*, They have nothing to fear who have Christ for their Master, and execute his commission.

(3.) He checks their joy on this singular distinction with

which he endued them, and directs them to a nobler cause for it; *rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven;* else, though they had cast out devils, they might themselves finally perish, and become companions with them. It is not gifts, but graces, that evidence our adoption of God, which should afford us most joy. *Note,* (1.) God knoweth those that are his; their names are registered in the records of eternity. (2.) The eternal predestination of God is matter of most comfortable meditation to those who, by faith embracing the promises, feel in their hearts the working of God's Spirit sealing them unto the day of redemption.

(4.) Christ expresses his delight and thankfulness for the blessings conferred on those his poor disciples: and to this hour nothing rejoices the hearts of his people so greatly as beholding the progress of his gospel, the fall of Satan, and the conversion of men's souls. He said, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,* the great Disposer of all things, *that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes,* leaving the proud scribes and doctors of the law under the darkness of pretended science, prejudiced against, and strangers to the mysteries of grace; whilst poor illiterate men, of low capacities, and contemptible in the eyes of the worldly wise, are put in trust with the gospel, and enlightened with the Spirit of truth. *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight;* such was the pleasure of infinite wisdom who sovereignly dispenses his gifts, the more to manifest his own glory. *All things are delivered to me of my Father,* all power and authority, all wisdom and grace to communicate to his chosen. In Jesus are all the treasures laid up, and out of his fulness we must receive. *And no man knoweth who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him:* the perfections of the divine nature are only fully known by the divine persons themselves; and we can only be acquainted with them, and their eternal purposes of infinite wisdom and grace, so far as the Son of God is pleased to reveal them to us.

(5.) Turning to his disciples, privately, he pronounces them truly blessed, favoured with a sight of the Lord's Christ, and enjoying the clearest discoveries of that kingdom of grace which the Messiah was now come to erect in the world. Prophets and kings in former ages desired in vain to see and hear what they, more highly favoured, saw and heard. *Note,* The distinguishing mercies we enjoy should excite our thankfulness, and quicken our diligence to improve them.

h Mat. 19. 16. & 22. 35. Mark 10. 17. & 12. 28.
Is. 8. 20. John 5. 39. Gal. 4. 21.
k Deut. 6. 5. & 10. 12. & 30. 6. Prov. i 23. 26. Mat. 22 37, 39. Mark 12. 30, 31. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 1 Cor. xiii. Lev. 19. 18. Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 14. Jam. 2. 8. 1 John 3. 18.
l Lev. 18. 5. Ezek. 20. 11. Mat. 19. 17 Gal. 3. 12. Rom. 10 5. & 3. 19, 20. Neh. 9 29.
m Ch. 16. 15. & 18. 9—11. Rom. 10. 3. Mat. 5. 42.
n Gen. 3. 1—6. John 8. 44. Eccl. 7. 29. Rom. 3. 23.
o Ps. 142. 4. Acts 4. 12. Jer. 3. 23, 24. Rom. 3. 19, 20. & 8. 3. & 9. 31, 32. & 10. 3. Gal. 3. 21, 22, & 4. 24. Heb. 10. 1, 2. & 7. 19. & 9. 9.

25. ¶ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, h Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 26. He said unto him, i What is written in the law? how readest thou? 27. And he answering said, k Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. 28. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: l this do, and thou shalt live. 29. But he m willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? 30. And Jesus answering, said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and n fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him,* and departed, leaving *him* half dead. 31. ° And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him,* and passed by on the other side.* 33. But a certain p Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him,* 34. And went to *him,* and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an q inn, and took care of him. 35. And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two r pence, and gave *them* to s the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and t whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. 36. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? 37. And he said, u He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, x Go, and do thou likewise.

* More exactly, *Likewise a Levite on the road, when he came near the place and saw him, passed by on the further side.*

p Acts 10. 28. ch. 9. 52, 53. John 4. 9. & 8. 48 with Heb. 2. 17, 18. & 4. 15. Mat. 1. 21. & 18. 11. & 20. 28.
q Is. 11. 10. Prov. 9. 1—5. Mat. 16. 18. Heb. 12. 22—24.
r Fifteen pence sterling. Mat. 20. 2.
s 1 Cor. 12. 28. & 4. 1, 2. Eph. 4. 11.
t 2 Cor. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.
u Heb. 2. 10—16. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Mat. 20. 28. Eph. 5. 2. Rev. 1. 5, 6.
x Mat. 5. 42—48. Rom. 12. 17—21.

Verses 25—37. We have the same question proposed by one of the scribes as was put by the young ruler, Mark x. 17. not so much with the view to be informed, as with the intention to entangle our Lord in his talk.

1. In answer to his question Christ turns over to the law in which he fancied himself deeply conversant, and bids him say what he read there, as the way of obtaining the eternal life he sought: and when the scribe replied, the conditions there prescribed were the perfect love of God and our neighbour, Christ approves the answer, and assures him, *Do this, and thou shalt live.* Such perfection of obedience will entitle those who can plead it to the reward. But where, alas! is this to be found? The more we read the tenor of the covenant of works, the more, if our minds are enlightened, shall we be driven to despair of ourselves, conscious how far we have been from continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them. But with this view had not the lawyer read. For,

2. *He, willing to justify himself,* as if he had kept the whole law, desired to know who was to be reckoned his neighbour; conceiting, probably, his justice and charity had been so extensive to the whole house of Israel, that he might justly claim the reward of perfect obedience.

Christ, by an apposite case in point, lets him see his ignorance of the divine law, and the defectiveness of his charity; correcting at the same time the corrupt notions of the Jewish teachers, who reckoned themselves not at all obliged to show the least kindness to those who were out of the pale of their communion. The story here represented is very beautiful and affecting.

1. A Jew, as he travelled from Jerusalem to Jericho, *fell among thieves,* with *which* the road was greatly infested, and these, not satisfied with having plundered and *stripped him of his raiment,* inhumanly *wounded him, and departed, leaving him* weltering in his blood, *half dead,* and ready to expire. This case may fitly represent the state of mankind, waylaid by Satan the great enemy of souls, robbed of the garments of innocence, wounded and dying in their sins, without power or strength to help themselves.

2. In this disastrous condition, in which the poor wounded traveller lay, *by chance,* so Providence ordered it, *there came*

down a certain priest that way, whose office and character should have engaged him to exercise his humanity and compassion towards an object so pitiable, especially to one of his own nation and religion; but his unfeeling heart was steeled against his brother, and, turning to the other side of the road, he pursued his journey unconcerned. A Levite quickly followed, as callous to every humane sensation; he just came and looked on; and, not caring to be at the trouble or expense of providing for a dying man, he kept on his way, and left him to perish there. Hardhearted monsters! cries every tongue. But, alas! such Levites and priests are found in every age, who not only withhold their hand from relieving the wants of the miserable, but leave the more precious souls of men, unconcerned what becomes of them. Some suppose that these represent the law of Moses, from which no mercy is to be expected; it makes no provision for man a sinner, nor speaks one word of comfort to the guilty; but leaves the soul under a curse, which extends to eternal death.

3. A *Samaritan,* one of that despised and detested nation, travelling that way, saw the miserable object, and compassion instantly melted his heart. Without waiting to know of what country he was, he went to him, and pouring oil and wine into his wounds, he bound them carefully up, perhaps with the very linen garments he wore, and, gently setting him on his own beast, he carried him to the nearest inn, and saw every accommodation provided for him which the place could afford. And, on the morrow, having waited that night to see the poor patient well provided for, he gave the host, on parting, two-pence, about fifteen-pence of our money, with a charge to take all possible care of the wounded man, and engaged to defray, on his return, whatever expense might be farther incurred. A noble instance indeed of humanity and generosity. We cannot be at a loss to whom this character of the good Samaritan eminently belongs. Jesus is come down from heaven: he sees his people lying in their blood, helpless and desperate; his compassions are kindled towards them: he binds up the wounds of the guilty sinner's soul: his own blood is the healing balm he pours into them: he brings them into his church, where they are fed with the provision of his ordinances; he clothes them with his righteousness, revives them with the cordials of his love, and bears their charges through the inn of this world, supporting them with the riches of his grace; he commends them to the care of his ministers, and at his second coming will not fail to reward their care and diligence.

4. Christ proposes to the lawyer the question, Which of these was the neighbour to the wounded traveller? and the case was too clear to admit of hesitation; he could not but answer, *He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.* Think not you have kept the law, or even understood the extent of the command, before you feel the same compassionate spirit, the same readiness to relieve even a Samaritan, as he showed towards this Jew. An extent of charity to which he had been hitherto an utter stranger: and therefore his self-justification was but self-delusion.

38. ¶ Now it came to pass, as they
y Bethany. John 11. 1. & 12. 1—3.
went, that he entered into [y] a certain
z John 11. 1—45. & 12. 1—3. Mat. 26. 6, 7.
village: and a certain woman named [z] Martha received him into her house.
39. And she had a sister called Mary,
a As was customary for disciples. Ch. 8. 35. Acts 22. 3. Deut. 33. 3. Prov. 8. 34. 1 Cor. 7. 32, &c.
which also [a] sat at Jesus' feet, and heard
b Mat. 8. 15. & 6. 31. Exod. 48. 18. Ps. 89. 21.
his word. 40. But Martha was [b] cumbered about much serving, and came to
him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care
that my sister hath left me to serve alone?
bid her therefore that she help me. 41.
And Jesus answered and said unto her,
c Ch. 21. 34. & 8. 14. Mat. 6. 26—34. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
Martha, Martha, thou art [c] careful and
troubled about many things: 42. But
d Ps. 27. 4. & 73. 25. & 142. 5. John 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. & 5. 6. Mat. 16. 16.
[d] one thing is needful: and Mary hath
e Ps. 16. 5, 6. Is. 45. 17. & 55. 3. John 17. 3. Ps. 73. 24—26. & 142. 5. 1 John 5. 18
chosen that [e] good part, which shall not
be taken away from her.

Verses 38—42. We have here,

1. The hospitable entertainment given to her blessed Lord by a good woman who lived at Bethany, named Martha. Though his character was obnoxious, and his retinue numerous and poor, yet she was not ashamed of owning her respect for him, and was happy to furnish him with the best her house afforded. A gracious heart makes an open hand. We should grudge no expense when Christ's cause demands our support.

2 Mary, the sister of Martha, sat at Jesus' feet, attentive to his divine instructions! and as, according to his usual custom, he began to discourse about the glad tidings of his salvation, she listened with eagerness to the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. *Note,* (1.) Ministers, not only in public, but from house to house, should delight to dispense the gospel-word. They are profitable visits when a gracious discourse seasons the entertainment. (2.) They who would be wise unto salvation must sit at Jesus' feet. We cannot hear his voice indeed: but in his blessed word he yet speaketh.

3. Martha, desirous to show her respect for her honoured guest, was very busy in providing the entertainment. Her diligence was commendable; but *she was* too much taken up, *cumbered with much serving;* she wanted to make the feast splendid, and was so distracted with these worldly engagements, that she could not find leisure to attend the heavenly discourse of the Redeemer. *Note,* (1.) Family cares inordinately engaging the mind are a great snare to our souls. (2.) Christ's servants should not cumber themselves with much serving. They who eat and drink to the glory of God will not affect danties.

4. Displeased that Mary came not to her assistance, Martha brings her complaint to Christ: *Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?* She seems not only to blame Mary's backwardness to assist her, but to reflect upon Jesus, that he should suffer her to sit there, when she wanted her help in the family: and therefore suggests that it was but reasonable, that he should *bid her go* and assist in providing for the guests. *Note,* (1.) They who have their own hearts much set upon the world are ready to find fault with those as negligent who show not the same anxiety after it. (2.) Too many, like Martha, are apt to think, that the exercises of religion encroach upon the duties of our station; but, usually speaking, the fault is, as here, far on the other side.

5. Christ reproves her inordinate carefulness. *Martha, Martha;* he speaks with earnestness and pity, *thou art careful and troubled about many things:* giving herself unnecessary anxiety, when Christ required no such sumptuous entertainment. *But one thing is needful,* to know Christ and partake of his salvation. Compared with this, every thing beside is unimportant; therefore should this engage our first and chief concern: and we are highly culpable when other things divert us from attending to the interests of our immortal souls. *Note,* (1.) Faithful rebukes are the truest marks of genuine love. (2.) They who are full of inordinate care are sure to involve themselves in many troubles. (3.) Christ's disciples have need deeply to remember this reproof and caution; for Martha's anxiety is a besetting evil.

6. Instead of blaming Mary, as her sister expected, Christ commends her choice, and approves her conduct; *She hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken from her.* *Note,* (1.) However serious godliness may provoke the censures of the luke warm, Jesus will commend what they condemn. (2.) They

who have chosen Christ as their portion, and his word as their rule, have wisely determined, and shall never repent of their choice. (3.) If we have by faith embraced the Saviour, and truly been made partakers of his grace, then we have an interest in that eternal blessedness, of which none of the powers of earth or hell can deprive us.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter, 1. *Christ teacheth his disciples to pray,* ver. 1—13. 2. *He fully answereth the blasphemous imputation of the Pharisees,* ver. 14—26. 3. *He shows the honour of obedient disciples to be greater than that of his own mother,* ver. 27 28. 4. *He upbraids the men of that generation for their infidelity and obstinacy,* ver. 29—36. 5. *He severely reproves the Pharisees and lawyers for their hypocrisy, pride, and their oppressing the consciences of those that submitted to them, and their hating and persecuting those that witnessed against their wickedness,* ver. 37—54.

1. AND it came to pass, that, as he was [a] praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, [b] Lord, [c] teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. 2. And he said unto them, When ye pray, [d] say, [e] Our Father which art in heaven, [f] hallowed be thy name. [g] Thy kingdom come. [h] Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. 3. [i] Give us * day by day our daily bread. 4. [k] And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And [l] lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. 5. And he said unto them, [m] Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; 6. For a friend of mine † in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him: 7. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. 8. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his [n] importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. 9. [o] And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 10. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall he opened. 11. [p] If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? 12. Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13. [q] If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall *your* [r] heavenly Father [s] give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

a Ps. 109. 4. Heb. 5 7. ch. 6. 12. & 9. 28.
b John 13. 13. & 20. 28. Phil. 3. 8.
c Rom. 8. 26. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Ps. 119. 26, 27, &c.
d Hos. 14. 2, 3. Mat. 6. 9—13.
e Mat. 6. 9. Is. 63. 16. & 57. 15. & 66. 1. Ps. 8. 1. & 11. 4. & 115. 3. Heb. 8. 1.
f Ps. 8. 1, 9. & 72. 17—19. & 113. 2—5. & cxlv—cl, cv, cvii.
g Mat. 4. 17. & 3. 2. ch. 9. 2. & 10. 9, 11. Is. 2. 2, 5. & liv, lx. & 9. 6. 7. Mat. 28. 18. & 16. 18.
h Mat. 26. 42. Acts 21. 14. 2 Thes. 3. 1. 2 Sam. 7. 25. Ps. 119. 5. & 103. 20.
i Prov. 30. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 8. John 6. 33. Is. 33. 16.
* Or *for the day.*
k Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Hos. 14. 2. Mat. 6. 12, 14. & 18. 35. Eph. 4. 31, 32.
l Mat. 26. 41. John 17. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 3. 10.
m Ch. 18. 1—8.
† Or *out of his way.*
n Gr. *impudence.* Gen. 32. 26. Mat. 15. 23—28. ch. 8. 1—8. Rom. 15. 30. 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8.
o Mat. 7. 7—11. & 21. 22. & 17. 21. Gen. 32. 26—29. Ps 118. 5. & 123. 2. Is. 45. 11. & 62. 1, 7. Mark 11. 24. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 12. 8. Heb. 4. 16. Jam. 1. 5, 6. & 5. 16—18. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14, 15. Ps. 34. 15, 17.
p Mat. 7. 9, 10. Is. 49. 15.
q Is. 49. 15. Heb. 12. 10. Mat. 7. 11.
r Ver. 2. Is. 63. 16. & 66. 1.
s Prov. 1. 23. Is. 44. 3, 4. Ezek. 36. 27. Joel 2. 28.

Verses 1—13. Prayer is the great instituted means of maintaining communion with God: it is as the breath of every spiritually living soul. There can be no surer proof of our being dead in trespasses and sins than the habitual neglect of it. The prayerless lives without God, and must die without hope. Our Lord himself was much in prayer, to set us an example: and his disciples, desirous to follow him, are represented here as preferring their request to him, that he would instruct them both concerning the matter and manner of their prayers, and give them a form or directory, as John had done for his disciples. *Note,* Unless the Lord *teach us to pray,* and pour out upon us the spirit of prayer and supplication, we can offer no acceptable service.

1. Christ condescends to grant their request, and gives them the following short but most comprehensive form of prayer:

Our Father which art in heaven: thou great Creator and universal Lord, whose throne is in the heavens, and to whom ten thousand times ten thousand angels and archangels pay their ceaseless adorations; to thee do we sinful worms and dust of the earth address our prayer, regarding thee not only as our common Parent and Maker of all things, but in the more endeared relation of our reconciled God and Father in Jesus Christ. *Hallowed be thy name:* may I and every other creature exalt thy glory; and, according to the displays of thy glorious perfections made in thy works and word, may we ever admire, adore, honour, love, and serve thee. *Thy kingdom come:* erect the throne of thy grace in our hearts; O visit us with thy salvation; give us the light of thy truth, and the effectual influences of thy Spirit, that we may become thy faithful subjects and servants. Send forth thy gospel into the world: accompany it with thy mighty power, and make it effectual to the conversion of sinners' souls; build us up together in thy faith, fear, and love, and prepare us daily, in the exercise of all holy conversation and godliness, for thy eternal presence; then come and take us to thy throne above, where, day and night for ever, we may serve thee in thy temple, and go out no more. *Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth:* may we emulate the lively, constant, universal obedience paid by the celestial hosts. Let thy revealed word be our invariable rule; and may we, without partiality and without hypocrisy, desire to know, and with delight fulfil, what thou dost command: and in every dispensation of thy providence may our spirits be resigned, submissive, satisfied, content to wait thy leisure, and meekly casting our care upon thee. *Give us day by day our daily bread:* on thee, O Lord, we depend for the needful provision of our bodies during the days of our pilgrimage; let us, as thy children, be supplied by thy bounty: enable us to live in a constant dependence upon thee, content with the portion thou art pleased to assign us, and confident thou wilt not leave us to want any manner of thing which is good for us: and, whilst our bodies are fed by thy providence, let our souls be nourished with the better bread of life which cometh down from heaven. *And forgive us our sins,* many, great, and aggravated as they have been: blot them out through the Redeemer's blood, speak peace and pardon to our guilty souls, and glorify thyself in mercy. And we are emboldened, Lord, to hope for an answer of peace; *for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us;* readily passing by their offences and trespasses against us, as we hope to be forgiven ourselves, and pleading thy promise, that, when we are enabled thus to do, we shall assuredly find mercy with thee our most highly and justly offended God. Remember therefore the word wherein thou hast caused us to put our trust

And lead us not into temptation; keep us from every snare laid for our souls, and suffer us not to fall under the trials we may be called to endure: *but deliver us from evil*, from the evil one, the evil world, and that greatest enemy our own evil hearts, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Save us with thine uttermost salvation, and bring us at last to that eternal kingdom where no temptation nor evil can enter.

2. Christ directs them as to the *manner* of their prayers: to be fervent, persevering, and importunate; the effects of which he instances in the case of a man, who having a sudden visit from a friend on his journey, and nothing for him to eat, should run to his neighbour's house at midnight, and desire to borrow three loaves. At that unseasonable hour his neighbour would be apt to make many excuses, and endeavour to put him off, rather than disturb his family; yet, if he is very importunate, that will usually prevail, and, if but to be rid of his importunity, he will lend him what he asks. Now if one, who shows so much reluctance to yield, is overcome by entreaty, much more will our gracious God, who is ever more willing to hear than we to pray, and wont to give more than we desire or deserve, answer the supplications of his people, if they faint not. Let them *ask* in faith, nothing doubting; let them *seek* with diligence unwearied; let them *knock* aloud with cries fervent and reiterated; and then they will surely find an answer of peace; their prayers shall be heard, their requests granted, and the door of mercy be opened.

3. Our Lord suggests yet farther encouragement to prayer from the consideration of our relation to God as our father. If the bowels of earthly parents yearn over their children's wants, and none are found so inhuman as, instead of bread and meat which they crave, to give them things noxious and poisonous. If men, by nature sinful, feel such tenderness towards their offspring, how infinitely surpassing are the compassions of our Father in heaven; and, as his power is equal to his love, much more will he supply all the spiritual necessities of our souls, and give his Holy Spirit, which comprises all blessedness, to them that ask him.

14. ¶ [t] And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. 15. But some of them said, [u] He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. 16. And others, [x] tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven. 17. But he, [y] knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falleth. 18. If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through [z] Beelzebub. 19. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do [a] your sons cast *them* out? [b] therefore shall they be your judges. 20. But if I with the [c] finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. 21. When a [d] strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: 22. But when [e] a stronger than he * shall [f] come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. 23. [g] He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. 24. [h] When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. 25. And when he cometh, [i] he findeth *it* swept and garnished. 26. [k] Then goeth he and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

t Mat. 9. 32—34. & 12. 22—30.
u Mat. 9. 34. & 10. 25. & 12. 24. Mark 3. 22—30. John 7. 30. & 8. 48, 52. & 10. 20.
x Mat. 12. 38. & 16. 1. Mark 8. 11. ver. 29. 1 Cor. 1. 22. Heb. 3. 9, 19.
y Mat. 9. 4. & 12. 25. Mark 3. 24. John 2. 25. Rev. 2. 23.
z Gr. *Beelzebul.* As ver. 15, 19, &c.
a Ch. 9. 49. Mark 9. 38.
b Ch. 19. 22. 2 Sam. 1. 16. Job 15. 6.
c Mat. 12. 28. Exod. 8. 19. Dan. 2. 44. & 4. 34. & 7. 14, 22. ch. 1. 35, 38. Heb. 12. 28.
d 1 Pet. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 12. & 2. 2. Is. 49. 24, 25. Mat. 12. 29. Mark 3. 27.
e Is. 9. 6. & 53. 1. Heb. 7. 25. Mat. 28. 18.
f Gen. 3. 15. Is. 33. 12. & 49. 24—26. & 53. 1—4. Col. 2. 15. 1 John 3. 8.
* Or, *he who is stronger.*
g Mat. 12. 30. Rev. 3. 15, 16. with ch. 9. 50.
h Mat. 12. 43—45. Acts 8. 13. Job 1. 7. & 2. 2. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Is. 35. 1. ch. 4. 5, 6. Acts 17. 30, 31. Eph. 2. 2.
i Ps. 81. 11, 12. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 2. 1—3. Tit. 3. 3. 2 Pet. 2. 12—19.
k Ps. 81. 12. Is. 66. 3, 4. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. John 5. 14.

Verses 14—26. The most amazing manifestations of Christ's power and glory, and his noble acts of beneficence towards men's bodies and souls, could not prevent the envenomed tongue of malice from casting upon him the most malignant aspersions. We have here,

1. The wicked inference drawn by the Pharisees, on seeing a most astonishing instance of Christ's power in the dispossessing a devil from a man that was dumb, who immediately recovered his speech to the amazement of the spectators. To counteract the effects of this miraculous cure among the people, some of them, who could not deny the fact, suggested that it was performed by a confederacy between Jesus and the prince of the devils: whilst others challenged him to give a sign from heaven of his divine mission, as if all besides was unsatisfactory. So perverse and absurd are usually the objections of obstinate infidelity.

2. Christ knew their thoughts, and what suggestions they were labouring to instil into the minds of the people, and confutes them with the most unanswerable arguments. It was as absurd to suppose so subtle an enemy as Satan would ever concur in establishing that doctrine which radically overthrew his empire over the souls of men, as that any community or family should propose their establishment by division between the members that compose it, which must evidently tend to their mutual destruction. Besides, they condemned themselves herein, when they admitted that many of their own kindred and followers, and exorcists, were, in the name of God, enabled to cast out devils; and never supposed any diabolical combination in their case. This malignant opposition to him therefore tended most effectually to their own ruin and destruction; for, since *the finger of God* was evident in these miraculous works, and proved *the kingdom of God* was come, which the Messiah should erect in the world; in rejecting the evidence of his misson they excluded themselves from all the blessings and privileges of his kingdom. And to show farther the real destruction of Satan's power by his miracles and doctrine, he illustrates the matter by a smilitude, ver. 21, 22. As a strong man will not quit his palace, which he holds with an armed force, unless he be vanquished by a superior foe, no more will Satan quit his hold of men's bodies and souls till compelled by the power of the almighty Saviour. When the prey therefore is taken from this mighty one, it is a sure proof that his power is broken, and his interest ruined. Nor can there be any neutrality between Christ and Belial. They who halt between two opinions, who do not join Christ's cause, admit the evidence of his mission, and profess discipleship, must expect to be treated by him as enemies, and to be scattered in his wrath.

The Redeemer's victories over Satan are still daily seen; yea, we are bound to experience them in our own souls, or it had been good for us we had never been born. For by nature we are

children of wrath, born slaves of corruption, and under the power of this wicked one. Our desperately wicked hearts are the palace where he sits enthroned, and there his despotic orders are obeyed; by every prejudice, every allurement, every temptation, he strengthens his interest against Christ and his truth; and flatters with visions of peace the sinner's soul, filling him with false confidence, keeping him in darkness with respect to his danger, lulling him asleep in security, suffering him to entertain no doubt of the goodness of his heart and the safety of his state, and turning him away from whatever tends to disturb this deceitful repose. But, when Christ comes by his word and Spirit the conflict begins, unusual distress and terror seize the soul, the enemy struggles hard to keep his hold, but the stronger grace and power of the Saviour prevail, the strongholds of Satan are laid low, the sinner's proud imaginations humbled, his false confidence, his own righteousness and self-sufficiency, levelled with the dust: Christ comes and takes possession of the heart; by his enlightening, sanctifying grace, dispels the darkness of ignorance and error, and looses the bonds of sin and corruption, taking the prey from the mighty, and employing to his own glory the body, soul, spirit, and all the faculties of the redeemed sinner.

3. Christ intimates to them their truly deplorable condition, under another similitude. They were like a man out of whom the evil spirit departed for a while, seeking a settlement elsewhere; but, finding none to his mind, he returned to his former house, and found it ready prepared for his reception; where, entering with seven worse spirits, he took up his abode: and the case of that man was more desperate than ever. Thus now that Satan's kingdom was shaken in Judea, he had retired for a while into the Gentile world: but when, after the resurrection of Jesus, and the preaching of his gospel among the heathen, he could find no rest there, his idols being demolished, and his votaries converted, then would he return again to the Jewish people, who had rejected their Messiah, and find them ready to welcome him into their hearts: with sevenfold greater influence over them he shall take possession of them for his own, and, by hurrying them on to fill up the measure of their iniquities, will hasten the destruction of their country, and effectually ruin both body and soul in hell.

This also represents the state of every hypocrite and apostate. An outward reformation may be wrought, and Satan's power for a time suspended; the house may be swept from grosser immoralities, and garnished with the form of godliness, with common gifts of speculative knowledge, or a fair show of profession, whilst the heart remains unchanged, unhumbled, and unholy: for a while they endure: but when the hour of temptation comes, Satan finds a ready access, and enters with greater power than ever into the heart; the sins which were before hid under the veil of hypocrisy break forth; apostasy ensues: and these usually prove the vilest and most abandoned of all sinners, and will receive the greater damnation.

27. ¶ And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, [l] Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. 28. But he said, Yea, [m] rather blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

l Ch. 1. 24, 30, 48. with 23. 29.

m Ch. 6. 47, 48. & 8. 21. Ps. 1. 1—3. & 112. 1. & 119. 1—6. & 128. 1. Is. 48. 17, 18. Mat. 7. 21. & 12. 49. ch. 8. 21. Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 22—25.

Verses 27, 28. Struck with the miracle which she had seen, and deeply affected with the convincing force of evidence which appeared in our Lord's discourse, a gracious woman of the company could not restrain the glowing rapture of her heart, and burst forth into expressions of wonder and admiration at what she heard and saw, counting her inexpressibly blessed and happy who was the mother of such a son. But Christ took occasion to point her to an unspeakably greater honour and happiness, of which she herself might become possessed: to hear the word of God and keep it, so to receive the love of the truth as to be saved thereby, was a far greater blessedness than, after the flesh, to have been found among his near relatives.

29. ¶ [n] And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is [o] an evil generation: they seek a sign; [*] and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. 30. For as [p] Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so also shall the Son of man be to this generation. 31. [q] The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, [r] a greater than Solomon is here. 32. [s] The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a [t] greater than Jonas *is* here. 33. [u] No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a [x] bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. 34. [y] The light of the body is the eye: therefore, when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light: [z] but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also *is* full of darkness. 35. Take heed therefore [a] that the light which is in thee be not darkness. 36. [b] If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

n Mat. 12. 38—42. Mark 8. 11, 12.

o Is. 57. 3. Mat. 16. 4. & 23. 33. Mark 8. 38. John 4. 48. & 2. 18.

* Matthew informs us, it was the Pharisees in particular who demanded a sign of our Lord.

p John 1. 17. & 2. 2. & iii, iv. Is. 8. 18. ch. 2. 34. & 9. 22, 24.

q 1 Kin. 10. 1, 2. 2 Chr. 9. 1. Mat. 12. 42.

r Ch. 3. 22. & 9. 35. Is. 9. 6. & 42. 1. & 49. 3. John 1. 14, 29. Mat. 12. 5, 42. Col. 2. 3, 9.

s Jon. 3. 5—10. Jer. 3. 11. Ezek. 3. 6, 7. & 16. 51. Rom. 2. 27, 29.

t John 1. 14. & 3. 16, 31. & 10. 30. Rom. 9. 5. Tit. 2. 13. Acts 7. 2.

u Mat. 5. 15. Mark 4. 21. ch. 8. 16.

x See Mat. 5. 15.

y Mat. 6. 22, 23. Rom. 12. 8. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Ps. 119. 5, 6, 105.

z Ps. 81. 12. Is. 66. 4. 2 Thes. 2. 10—12.

a Is. 6. 9, 10. & 5. 20. & 29. 14, 15. & 44. 18. & 42. 19, 20. Jer. 5. 21. Mat. 13. 14, ch. 18. 11. Rom. 1. 22. 1 Cor. 1. 19—21.

b Job 17. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 1 John 5. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Acts 26. 18. Mat. 5. 16. Phil. 2. 15, 16. Eph. 5. 8.

Verses 29—36. As they were so obstinate in rejecting the signs he had given them, and still demand one from heaven, as a subterfuge for their unbelief, Christ rejects their petition, and, before the people, who were gathered thick around him, assures them,

1. That no sign shall be given them from heaven but only that of which Jonas was the type and figure, even the resurrection of the Son of man from the dead; and their rejection of that would seal them up under final impenitence.

2. He warns them of the dreadfulness of their guilt, and the aggravated ruin which must be the consequence of rejecting him and his gospel. As he was far greater than Solomon or Jonah, the queen of Sheba, who came so far to hear the wisdom of the one, and the Ninevites, who repented at the preaching of the other, would rise up in a judgment-day to upbraid and condemn their perverseness and unbelief.

3. They had yet the light of truth among them; they were therefore inexcusable if they abode in darkness, and wilfully shut their eyes against conviction. They who embraced the gospel, receiving it in the light and the love of it, would be infinitely blessed and benefited thereby; those who rejected it would be given up justly to the blindness of their heart, and

left to fall into eternal darkness. *Note*, (1.) The gospel is *the lighted candle*, set up on the candlestick of the public ministry, to guide benighted souls into the paths of everlasting peace. (2.) What the eye is to the body, that faith is to the soul, enabling us to see the great things which pertain unto our eternal life, and to embrace them; and, as the blessed effect thereof, we are enabled to walk in comfort and holiness, growing in grace, till the blessed day comes when no cloud of ignorance, or spot of sin, shall hide the full lustre of the beatific vision. (3.) Whilst the heart remains under the power of native corruption, the understanding is darkened, the judgment corrupted by depraved affections, and all the glories of the gospel-day shine around such in vain: as the sun's brightest beams convey no light to the person whose organs of vision are obstructed by vicious humours. (4.) We have great need to beware how we trifle with the gospel; lest we provoke the Lord to withdraw the light of truth from us, and seal us up under judicial blindness and hardness of heart; and then, *how great is that darkness.*

37. ¶ And as he spake, [c] a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. 38. And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that [d] he had not first washed before dinner. 39. And the Lord said unto him, [e] Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.* 40. *Ye* [f] fools did not he that [g] made that which is without make that which is within also? 41. But rather [h] give alms of such things as ye have;‡ and, behold, all things are clean unto you. 42. [i] But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God; these ought ye to have done, and not leave the other undone. 43. [k] Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets. 44. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for [l] ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware *of them*. 45. Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also. 46. [m] And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. 47. [n] Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. 48. Truly [o] ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for [p] they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres. 49. Therefore also said the [q] wisdom of God, [r] I will send them prophets and apostles, and [s] *some* of them, they shall slay and persecute: 50. [t] That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; 51. From the blood of [u] Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation. 52. [x] Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye ‖ hindered. 53. And as he said these things unto them, [y] the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things; 54. [z] Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

c Ch. 7. 36. & 14. 1. & 7. 34. 1 Cor. 9. 19, 20.

d Mat. 13. 1, 2. Mark 7. 1—5.

e Mat. 23. 23, 25. & 7. 15. Mark 7. 4. Tit. 1. 15, 16. 2 Tim. 3, 5.

* Or, *malevolence.*

f Ps. 14. 1—5. & 92. 5, 6. & 94. 8. Deut. 32. 29.

g Gen. 1. & 2. 2, 7. Num. 16. 22. Zech. 12. 1. Heb. 12. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 23.

h Ch. 12. 33. & 16. 9. Mat. 5. 44. Dan. 4. 27. Is. 58. 7. & 61. 8. ch. 19. 8. 2 Cor. 8. 12. 1 Tim. 4. 4. Tit. 1. 15. Heb. 13. 16. Liberality to the poor is a better way to sanctify your earthly enjoyments.

‡ Or, *only give in alms what ye have.*

i Mat. 23. 23, 24. & 9. 13. & 12. 7. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Hos. 6. 6. Prov. 21. 3. Mic. 6. 3. Gal. 5. 22—24.

k Ch. 20. 46. & 14. 7. Mat. 23. 6, 7. Mark 12. 38, 39. 3 John 9. Prov. 16. 18. & 29. 23. Hab. 2. 4.

l Mat. 23. 27, 28. Acts 23. 3. Hos. 5. 1. & 9. 8. Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. & 5. 9. Tit. 1. 15.

m Mat. 23. 4. Is. 10. 1. Gal. 6. 13. Ps. 94. 20.

n Mat. 23. 29—36.

o Ps. 64. 8. Josh. 24. 22. ch. 19. 22. Job 15. 5, 6.

p Acts 7. 51, 52. 1 Thes. 2. 15. 2 Chr. 36. 16. Mat. 21. 35, 36. Jam. 5. 10. Heb. 11. 36—38.

q Prov. 1. 20. & 8. 1, 12. & 9. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 24. Col. 2. 3.

r Mark 16. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11.

s Mat. 22. 6. John 16. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 24, 25. ch. 21. 16, 17. Acts iv—xxv.

t Mat. 23, 35, 36. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. Exod. 20. 5. Mic. 6. 16. Rev. 18. 24. Gen. 9. 5, 6. Ps. 9. 12.

u Mat. 23. 35. Gen. 4. 8. Heb. 11. 4. 1 John 3. 12. 2 Chr. 24. 21, 22. Zech. 1. 1.

x Mat. 23. 13. Ezek. 22 25. 2 Tim. 3. 6. Tit. 1. 11. ch. 19. 39. They, by false glosses, kept people ignorant of the scripture, and did all they could to hinder others, as well as themselves, from believing the gospel.

‖ Or, *forbade.*

y Mat. 23. 2—22. & 12. 38. & 16. 1. & 19. 3. & 22. 18. ver. 16.

z Mat. 22. 15. Jer. 18. 18. & 20. 10. Ps. 37. 32. & 56. 5, 6.

Verses 37—54. We have here,

1. The invitation which one of the Pharisees gave our Lord to dine with him, which he accepted, went to the house, and sat down to meat.

2. The Pharisee observed, and was much offended, that Christ did not wash before he sat down at the table, according to the tradition of the elders, which he and his brethren so scrupulously observed.

3. Christ, who knew this proud Pharisee's thoughts, took occasion freely to reprove their folly and hypocrisy, who had placed the substance of their religion in these useless and superstitious observances, whilst they neglected the great and most important commands of God. He denounces therefore his woes against them, (1.) For their *hypocrisy*, in showing such solicitude to observe the various washings of their cups and platters, in conformity with the traditions of the elders; whilst they took no pains to cleanse their souls from the deep pollutions of sin, from the inward extortion and covetousness, which rendered them abominable in the sight of God. What egregious folly! If God required outward cleanness, must he not much more expect internal purity? The way to have a sanctified use of their creature-comforts was by charitable distribution to the poor, Deut. xxvi. 12—15. and when this proceeded out of a pure heart, and faith unfeigned, all this would then be clean unto them, Tit. i. 15. but without this, all the water in Jordan would never cleanse them from their filthiness. (2.) For their *injustice* and *irreligion*: whilst they pretended the most scrupulous regard to God's service, tithing even the herbs in their garden, they lived in the gross violation of the most weighty precepts of the moral law; passing over *judgment*, partial as magistrates, extortioners in their dealings, and as void of the *love of God*, as of charity to their neighbour; duties, which being of the first importance, demanded their chief attention. (3.) For their *pride*. They were fond of pre-eminence; expected the most honourable seat in places of worship, where humility was especially required; and affected sounding titles of homage to be paid them in public, as if they were beings of a superior rank. (4.) For their *inward filthiness*. Notwithstanding all the specious appearances of devotion and piety which they wore, their hearts were a sink

of uncleanness; and as graves concealed, which men, ere they were aware, walked over, and were defiled by them; so did their principles, practice, and conversation, corrupt those who followed their destructive ways.

4. One of the lawyers, or scribes, whose office it was in general to expound the law to the people, conceived these reproofs on the Pharisees included reproaches on them also; and our Lord, without respect of persons, does not spare them. They were alike culpable, and the same woes and wrath hung over them. (1.) Because they added to the divine precepts an unsupportable load of human traditions; and whilst to themselves they were abundantly indulgent, and made the path of self-denial sufficiently easy, they exacted with rigour a scrupulous conformity from others to their human impositions. (2.) Because they pretended reverence for the memory of the prophets, and erected noble monuments over the graves of those whom their fathers had murdered; but even the care of the prophets' tombs perpetuated the memory of their ancestors' crimes, which they were ready to repeat, being actuated by the same malignant spirit; *therefore, also said the wisdom of God*, Jesus the divine *Logos*, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, *I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute*, exceeding all the outrages of their forefathers; more bloody minded and inveterate against the ministers of the gospel; filling up hereby the measure of their iniquities, and bringing upon themselves the vengeance due for all the righteous blood shed from Abel to Zacharias, who, for his fidelity, was stoned in the very courts of the temple, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20—22. At the hands of this generation, saith he, shall it be required; and the prediction was fearfully verified, in the dreadful and utter destruction shortly after poured out upon their city, temple, and nation. (3.) Because *they had taken away the key of knowledge;* arrogating to themselves the right of expounding the Scriptures, they misled the people by corrupt glosses. They perverted the texts which had the plainest reference to the Messiah, and the clearest accomplishment in Jesus; instilling wrong notions of his temporal kingdom, they prejudiced the people against Christ and his gospel; and refusing to enter themselves into the number of his disciples, they used all their art and influence to prevent others from joining them who were disposed to acknowledge his mission and character.

5. Cut with these sharp rebukes, which unhumbled sinners regard as affronts and reproaches, *they began to urge him vehemently*, with captious questions, *and to provoke him to speak of many things;* trying to ruffle his temper, or draw from him some unguarded expression, whereon to ground some accusation against him; either to render him odious to the people, or obnoxious to the government; but his patience and prudence disappointed their malice. *Note*, Fidelity in reproving men's sins will often procure us inveterate enemies; and we have need to watch over the temper of our hearts, and the door of our lips, when in the midst of those, who we know lie in wait for our halting.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Christ here, 1. *Warns his disciples to take heed of hypocrisy, and of cowardice in professing Christianity and preaching the gospel,* ver. 1—12. 2. *He gives a caution against covetousness,* ver. 13—21. 3. *He encourageth his disciples to cast all their care upon God, and engageth them to make religion their main business,* ver. 22—34. 4. *He stirs them up to watchfulness,* ver. 35—48. 5. *He bids them expect trouble and persecution,* ver. 49—53. 6. *He warns the people to observe and improve the day of their opportunities, and to make their peace with God, in time,* ver. 54—59.

[a] Gen. 49. 10. ch. 5. 1, 15. & 6. 17. & 9. 11.

1. IN the mean time, [a] when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, [b] Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy. 2. [c] For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. 3. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. 4. And I say unto you, [d] my friends, [e] Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him which, after he hath killed, [f] hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. 6. Are not five [g] sparrows sold for two [g] farthings, and [h] not one of them is forgotten before God? 7. But [i] even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. [k] Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. 8. [l] Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: 9. [m] But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. 10. [n] And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven. 11. [o] And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, [p] take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: 12. [q] For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

[b] Mat. 16. 6—12. Mark 8. 15—21. 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8.
[c] Mark 4. 22. Mat. 10. 26. Job 12. 22. ch. 8. 17. Eccl. 12. 14. 1 Cor. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rom. 14. 12. Rev. 20. 11. 12.
[d] John 13. 1. & 15. 9, 14, 15. Eph. 5. 30.
[e] Mat. 10. 28—33. Is. 8. 12 & 51. 7. & 41. 10, 14. Jer. 1. 8, 17. 1 Pet. 3. 14. Rev. 14. 7. Eccl. 12. 13. Prov. 1. 7. & 23. 17.
[f] Ps. 9. 17. Mat. 25. 41. Rev. 1. 18. Is. 51. 3.
[g] See Mat. 10. 29.
[h] Acts 15. 18. Ps. 113. 5. & 50. 10, 11. & 145. 15, 16. & 147. 9.
[i] 1 Sam. 14. 45. 2 Sam. 14. 11. 1 Kin. 1. 52. Acts 27. 34. ch. 21. 18. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Phil. 4. 6.
[k] Mat. 10. 31. & 6. 26. 1 Cor. 9. 9. Ps. 8. 5. Is. 43. 1—3. & 41. 10—16. & 51. 7, 12.
[l] Mat. 10. 32. Rom. 10. 9, 10. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Ps. 119. 46. Acts 4. 19. Rev. 3. 5. 1 Sam. 2. 30. 1 Cor. 15. 58.
[m] Mat. 10. 33. Mark 8. 38. ch. 9. 26. 1 John 2. 23. Mat. 7. 23. & 25. 12, 41.
[n] Mat. 12. 31, 32. Mark 3. 28, 29. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. Heb. 7. 25. 1 John 1. 9. Ezek. 33. 11. ch. 23. 34. Acts 5. 31. with 1 John 5. 16. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 1 Sam. 2. 25.
[o] Mat. 10. 19. Mark 13. 11. ch. 21. 14, 15. Acts iv—xxv.
[p] Mat. 6. 34. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
[q] Ps. 46. 1. Gen. 22. 14. Exod. 4. 12, 15. 2 Sam. 23. 2. Is. 43. 1, 2. & 41. 10. & 48. 17. Jer. 1. 7. ch. 21. 14.

Verses 1—12. Our Lord inculcated the same truths on different occasions. We need line upon line and precept upon precept. A vast auditory was now assembled; and, as he was ever ready to speak when they desired to hear, he took occasion,

1. To caution his disciples in public against that hypocrisy of the Pharisees which he had just before so sharply rebuked in private. He calls it *the leaven of the Pharisees.* Their hearts, lips, and lives were wholly infected thereby: swollen with pride and self-importance, and soured with envy and malice, all their specious pretences to religion were but an abomination. Christ therefore warns his disciples to shun this hateful evil themselves, and not to be imposed upon by the fair professions of those designing men. And he urges, as a powerful argument, the sure detection of hypocrisy, either in this world, or in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. Their most retired communications, even the whispers in a closet, must all shortly be proclaimed before the assembled world. How careful then

need we be over every thought and word, considering that all-seeing and heart-searching God with whom we have to do.

2. He charges them to be faithful to their trust, and never to suppress, through fear or shame, one tittle of their message; but what they have learned of him in private, that must they boldly and publicly declare in the face of all opposition, and to encourage them to approve their fidelity unshaken, he addresses them, [1.] As his *friends*, whom he dearly loved, and would not fail to support under every trial. [2.] He lets them know, that the most inveterate malice of their foes can only reach the perishing body; they cannot touch the immortal soul. Better therefore, infinitely better would it be for them, by a steady testimony to the truth, bravely to put their lives in their hands, and meet, if the Lord so permitted, the worst death their enemies could inflict; than by a cowardly silence, or suppression of the offensive doctrines of the gospel, to provoke a jealous God, whose wrath reaches not only to the body but to the soul, sinking both into the flames of hell, and enduring to eternity. The fear of him should swallow up every other fear. [3.] That guardian providence, which watches over and orders the most minute events, would take peculiar care of them. Not a sparrow is forgotten of God, or falls unnoticed; yea, the very hairs of their head are numbered; their most envenomed foes cannot touch one of them without permission; therefore they need not fear what man can do unto them. [4.] According to their fidelity or unfaithfulness, so would they be owned or disowned by him at the last great day. They who, fearless of reproach or suffering, dared make confession of him in the world, shall be with honour acknowledged as his disciples, in the presence of angels at the resurrection of the just; whilst to decline bearing a testimony for him before men, to avoid loss or infamy, would infallibly provoke Jesus to renounce all relation to them, and expose them to everlasting shame and contempt in the dreadful day of judgment. When we are tempted to be ashamed of or to deny our profession, let us seriously remember this warning, and be wise. [5.] Contempt of their testimony, and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, would expose their persecutors to endless wrath. All the revilings now cast out against the Son of man in his state of humiliation were pardonable; but after his ascension, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, to ascribe the miracles they wrought in confirmation of the resurrection of Jesus to diabolical agency, would be to resist the only means of conviction, and must exclude such blasphemers from the possibility of repentance or forgiveness. [6.] In all emergencies, where they were called to answer before the tribunals of their persecutors, whether Jews or Gentiles, Christ undertakes to furnish them with a tongue and wisdom, which none of their adversaries shall be able to gainsay or resist. They need not take thought a moment what to speak in their own defence; the Holy Ghost should effectually furnish them with every thing proper for the occasion; and with such encouragements before them, they may boldly go forth, and fear not.

13. ¶ And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, [r] that he divide the inheritance with me. 14. And he said unto him, Man, [s] who made me a judge or a divider over you? 15. And he said unto them, [t] Take heed, and beware of covetousness: [u] for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. 16. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man [x] brought forth plentifully: 17. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do,* because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18. [y] And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19. And I will say to my soul, [z] Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; [a] take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. 20. [b] But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night † thy soul shall be required of thee: [c] then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? 21. [d] So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

r Ps. 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19. John 6. 26. 1 Tim. 6. 5, 9, 10.
s Exod. 2. 14. John 18. 36.
t Ch. 21. 34. & 8. 14. 1 Cor. 5. 11. Col. 3. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 7—11, 17—19. Heb. 13. 5. Eph. 5. 3. 1 Thes. 2. 5. Hab. 2. 9. Ps. 119. 36, 37. Prov. 28. 16.
u Mat. 6. 25. Eccl. 4. 6. & 5. 10, 12, 13, 17, 19. & 6. 2. Prov. 17. 1. & 15. 16, 17. & 26. 16. Ps. 37. 16.
x Job 12. 6. Mat. 5. 45. Acts 1. 17. Job 21. 7—12. Ps. 73. 3—12.

* 'What shall I do?' Give it to the poor, that shouldst thou do.—*Basil.*
y Ps. 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19. Jam. 3. 15. & 4. 4.
z Job 14. 1. Prov. 27. 1.
a Eccl. 11. 9. Is. 22. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 15. 32. Jam. 5. 5.
b Dan. 4. 31. 1 Thes. 5. 3. Job 21. 13.
† Or *do they require thy soul.*
c Job 20. 20, 22. & 27. 8. Ps. 39. 6. & 52. 7. Jer. 17. 11. Ps. 49. 7.
d Mat. 6. 20. ver. 33. Hos. 10. 1. 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18.

Verses 13—21. We have here,

1. The application made to Christ by one of the company, desiring him, as a person of authority, to interpose on his behalf with his brother, who either unjustly kept him out of his part of the inheritance, or being the elder, and having by law a double portion, this worldly minded man would fain come in for an equal share.

2. Christ refuses to interpose. The exercise of temporal power and authority did not belong to that kingdom he came to establish; nay, had he interfered, they would have perhaps made it a ground of accusation, and quarrelled with him for daring to make himself a ruler and a judge. (See Exod. ii. 14.)

3. He takes occasion from this unreasonable application, to warn his disciples against the great sin and danger of covetousness, which being a most insinuating evil, they had need carefully guard their hearts against it. Men are apt to fancy, that this world's goods are most essential to happiness; but *a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth*, they conduce nothing to the spiritual satisfaction of the soul; they cannot prolong our lives a day, an hour; nay, instead of being comforts to us, they often prove a plague and snare here below; besides all the hinderances they put in our way, to obstruct our entrance into the kingdom of heaven. To give the greater force to his admonition, he illustrates it by a striking example.

The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. (Χωρα *a region.*) His estate was vast, as the produce of it was abundant. These common gifts of providence the evil and unthankful often enjoy in the largest measure; but we may not judge of God's love or of real felicity from hence. The *rich* man is far from being usually the *happy* man. We are told,

[1.] What anxious cares his wealth occasioned. *He thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?* He appears as full of perplexity as if he knew not where to get another morsel to satisfy the cravings of hunger. Such is the usual effect of increasing wealth; it brings an increase of cares and disquietude.

[2.] The result of his thoughts was this: *I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods;* a resolution, that spoke great folly, as well as ungodliness. He calls those *his* fruits, which were really but lent him of the Lord. To hoard up *all*, when so many empty barns of the poor, and hungry bellies might have charitably eased him of somewhat of his load of plenty, was vilely covetous. To call these his *goods*, which must perish in the using, proved his utter ignorance of a better portion. *Greater barns* would only bring greater expense and greater care, besides the plague of building; and his presumptuous *I will*, showed he left God far above out

of his sight. So ready are they who trust in uncertain riches to forget the living God.

[3.] He flatters himself with the most pleasing prospects, when his schemes were completed, of sitting down and enjoying at ease the store he had collected. *I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* How absurd the conclusion? Could *his* soul relish the gratifications of a beast, or feel any satisfaction from the indulgence of appetite? The wealth of the world, and the pleasures of sense, are not a portion at all suited to its wants: these God alone, with a sense of his love and favour, can supply. He promised himself *many years* to enjoy his affluence, when he knew not what a day might bring forth: and insured the safety of his goods, when in the shortest space fire or tempest might lay his storehouses in ruins: so precarious are all our earthly possessions. But if he saw his barns rise, and brooded over his plenty, *ease* was what he could no more secure to his body than his soul. All his fruits and his goods could no more alleviate the pains of an aching head, than cure the pangs of an aching heart. One stroke of sickness or disease must embitter all his abundance, and leave him pining in the midst of plenty: one unhappy incident in his family might forbid him to taste the least satisfaction in all his affluence. So poor, so precarious a portion is all sublunary good.

[4.] God suddenly confounds his schemes, and blasts his hopes. He said unto him, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* Death in a moment darkens all the gay prospect, and dashes the gaudy bubble which flattering hope had blown. The day is near, when every carnal worldling, whom men admired as *wise*, and praised as *doing well for himself*, (Psal. xliv. 18.) shall feel with terrible conviction his egregious folly, and hear *thou fool* pronounced upon him by the lips of eternal wisdom. The affluence of the wicked must quickly change its owner, and nothing remain for them but a dreary grave, and a certain fearful looking for of judgment. Death, whenever it comes to them, will be a terrible surprise; a dreadful night of horror will surround them; and, dragged reluctant from the body, their soul, their guilty soul, must go where riches profit not to bribe a verdict in their favour, nor can all their wealth procure one drop of water to cool their tongue in those eternal flames which never shall be quenched.

[5.] Our Lord applies the parable in general to every worldly minded man, *that layeth up treasure for himself;* sets his heart upon riches; expects his happiness from them; and all whose concerns are engrossed merely about himself, without a regard to God's glory, or care for his neighbour: *and is not rich towards God:* destitute of the treasures of grace, and without the least title to the eternal inheritance; *so is he;* so absurd are his schemes, so fruitless his cares, and so miserable will be his end. Let us be warned therefore in time, and not foolishly prefer gold to godliness, the body to the soul, and time to eternity.

22. ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, [c] Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. 23 [f] The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment. 24. [g] Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls? 25. [h] And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? * 26. If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? 27. Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that [i] Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28. If then God so clothe the grass, [k] which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, [l] O ye of little faith? 29. And [m] seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, ‡ neither be ye of doubtful mind. 30. [n] For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: [o] and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 31. [p] But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and [q] all these things shall be added unto you. 32. [q] Fear not, [r] little flock; for [s] it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33. ¶ [t] Sell that ye have, and give alms; [u] provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. 34. [x] For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 35. ¶ [y] Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning; 36. [z] And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from [a] the wedding; that when [b] he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. 37. [c] Blessed *are* those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. 38. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. 39. [d] And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. 40. [e] Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

e Mat. 6. 25—34. Ps. 55. 22. 1 Cor. 7. 32. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 8. Heb. 13. 4.

f Job 2. 4, 6. & 1. 12. Prov. 13. 8. & 6. 26.

g Mat. 6. 26. Job 38. 41. Ps. 104. 27, 28. & 145. 15, 16. & 147. 9.

h Mat. 6. 27. Ps. 75. 6. Eccl. 9. 11.

* The word here rendered *stature*, signifies also *age*, or *life-time*.

i 1 Kin. iv, ix, x. 2 Chr. i, viii, ix.

k Ps. 129. 6. & 102. 4. Is. 40. 6, 7. 1 Pet. 1. 24.

l Is. 50. 10. ch. 14. 31. Mark 9. 24.

m Ver. 22. Mat. 6. 25, 31. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Ps. 55. 22

‡ Or *live not in careful suspense.*

n Ps. 4. 6. & 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19. Rom. 8. 5. Mat. 5. 46, 47. & 6. 32.

o 2 Chr. 16. 9. Ps. 23. 1. Phil. 4. 19.

p Mat. 6. 33. John 6. 27. 1 Tim. 4. 8. 1 Kin. 3. 11—13. Ps. 24. 9, 10. & 37. 8, 19, 25, 29. & 84. 11. ch. 10. 42. 1 Cor. 3. 22. Rom. 8. 31, 32.

q Is. 35. 3, 4. & 41. 10, 14. & 43. 1, 2. Rev. 1. 17.

r Mat. 7. 14. & 20. 16. & 22. 14. Is. 40. 11. Ezek. 34. 31.

s Mat. 7. 11. Eph. 1. 3—7. Jer. 5. 19. Heb. 12. 28. 2 Pet. 1. 11. Rom. 6. 23. Mat. 11. 25, 26.

t Mat. 19. 21. Acts 2. 45. & 4. 34. 2 Cor. 8. 2. ch. 16. 9.

u Mat. 6. 19—21. ch. 16. 9. & 18. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 17—19.

x Mat. 6. 21. Col. 3. 1—3. Phil. 3. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 18.

y Eph. 6. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 13. Mat. 5. 16. Prov. 4. 18. & 21. 18.

z Gen. 49. 18. Ps. 62. 1, 5. & 130. 5, 6. & 123. 2

a Mat. 22. 1—13. & 25. 1—12.

b Mat. 24. 42—45. Song 5. 2. Rev. 3. 20. Ps. 24. 7. 9.

c Mat. 24. 46—51. Rev. 16. 15. Lam. 3. 25, 26. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

d Mat. 24. 43. 1 Thes. 5. 2, 3. Rev. 16. 15. & 3. 3. 2 Pet. 3. 10.

e Mat 24. 42, 44. & 25. 10, 13. Rom. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 16. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Mark 13. 33—37 ch. 21. 34—36. 2. Pet. 3. 12. Rev. 16. 15. & 21. 2. & 19. 7.

Verses 22—40. The foregoing instructions we have considered before in the other Evangelists; but they are of such importance, as to deserve our hearing once, yea twice, that they may be graven on our hearts; for nothing is a more fatal snare to the soul, than inordinate desire after the wealth of this world.

1. Christ enjoins his disciples, to cast their care upon God, and never to disquiet or perplex themselves about a worldly pro-

vision, *anxious solicitude* being as criminal as *sensual indulgence*. We must *take no thought* about the necessaries of life, disquieting ourselves with the fears of hunger or nakedness; but in the way of duty cheerfully trust him with our support, who gave us our being, ver. 23. Even the ravens are fed by his providence, and the lily is clothed with beauty, such as Solomon arrayed in all his glory could not vie with: and shall he not much more feed and clothe us, who in excellence, as creatures, are so much better, and as his peculiar people, are so much dearer to him? The cause of all our anxious cares and fears is our unbelief: not that our solicitude will mend our circumstances; it is as useless as it is needless. We cannot add to our *stature* a cubit, or to our *age* a day; and if in the least things all our thoughts must be unavailing, why should we distress ourselves about the rest? Dependent therefore on the Divine Providence, we need not be distressed, perplexed, and fluctuating like meteors, about a subsistence; for this would show we had no more confidence in God than heathens, and intimate the most criminal distrust of the power and care of him we call our *Father*, who knows all our wants, is able to supply them, and hath engaged that we shall want no manner of thing that is truly good for us. We have indeed greater things in view than food and raiment, even *the kingdom of God*, the blessings of grace and glory: these must engage our first concern, and then we may safely trust the Lord with all our temporal affairs.

2. He encourages them not to fear want, when they are the assured heirs of their eternal King. *Fear not, little flock*, Christ's children are like a *flock*, united in love under their kind shepherd's care: *a little flock*; few compared with the world which lieth in wickedness: yet though compassed with enemies, they need *not fear*; their Redeemer is mighty as he is gracious. *It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*; a kingdom of glory that fadeth not away; the gift of sovereign grace, bestowed not according to our desert, but the good pleasure of his own will; and if he hath provided a throne in the heavens, we may rest assured he will not leave us to want on earth. Instead therefore of desiring to hoard unnecessary wealth, or being under anxiety about food or raiment, our hearts and hands should be open, according to our abilities, to relieve the necessitous: and, when God's providence calls for it, ready to part with all we possess, sending it before us, as the surest and most abiding portion, which will enrich us in the eternal world, where it will be incorruptible and inexhaustible. This will raise our affections to high and heavenly things, and then where our treasure is, our heart will be.

3. He bids them prepare for the day when he, their Master, shall come to take them with him to the mansions provided for them, and to partake of the pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore. Christ, our Master, is gone up to heaven, to prepare for himself his spouse, the church: we are his servants, appointed to watch till his return, and to be ready to meet him, the oil of grace burning in our lamps, and our souls active in his service. As many as he finds thus expecting him, and welcoming his arrival, he will reward with distinguished blessedness, and entertain them with all the unutterable delights of the eternal world, taking them with him to sit down in the kingdom of God. As the time of Christ's coming is uncertain, like the wise householder, we need be habitually on our guard, and awake with the first alarm, that we may not be unexpectedly surprised, as by a thief in the night; *for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not*, and wo to those whom he finds sleeping in sin and carnal security.

41. ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable [f] unto us, or even to all? 42. And the Lord said, [g] Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season? 43. [h] Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 44. Of a truth I say unto you, that he [i] will make him ruler over all that he hath. 45. But [k] and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin [l] to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken: 46. [m] The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will * cut him in sunder, and [n] will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. † 47. [o] And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. 48. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. 49. ¶ [p] I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? ‡ 50. But [q] I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I [r] straitened till it be accomplished! 51. [s] Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division. 52. For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. 53. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. §

f Mark 13. 37. & 14. 34, 38.
g Mat. 24. 45. & 25. 21, 23. ch. 19. 17, 19. 1 Cor. 4. 2. John 21. 15—17. Acts 20. 28. Gal. 6. 10. Eph. 4. 11—13. Heb. 3. 5. & 13. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 2.
h Rev. 16. 15. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. ver. 37.
i See ver. 42. ch. 19. 17, 19. & 22. 29, 30. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Dan. 12. 2, 8.
k Mat. 24. 48. 2 Pet. 2. 3, 4. Ezek. 12. 22—28.
l Is. 65. 5. 3 John 9, 10. 2 Cor. 11. 26. Gal. 4. 17, 18. Phil. 3. 18, 19.
m Mat. 24. 42, 44, 50, 51. 1 Thes. 5. 2, 3. Rev. 16. 15. John 5. 28, 29.
* Or *cut him off.*
n Job 20. 29. Ps. 11. 6. Mat. 7. 22, 23. & 8. 11, 12. & 13. 42, 50.
† Or *with the faithless.*
o Mat. 11. 21—24. ch. 10. 12—15. John 9. 41. & 15. 22. Acts 17. 30. Jam. 4. 17. Num. 15. 30. Deut. 25. 2. Lev. 5. 17.
p Ver. 51—53. Mat. 10. 34—36. & 16. 24, 25. & 24. 9, 10.
‡ Better thus, *what would I, but that it were kindled?*
q Mat. 20. 22. & 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19, 28. & 21. 39. & xxvi, xxvii. John xviii, xix. ch. xxii, xxiii.
r Or *pained.* Ps. 40. 8. John 18. 11. Acts 21. 13. He desired, and delighted, to suffer unto death for our redemption.
s Mat. 10. 34—36, 21. Mic. 7. 5, 6. Jer. 9. 4. Acts 13. 44, 45. & 28. 24. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13, 14. John 13. 18. & 15. 19, 19. & 16. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 26. Acts iv—xxv. John 9. 16. & 10. 19.
§ Infidels have confidently alleged these consequences of the promulgation of Christianity as so many objections to its divine original, wilfully forgetting that 'thus it was written, and 'thus it must be.'—*Scott.*

Verses 41—53. Peter, the warm-hearted disciple, the ready spokesman, desires to know if our Lord's discourse was directed to the apostles in particular, or to all the disciples in general. Hereupon,

1. Christ replies to his question. What he had spoken had both a general view to all the disciples, and was particularly applicable to them who were advanced to the most honoured posts, as stewards of the Lord's household. (1.) Their *duty* was, as put in trust with the care of men's souls, to be wise and faithful dispensers of the gospel, and the instituted ordinances of grace; considering the several cases and states of those to whom they ministered, and seasonably and rightly dividing to each the word of truth, for their conviction, edification, or comfort. (2.) The *blessedness* of fidelity would be great: whosoever shall be found at Christ's appearing thus zealously, diligently, persever-

ingly employed, shall be highly advanced by him in glory, and placed, like Joseph in Egypt, at the king's right hand. (3.) As great will be the *misery*, sin, and danger of those who shall be found unfaithful. It is shocking to think there should be such a character as a minister of Christ in profession, quarrelsome, oppressive, abusive, profane, drunken; yet such there have been, there will be; and the cause of these, and the like enormities, is intimated: such a one saith, *My Lord delayeth his coming*, and therefore in security goes on; negligent and treacherous to his trust, and insensible to the awful account he must shortly make. But such insensibility retards not the approach of danger, the dreadful hour of reckoning draws near, the judge will suddenly and unexpectedly appear, and pronounce their tremendous doom: according to the light and advantages they have enjoyed, shall be the measure of their punishment. The stripes shall be fewer, where through ignorance men have erred and offended; whilst the heaviest strokes of vengeance shall fall on those who have abused the greatest gift, and, in opposition to knowledge and conscience, have been unfaithful to their trust: and this is agreeable to the strictest rules of equity, that where a greater trust hath been committed, a proportionable improvement should be required; whilst unfaithfulness and negligence in such a case, become more aggravatedly criminal.

2. Christ admonishes them of the fiery trials which he and they must go through. His gospel, though breathing the spirit of peace and love, yet being so opposite to the pride and prejudices of men, would give occasion to the bitterest animosities and persecutions. This fire was already kindled in the rancour shown him by the Scribes and Pharisees; but will he desist from his glorious undertaking, or suppress the offensive truths? No, in no wise. Since by no other means, than the sufferings he foresaw, the salvation of his people could be obtained, he willingly offers himself to the bloody baptism before him, eagerly longing for the time when it should be accomplished in the garden and on the cross. How astonishing his love towards us! He forewarns his disciples, that they must expect their cross also; for from that temporal kingdom of peace and prosperity with which they flattered themselves, war and tumult are before them. The gospel they preached would be opposed with the fiercest rage of men and devils, and the greatest miseries and confusions be the consequence. Even amongst nearer relations it would occasion the most grievous divisions: in families where part should be converted, and part remain in their sins, the bitterest animosities would arise in the bosoms of those who rejected the counsel of God. And such will be their enmity against those who embrace the truth, that it will break through all ties of blood, duty, and friendship; making the father unnatural, the son undutiful; even in the hearts of those whose softer sex should breathe greater mildness, the spirit of superstition and bigotry will quench all natural affection, so that even parents shall persecute their children, and children their parents; exasperated by the reproof of their holy lives, and inflamed with rage at the gentlest remonstrances, and the most endearing persuasions of those who labour for their conversion. And thus it continues to this day, and must to the end of the world; let us not think it strange.

54. ¶ And he said also to the people, [t] When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. 55. And [u] when *ye see* the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. 56. [x] *Ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern [y] this time? 57. [z] Yea and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? 58. ¶ [a] When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. 59. I tell thee, [b] thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last [c] mite.

t Mat. 16. 2. Job 36. 27—33. 1 Kin. 18. 44.
u Job 37. 17.
x Mat. 16. 3. Rom. 1. 21, 22. 1 Cor. 1. 19—24, 26, 27. Mat. 11. 25. & 24. 32. John 4. 35.
y Gal. 4. 4. ch. 19. 42, 44. Is. 63. 4. & 61. 2. Dan. 9. 24—26. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 2. Hag. 2. 7. ch. 19. 42, 44.
z Deut. 4. 29. & 32. 29. Ps. 94. 9.
a Mat. 5. 23—26. Gen. 32. 3—20. 1 Sam. 25. 28. Prov. 25. 8, 9. with Ps. 32. 6. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Heb. 3. 7—13. ch. 14. 31, 42. Is. 55. 6. Job 22. 21. John 5. 22. Mark 13. 41.
b Mat. 5. 26. Prov. 25. 8. with Mat. 25. 41, 46. 2 Thes. 1.
c Not quite the tenth part of a farthing. Mark 12. 42.

Verses 54—59. The former discourse was addressed to the disciples, this to the multitude.

1. Christ upbraids them for their stupidity and perverseness in not attending to, or rejecting the evidences of his mission. They judged what weather there would be by the prognostics which experience had taught them; how inexcusable then were they not to discern *this time*, fixed for the Messiah's appearing; and how hypocritical and false their pretences to wisdom and knowledge of the prophets, when they disregarded or perverted the plainest declarations of the scriptures, concerning the birth, family, life, doctrine, and kingdom of the Messiah, and thus knew not the day of their visitation! Amazing, that they should not, even of themselves, discern what was right, where the evidence was so cogent; and that whilst they showed observation and judgment in matters of less concern, in this of infinitely greater moment to their souls, they should act so strangely infatuated!

2. He admonishes them of the necessity of a speedy accommodation of their matters with an offended God before it be too late. As common prudence would dictate the necessity of seeking an amicable agreement with our adversary, rather than push matters to extremities where the cause must infallibly be carried against us, and a prison be the issue of the trial; much more should we, in the matters of our souls, show greater concern to obtain reconciliation with God, who, by our sins, is become our adversary. To attempt our own justification before him, were folly: as to escape from his sentence, is impossible. Whilst, therefore, we are *in the way* of life, our wisdom is to cast ourselves at his feet, acknowledging our offences; and through faith in Jesus, our surety, to plead for mercy, lest death should drag us to his dread tribunal in unpardoned guilt, and the ministers of vengeance seize us in consequence of the judgment pronounced, and cast into the prison of hell; where even eternal torments can never satisfy offended justice, or cancel the infinite debt of sin.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The good improvement Christ made of the massacre of some Galileans,* ver. 1—5. 2. *The parable of the barren fig-tree,* ver. 6—9. 3. *Christ's healing a poor infirm woman on the sabbath-day,* ver. 10—17. 4. *A repetition of the parables of the grain of mustard-seed, and the leaven,* ver. 18—22. 5. *His answer to the question concerning the number of the saved,* ver. 23—30. 6. *The slight he put upon Herod's malice and menaces, and the doom of Jerusalem read,* ver. 31—35.

1. THERE were present at that season some that told him of the [a] Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. * 2. And Jesus answering said unto them, [b] Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans,

a Acts 5. 37.
* Perhaps the story of the Galileans might now be mentioned unto Christ, with the design of leading him into a snare, whether he would justify or condemn the persons that were slain.—*Doddridge.*
b Job 5. 6, 7. Acts 28. 4. Mat. 7. 1.

because they suffered such things? 3. I tell you, Nay: but, [c] except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 4. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were [d] sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? 5. I tell you, [e] Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

c Ver. 5. John 3. 3, 5. ch. 19. 27, 42—44. & 21. 24. Mat. 3. 10, 12. & 12. 45. & 21. 41, 44. & 22. 7. & 23. 35—39. & xxiv. Mark xiii. Deut. 28. 52—58.

d Or *debtors*. Mat. 6. 12. & 18. 24. ch. 7. 41. & 11. 4.

e Exod. 4. 8. Is. 28. 10, 13. Mic. 6. 9 Ezek. 18. 30. & 7. 3, 4.

Verses 1—5. We have here,

1. A tragical story reported to our Lord by some who were present. Probably these Galileans had been followers of Judas of Galilee, Acts v. 37. of whom Pilate having got information, fell upon them when they came up to the temple to worship, and mingled their blood with their sacrifices. Perhaps what our Lord had been speaking of the necessity of always watching, and the importance of securing peace with God, gave occasion to the remark: or, as it seems from the sequel, they meant to insinuate, that these must needs be very wicked persons, who were given up to so dreadful a judgment.

2. Jesus seeks to turn this event to their profiting, and to ground thereon an exhortation to repentance. He reproves the uncharitable censure they seemed to cast on these unhappy men, as if their crimes had brought them to this untimely death, whereas such afflictive visitations were no proof of guilt; the best of men have sometimes suffered most. Nor may we judge of God's love or hatred to any man by the outward dispensations of his providence. If they meant to reflect on them as Galileans, and thereby to throw some reproach on Christ and his disciples, who were their countrymen, Christ instances a recent calamity of as melancholy a nature which lately happened at Jerusalem, when eighteen persons were suddenly crushed to death by the fall of a tower at Siloam; so that these calamities were not singular, or confined to persons in one place more than another; nor were they to conclude, that these men perished because they were greater sinners than others in Galilee or Jerusalem. But he solemnly warns them, that a heavier doom hung over their heads except they repented; when their blood too should be shed by the Roman sword in the midst of their sacred solemnities, and they be buried as the men in the tower of Siloam, under the ruins of their city, and perish temporally and eternally; and this is applicable to every sinner. (1.) His desert is to perish under the wrath of God. (2.) Nothing but repentance can prevent his ruin. (3.) The judgments of God on others are loud warnings to us. (4.) Consciousness of our own sinfulness and provocations, should make us very careful how we censure others. (5.) They who are severe in judging, may expect judgment without mercy.

6. ¶ He spake also this parable: A certain *man* had [f] a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. 7. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, [g] Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? 8. And he answering said unto him, Lord, [h] let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it:* 9. And if it bear fruit, *well:* and if not, *then* [i] after that thou shalt cut it down.

f Is. 5. 1—4. Ps. 80. 8—13. Jer. 2. 21. Mat. 21. 19, 20, 33—41. Ezek. xv.

g Rom. 2. 4, 5. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Hos. 10. 1, 2. Is. 5. 4—7. Ezek. xv. John 15. 2, 8.

h Exod. 32. 11. Jer. 18. 20. Joel 2. 17. Heb. 7. 25. ch. 23. 34.

i Jer. 18. 21. & 15. 1. & 7. 16. Ps. 21. 8—12. & 69. 22—28.

Verses 6—9. This parable is designed to enforce the foregoing admonition. It seems primarily to be applicable to the Jewish people, blessed with peculiar advantages, but disappointing God's expectations; yet spared a little longer at the Redeemer's intercession, till having tried them another space, and used in vain the most powerful means for their conversion in the mission of his apostles, at last he devotes them to utter ruin for their unbelief and impenitence, cutting them down as a barren tree, and casting them into the fire. But whatever reference the parable hath to them, it is of more extensive use, as containing a warning to all who enjoy the means of grace; and who, if they are not converted by them, will fall under heavier wrath and condemnation.

1. Great were the advantages this fig-tree enjoyed. It was planted *in a vineyard*, in the best soil, and under the owner's peculiar care and culture. The church is the vineyard of God, every visible member hath a place there, sitting under the rain of gospel doctrine, and blest with the ministerial labours of Christ's faithful servants.

2. The owner justly expected to find fruit on this tree, as the Lord doth from all who have a place in his church, of whom he requires the fruits of grace and holiness, as well as the leaves of profession.

3. Great was the disappointment: *he found none*, and therefore complains to the vine-dresser how long he had waited, and how useless was this tree which impoverished the ground, and occupied the room of one that might be profitable. With much more reason may the Lord complain of many professors, who bring him no honour, and continue barren and unfruitful. He comes from year to year, for three, for thirty, yea, sometimes for threescore years together: so wonderful is his patience and forbearance, and finds them still *cumberers of the ground*, whose ill example is more extensively pernicious the longer they are permitted to stand.

4. He dooms it to fall, *cut it down;* since the tree bore no fruit, it was only fit for the flames. Such is the awful sentence of God against the impenitent sinner; *cut him down*, and death is ready to lift the axe, and cast body and soul into the fire of hell. How awful, how alarming the thought!

5. The vine-dresser begs another year; if it be spared, he will take fresh pains it may yet bear, and then all will be well; but if not, he consents to leave the tree to its just doom. Christ is this vine-dresser; at his intercession are sinners spared, and every minister under him fails not in like manner to be an advocate for those among whom he labours. But, (1.) If through the intercession of Jesus our lives are prolonged and we have yet another year granted, we should know and improve the day of our visitation. The time is short, reprieves are not pardons; though we are spared ever so long, if we continue in our sins, we must perish at the last. (2.) Whilst the Lord spares the sinner, ministers must never be weary of labouring, and should try every method; digging up the heart by the terrors of the law, and seeking to dung it with the quickening manure of the gospel. (3.) It is never too late to amend; the most barren and unfruitful, who by grace at last are turned to God, will find mercy with him; the past transgressions shall be forgiven, the present service accepted, and all shall be well. (4.) God's patience, though it bear long, will not bear always; they who provoke and grieve his holy Spirit by their obstinate impenitence, will at last be left to the destruction they have chosen, and every day of his forbearance which they have abused, shall add a treasure of wrath against the day of wrath.

10. ¶ [k] And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. 11. And, behold, there was a woman, who had a [l] spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no

k Ch. 4. 15, 16, 44.

l Ver. 16. Mat. 15. 22. & 17. 15. ch. 14. 2. John 5. 5, 6. & 9. 19—21. Acts 3. 2. & 4. 22. & 14. 8—10.

wise lift up *herself*. 12. And when Jesus saw her, [m] he called *her* to *him*, and [n] said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. 13. And he [o] laid *his* hands on her: [p] and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. 14. And [q] the ruler of the synagogue answered [r] with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, [s] There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. 15. The Lord then answered him, and said, [t] *Thou* hypocrite, [u] doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering? 16. And ought not this woman, being [x] a daughter of Abraham, whom [y] Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, [z] be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? 17. And when he had said these things, [a] all his adversaries were ashamed: [b] and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

m Is. 65. 1. Mat. 11. 28.
n Ps. 107. 20. Rom. 4. 17. ch. 5. 20, 24. & 7. 14. & 6. 10. & 8. 54. & 18. 42.
o Ch. 5. 13. & 6. 19. & 8. 44. Mark 7. 33. & 8. 25. & 16. 18.
p Num. 23. 19. Ps. 33. 29. ch. 18. 43. & 7. 15, 16. Ps. 103. 1—5. & 116. 12. & 115. 1, 3.
q Mat. 9. 18. Acts 13. 15.
r Rom. 10. 2. Gal. 4. 17.
s Exod. 20. 9. & 23. 12. Lev. 23. 3. Deut. 5. 13. Ezek. 20. 12. ch. 6. 7. & 14. 3.
t Mat. 7. 5. & 23. 13—27. Is. 29. 13.
u Mat. 12. 10, 11. ch. 14. 3, 5. John 7. 23. Deut. 22. 4.
x Ch. 19. 9. & 3. 8. Gen. 17. 7.
y John 8. 44. Eph. 2. 2. Mark 9. 17, 18, 21, 22, 26.
z Is. 49. 24—26. Mark 2. 27. & 3. 4. Mat. 12. 11, 12.
a Ch. 14. 6. Ps. 40. 14.
b Ch. 7. 16. Mat. 9. 33. Acts 3. 9—11.

Verses 10—17. Christ was an unwearied preacher, and, as usual, was now in the synagogue on the sabbath-day. To confirm the doctrine he taught, we are told,

1. The notable miracle he wrought on an infirm woman who was present. Her case was very pitiable; under the power of Satan her body was so convulsed and contracted, that she was bent double, and could not stand erect: and as the disorder had been of so long standing as eighteen years, all hope of a cure was desperate. Yet she made a shift to crawl to the synagogue, and did not as many might have done, make her weakness, or deformity a plea for absenting from God's worship. There the compassionate eye of Jesus remarked her unhappy situation; and, unsolicited, he called and cured her, loosing her from Satan's bonds, and enabling her instantly to stand upright: for which she most heartily expressed her gratitude, glorifying and praising God for this extraordinary and unexpected mercy. *Note*, (1.) So weak and infirm are our souls by nature, unable to lift up their affections to high and heavenly things, and never bowed down to earthly sensual objects. (2.) Christ seeks us, not we him, and is pleased to call to us in the gospel word, that coming to him we might be cured. (3.) The powerful hand of his grace effectually relieves the soul from the bondage of guilt and corruption; and when at any time we are afterwards bowed down with fear, and go heavily through manifold temptations, he giveth strength to the weak. (4.) It will be the delight and duty of all who experience his healing, to glorify him in their lips and in their lives, walking upright before him.

2. The envious and malicious ruler of the synagogue, instead of glorifying God for the miracle, hardened with bigotry and prejudice, sharply reprimanded the people, as if the sabbath was violated by their coming to be healed on that day. *Note*, They who resolve to find fault, and not to be convinced, will cavil against the most glaring evidence.

3. Our Lord justifies his own conduct, and upbraids him with his hypocrisy. The zeal he pretended for the sabbath was a mere pretence, to hide that enmity which raged in his heart against Christ and his gospel. His own daily practice condemned and confuted his unreasonable and uncharitable censures. None of those who most rigidly observed the sabbath, thought it any breach of the sacred rest, to loose his beast from the stall, and lead him to water. And if an ox, or an ass might have such pains bestowed on them on the sabbath, with how much greater reason did mercy and charity plead, that a human creature, a daughter of Abraham too, bound by Satan's power, and so long and so grievously afflicted, should be relieved, when without the least labour it could be done by a single word?

4. The argument was most conclusive, and confusion covered his adversaries; whilst all the people, who were struck with wonder at his miracles, and the force of his reasoning, rejoiced at these glorious works of power and grace which they beheld. *Note*, Sooner or later all the foes of Christ and his people shall be confounded, and all his faithful triumph in his great salvation.

18. ¶ Then said he, Unto what is the [c] kingdom of God like? [d] and whereunto shall I resemble it. 19. It is like a grain of mustard-seed which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. 20. ¶ And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21. [e] It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three [f] measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. 22. [g] And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

c Acts 1. 3. ch. 17. 20, 21.
d Mat. 13. 31, 32. Mark 4. 30—32. Job 8. 7. Is. 60. 22. & 2. 2—4. & xlix, liv, lx. Ezek. 47. 1—12. Dan. 2. 44. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20—23. & xiv. Acts i—xix. Ps. 80. 8—11. Prov. 4. 18. Job 17. 9.
e Mat. 13. 33. Rom. 1. 14, 16. 1 Cor. 9. 22, 23. Ps. 72. 16—19. & 119. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 23.
f See Mat. 13. 33.
g Mat. 9. 35. ch. 4. 43, 44. Acts 10. 38. Mark 6. 6.

Verses 18—22. We have here,

1. Two parables which were before recorded, Matt. xiii. 31. representing the gradual increase of Christ's church, and the secret, but effectual spreading of the gospel leaven. Though the beginnings were small, as the grain of mustard-seed when sown; yet, in process of time, like a fair spreading tree, the kingdom of the Messiah would be erected throughout all the world; and Gentiles, as well as Jews, flock into it. And like leaven, though no external force be employed, the doctrines of truth would insensibly, but powerfully work, till their influence was diffused through all the earth.

2. Our Lord continued his course towards Jerusalem, preaching and teaching in all the cities and villages as he journeyed. Wherever providence directs our way, we should be glad to improve every opportunity to speak a word for the good of immortal souls.

23. ¶ Then said one unto him, Lord, [h] are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, 24. * [i] Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, [k] will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. 25. [l] When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: 26. Then shall ye begin to say, [m] We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in

h Mat. 20. 16. & 22. 14. & 19. 25. & 7. 14.
* Gr. *Strive as in agony.*
i Mat. 7. 13, 14. & 11. 12. John 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2. Heb. 2. 3.
k John 8. 21. & 7. 34. & 13. 33. Rom. 9. 31. & 10. 2, 3.
l Is. 55. 6. Mat. 25. 10, 12. & 7. 21—23. ch. 6. 46. Ps. 32. 6.
m Is. 58. 2. Heb. 6. 4, 5. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16.

our streets. 27. [n] But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all *ye* workers of iniquity. 28. [o] There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out. 29. [p] And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. 30. [q] And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

n Mat. 7. 23. & 25. 12, 41. Ps. 1. 6. & 5. 6. & 6. 8. Hos. 11. 12. Hab. 1. 13. with 1 Cor. 8. 2. Gal. 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 19.
o Mat. 8. 11, 12. & 13. 42. & 22. 13. & 24. 5. ch. 16. 23. Rev. 21. 8. & 22. 15.
p Gen. 28. 14. Ps. 22. 27—31. & lxxii. 1-4. 2—4. & 11. 10. & 42. 6. & 43. 6 & 49. 6. & liv, lx. Mal. i, ii. Rom. 15. 9—19. & 11. 11, 12. Acts x—xix. & 22. 21. & 26. 17—23. & 28. 28. Eph. 3. 6—8. Col. 1. 6, 23. Mark 13. 27.
q Mat. 19. 30. & 20. 16. & 3. 9, 10. & 8. 11, 12.

Verses 23—30. We have here,

1. The question put to our Lord, *Are there few that shall be saved?* Perhaps the design of it was captious, to represent him as rigid and uncharitable, or it might be mere curiosity; many being more inquisitive who shall be saved, and who not, than about what they must do to secure their own salvation.

2. Our Lord answers the question in a way which seemed most profitable for the inquirer, directing him at least to give diligence to insure the salvation of his own soul.

(1.) His exhortation is, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate;* the way to heaven is difficult; ten thousand obstructions, both without and within, straiten the passage; great diligence and incessant prayer, therefore, are needful; that strengthened by power from on high, we may be able to hold on, and to hold out, and so to run as to obtain the prize.

(2.) He enforces his exhortation by various motives, [1.] *Many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able,* willing indeed to go to heaven, but unwilling to use the necessary means; resting in cold formality, or lazy endeavours; bound with the fetters of sloth, or blinded with pride and self-righteousness, and so mistaking the way, or coming short of the kingdom. [2.] If the present moment be neglected, it will shortly be too late. The door of mercy through the gospel, which is now open, will shortly be shut, when Jesus the master of the house, in death or judgment, requires the sinner's soul: and then the most importunate cries will be unavailing: it is now or never that prayer can profit us. [3.] Many who entertained the most confident hopes of heaven, will be found to have a lie in their right hand. They will knock as if they had a right to admission, plead relation to Christ as their Lord, that they were constant attendants on his word, and communicants at his table, yet will Christ utterly disown them in that day, and drive them with indignation from his presence, as *workers of iniquity;* whatever pretences to religion they made, their hearts were not right with him; their professions were hypocritical, and secret sins were harboured, delighted in, and gratified. Doomed, therefore, to be thrust into the outer darkness, with every dreadful expression of horror and despair, with weeping, and gnashing of teeth, in vain shall they bewail their folly; and pining with envy and vexation, shall behold the patriarchs, prophets, and saints of God, in glory exalted, and enjoying those unutterable delights of the heavenly kingdom, from which themselves must be eternally excluded; the sight of which will aggravate every pang they feel. How awful a scene! what diligence, what carefulness should it beget in us, that we come not into this place of torment! How jealous need we be over our hearts, that we rest not in outward privileges, and deceive not ourselves with vain hopes; thousands have gone out of this world dreaming of heaven, and have awaked in hell.

(3.) Some shall be saved; though *few,* comparatively speaking, in any one place or age; yet *many,* when collected into the great congregation: and these, such as seemed the most unlikely, coming from Gentile lands, from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and admitted into the church of the redeemed, whilst the Jewish people, who were *first* in privileges, shall be *last,* rejected for their impenitence; and the heathen, who were *last* in their call, shall be *first* in the kingdom. *Note,* When we come to heaven, we shall meet many there whom we least expected, and miss many, of whom we entertained the most confident assurances.

31. ¶ The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, [r] Get thee out and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. 32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that [s] fox, Behold, [t] I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third *day* I shall be [u] perfected. 33. Nevertheless, [x] I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the *day* following; [y] for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. 34. [z] O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: [a] how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and [b] ye would not! 35. [c] Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, [d] ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, [e] Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

r Neh. 6. 10. Amos 7. 13.
s Song 2. 15. Ezek. 13. 4. Mic. 3. 1—3. Zeph. 3. 3.
t Ps. 93. 4. John 10. 32.
u Heb. 2. 10. & 5. 8. John 17. 4. & 19. 30.
x Ps. 31. 15. John 9. 4. & 5. 17.
y Mat. 20. 18. Acts 2. 23. & 4. 27, 28.
z Neh. 9. 26. Mat. 23. 37—39. Luke 19. 42. ch. 21. 35, 36. & 22. 6. 2 Chr. 36. 15, 16. & 20. 21, 22. Acts 7. 59.
a Deut. 4. 29. & 32. 29. Ps. 81. 10. & 50. 7. with Deut. 32. 11, 12 Ps. 17. 8. & 91. 4.
b Ps. 69. 26. Is. 1. 7. Mic. 3. 12. Ps. 81. 11. Hos. 11. 2, 7. Prov. 1. 24, 25. Acts 3. 14, 15.
c Ch. 21. 5, 6, 24. & 19. 44. Mic. 3. 12. Is. 1. 7.
d Prov. 1. 26—30. John 8. 21, 24. & 7. 34. Hos. 3. 4, 5.
e Ps. 118. 26. Mat. 21. 9.

Verses 31—35. Christ's inveterate enemies are ceaseless in their malice, seeking to distress and destroy him.

1. Certain Pharisees pretending regard for his safety, brought him information that his life was in danger from Herod; either this was a contrivance of their own, who wanted to get rid of Christ, whose preaching and practice so reproved and cut them to the heart; or it may be, Herod employed them to drive Christ out of his dominions, being willing enough to have done him a mischief, but fearing the consequences of attempting to seize him, because of his interest in the people. *Note,* It is no unusual artifice of wicked men to seek, by suggestions of danger to deter the faithful from their duty.

2. Christ defies Herod's menaces. *Go tell that fox,* saith he, whose craft, treachery, and rapine were notorious, *Behold I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow;* not desisting from his work nor intimidated with these threatenings; *and the third day I shall be perfected,* shortly my work will be finished, and by my sufferings and death I shall complete the salvation of my people: and till then, it is neither in the power of Herod, or any of the emissaries of hell, to stop me in my work, or take away my life. *Nevertheless* as my hour is not yet come, *I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following,* continuing his ministry in Galilee, without fear of interruption: *for* as my death, and the place of it, are foreordained of God, *it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem,* where alone the great council sat, to whom it belonged to judge those who laid claim to the gift of prophecy, and to put those whom they counted impostors to death. *Note,* (1.) All the powers of earth or hell cannot hurt or destroy us, till the appointed time comes. (2.) The day of

death will be the time when the faithful shall be perfected; a consummation devoutly to be wished for.

3. On this occasion, at the mention of Jerusalem, Christ laments over her wickedness, and foretells the wrath ready to descend on that devoted city. Not knowing the day of her visitation, she was abandoned to ruin; and too late would be convinced of his divine mission, and wish for a part in his salvation, when he should come shortly to execute his temporal judgments; or in the great day, to pour the vials of his eternal wrath on those who had rejected him.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The cure which Christ wrought upon a man that had the dropsy, on the sabbath-day, and his justifying himself therein, against those who were offended at his doing it on that day,* ver. 1—6. 2. *A lesson of humility given to those who were ambitious of the highest rooms,* ver. 7—11. 3. *A lesson of charity to those who feasted the rich and did not feed the poor,* ver. 12—14. 4. *The success of the gospel foretold in the parable of the guests, invited to a feast,* ver. 15—24. 5. *The great law of discipleship laid down, with a caution to all that will be Christ's disciples, to undertake it deliberately, and with consideration, and particularly to ministers, to retain their savour,* ver. 25—35.

1. AND it came to pass, [a] as he went into the house of one of the [b] chief Pharisees* to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they [c] watched him. 2. And, behold there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. 3. And Jesus answering spake unto [d] the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, [e] Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? 4. And [f] they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go; 5. And answered them, saying, [g] Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? 6. [h] And they could not answer him again to these things.

a Ch. 7. 34, 36. & 11. 37. 1 Cor. 9. 19, 20.

b John 3. 1.

* Or, *of one of the rulers who was a Pharisee.*

c Ch. 11. 53, 54. Mark 3. 2. Ps. 37. 32.

d Ch. 11. 29, 46. Mat. 23. 4.

e Mat. 12. 10. ch. 13. 14. Mat. 2. 24. & 3. 4.

f Mat. 21. 25—27. & 22. 22, 34, 36.

g Exod. 23. 5. Deut. 22. 4. ch. 13. 15. Mat. 12. 11, 12.

h Ch. 13. 17. Acts 6. 10. Mat. 22. 46.

Verses 1—6. Christ refused not the invitations of those he knew were his enemies; and though he was well aware of their malicious intentions, he behaved to them with all kindness and courtesy.

1. He dined with a chief Pharisee on the sabbath-day; and there being present a pitiable object, who was swoln with a dropsy; they *watched* whether he would heal him: intending, if he did, to accuse him as a sabbath-breaker.

2. Christ, who knew their thoughts, interrogates them on the subject, Whether *it was lawful to heal on the sabbath day?* But they observed a sullen silence, unwilling to preclude the accusation they meditated, by admitting it to be lawful, and yet not knowing how to maintain the unlawfulness of so good a deed.

3. *He took* the man aside *and healed him*, reducing in a moment his distended body, and sending him away perfectly cured. And in his own justification, and to their conviction and confusion urges their own practice, to prove the lawfulness of such a work of charity. If they admitted that an ox or an ass fallen into a pit, should be lifted out on the sabbath-day, lest it should perish there, how much more forcible was the argument for the cure of a diseased person, whose life was in danger? and how evidently did it appear, that their zeal for the sabbath was mere hypocrisy, designed only to cover their malignity against him?

4. *They could not answer him again to these things*, their own conduct spoke their condemnation. *Note*, At Christ's bar every mouth shall be stopped.

7. ¶ And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how [i] they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, 8. When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not [k] down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; 9. And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. 10. [k] But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh he may say unto thee, † Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. 11. [l] For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. 12. ¶ Then said he also to him that bade him, [m] When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbours;† lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. 13. But when thou makest a feast, [n] call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: 14. And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; [o] for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

i Mat. 23. 6. ch. 20. 46. & 11. 43. Mark 12. 38. 3 John 9.

k Prov. 25. 6, 7. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Prov. 15. 33. James 4. 6.

l Mat. 23. 12. ch. 18. 14. & 2. 51. Job 22. 29. Ps. 18. 27. Prov. 15. 33. ver. 10.

m Prov. 15. 33. & 18. 12. & 29. 23. James 4. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

† Many things are delivered in Scripture in the form of an absolute and universal prohibition, which must not be so understood, of which we have here an instance.

n Neh. 8. 12. Job 31. 17. Prov. 3. 9, 28.

o Prov. 19. 17. Mat. 25. 26. John 5. 29. Acts 24. 15. Dan. 12. 2, 3.

* How clearly does it appear that a future state of retribution was a prominent article of the general or popular creed among the Jews at this time!—*Scott.*

Verses 7—14. Though our Lord was courteous, he was far above the flattery of compliment. When he saw occasion for rebuke, he would not even in the company of persons most distinguished, refrain from faithful admonition.

1. He rebukes the guests for that affectation of pre-eminence which he observed among them, each coveting the most honourable seat at the table. Such pride would expose them to contempt, whilst humility was the way to honour: for they who assumingly thrust themselves into the seat of precedence which did not belong to them, might expect to be degraded, when a more honourable personage coming in, the master of the house would say, *Give this man place;* and this could not fail of covering with confusion the conceited intruder, who must go down lower, and expose himself to the contempt of the company. Much more to their honour would it be, humbly to take the lowest place as ready to give the preference to others; for then the master, attentive to place his guests, according to their rank, would respectively desire them to come up higher, and their modesty and humility would gain the regard and esteem of all that sit at table. And as this is the case among men, so it is also before God: *whosoever exalteth himself,* in a proud conceit of his own excellence above other men, *shall be abased,* treated with contempt and abhorrence by him who trieth the heart, and

knows the true characters of men; *and he that humbleth himself*, under the deepest sense of his vileness and unworthiness, *shall be exalted* to the favour of God on earth, and to the enjoyment of his glory in heaven. *Note*, (1.) Pride is a sin alike odious in the sight of God and man. (2.) Modest diffidence gives a brighter lustre to real worth.

2. He rebukes the master of the house for his inviting the rich and neglecting the poor. It bespeaks the pride, selfishness, and luxury of the heart to make profuse entertainments, and invite only the wealthy, at whose tables we expect to be entertained in return. Such feasting is evil; it is an abuse of the creatures of God, and robbery of the poor; not that we are forbid welcoming our friends or returning their visits; it is the profusion which would render us incapable of relieving the indigent, the vain love of show, the ambition of keeping grand company, and the expectation of a recompense in kind, which our Lord condemns. He bids us, on the contrary, with charitable hospitality feed the poor; not sturdy beggars, for that is no charity, but an encouragement to idleness; *but the maimed, the lame, the blind*; these cannot indeed return the favour; but we shall be no losers. God will remember and reward these labours of love at *the resurrection of the just*.

15. ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, [p] Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread * in the kingdom of God. 16. [q] Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: 17. [r] And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. 18. And [s] they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. 19. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. 20. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come. 21. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, [t] being angry, said to his servant, [u] Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. 22. And the servant said, Lord, [x] it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. 23. And the Lord said unto the servant, [y] Go out into the highways and hedges, and [z] compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. 24. For I say unto you, that [a] none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

p Rev. 19. 9. ch. 13. 29. John 6. 34.

* *To eat bread* is a well-known Hebrew idiom for, to share in a repast.

q Mat. 22. 2—10. Is. 25. 6. Mark 16. 15. Rev. 19. 9. Is. 55. 1—7.

r Mat. iii, x. Mark i, iii. Luke i, iii, ix, x. Acts i—ix. Prov. 1. 20—24. & 9. 1—5.

s Mat. 22. 3, 5, 6. John 1. 11. & 5. 40. Mal. 13. 22. ch. 8. 14. & 21. 34. Is. 29. 9—12 & 28. 9—13. & 5. 5, 6. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. 2 Tim. 4. 10. Phil. 3. 19. Ps. 17. 14.

t Mat. 22. 7, 8. & 21. 41, 43. & 3. 11, 12. see ver. 24.

u Mat. 28. 18, 19. & 11. 5, 28. Mark 16. 15, 16. Acts 13. 46, 47. & 28. 28. Rev. 22. 17. Is. 42. 6, 7. & 45. 22. with John 7. 48, 49. Zech. 11. 7, 11. James 2. 5.

x Acts i—ix.

y Mat. 22. 9, 10 & 28. 18, 19. & 26. 13. Mark 16. 15, 16. Eph. 2. 17—22. & 3. 6—8. Rom. 10. 18. Col. 1. 23. Acts x, xi.

z Prov. 1. 20—23. & 9. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 20 & 10. 3—5. Col. 1. 23, 28, 29. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Ps. 110. 3.

a See Mat. 21 41, 43. & 8. 11, 12. & 23. 38, 39. & 22. 8.

Verses 15—24. Affected with the discourse of Christ, which breathed such humility and charity, one of the guests broke forth as in a transport, looking forward to the days of the Messiah, when they expected that all plenty, piety, and happiness would universally abound, and said, *Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God*. Christ immediately replied to this observation by a parable, drawn from the feast before them, and containing intimations which they would be very backward to receive; insinuating to them, that however great the Messiah's kingdom might be, the Jews in general would reject it, and the despised Gentiles chiefly partake of the privileges of the gospel.

1. *A certain man made a great supper, and bade many.* Christ is the master of the feast; all the riches of gospel grace are provided by him for the entertainment of miserable sinners, and his invitation is free and gracious. He bids his servants say, whosoever will, let him *come, for all things are now ready*; the present moment is the accepted time; there must be no delay; and if we feel our want of pardon, peace, grace, and glory; we shall make none, but press eagerly to be fed with these heavenly provisions.

2. The guests gave the servants a cold reception, and pretended other engagements. The Jewish people in general rejected the gospel, and turned a deaf ear to the apostles, and evangelists; and too many in every age resemble them, and find some frivolous excuse for their conduct. One had purchased a farm, and he must needs go and see it; another had bought five yoke of oxen, and he wanted to try them; and a third is just married, and therefore he pleads, *I cannot come*. But the truth is, *I will not*; his wife would have found a welcome too, that need not have hindered him. *Note*, (1.) Any thing will serve for a hinderance to those who want an excuse; and the devil will take care that they shall not be at a loss, who have no inclination to duty. (2.) Hearts full of worldly cares, and set on amassing wealth, must needs be deaf to gospel calls. (3.) The folly of men of the world is great as their sins; for what trifles do they barter heaven! (4.) Inordinate affection to lawful comforts, even to our dearest relatives, may prove a dangerous stumbling-block in our way to glory.

3. The servants returned with grief to their master, and reported the repulse they had met with; and just indignation kindled in the master's bosom at the ingratitude and contempt shown to his gracious invitation. *Note*, (1.) Ministers carry their complaints to God against the souls among whom they have laboured in vain, and spent their strength for nought; and a fearful account will such despisers of the gospel shortly give. (2.) Abused mercy turns to fiercest wrath; rejection of the calls of grace must needs issue in ruin.

4. Though they who were invited refuse to come, the feast shall not be lost. The master bids his servants *go into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind*; since the Scribes and Pharisees, with all the rich and noble among the Jews, rejected his salvation, the gospel was to be preached to the lowest of the people, many of whom were brought to the obedience of faith. And when the servants, having executed their commission, reported that yet there was room, their Lord sends them *into the highways and hedges*, even to the Gentile world, to call the vilest sinners, and urge them to come in, assuring them of a hearty welcome. *Note*, (1.) The unbelief of the impenitent shall not prevent the promise of God from taking effect. Christ will have a church and people in the world, though the wise, mighty, and noble reject him. (2.) The gospel has usually most success among those whom the proud, the wise, and self-righteous despise, even the ignorant, the poor, the publicans, and open sinners; nor must the servants think it any disparagement to themselves or their master, that of such is the kingdom of heaven. (3.) The compulsion which Christ's ministers must use is, the force of argument and persuasion; not violence, or the civil power, which can only make men hypocrites. (4.) None are excluded from Christ who do not exclude themselves; there is room, and we are welcome: if we refuse to come, our ruin lieth at our own door.

5. He seals up the despisers of the gospel under wrath and

reprobacy. *I say unto you that none of those who were bidden, shall taste of my supper.* The unbelieving Jews to whom the gospel was first preached, and all who hear and reject the counsel of God against their own souls are justly abandoned to the delusions they have chosen, and left to perish in their sins.

Mat 10. 37. & 16. 25. & 19. 29. Deut. 33. 9. & 13. 6. John 21. 17. Ps. 73. 25, 26. & 142. 4, 5. Rev. 12. 11.

c Mark 8. 34. Mat. 10. 38. & 16. 24. & 11. 29. ch. 9. 23. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

d Prov. 24. 27. 1 Kin. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 5. Jude 20. These parables teach us that we must resolve to lose all, and suffer all, for Christ, when we set out in religion.

e Gal. 3. 3, 4. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26, 27. with 2 Pet. 1. 4—12. & 3. 12. Col. 2. 6, 7. Tit. 2. 11—13. 2 John 8. 18.

f Prov. 20. 18. Men had better never profess to serve Christ, than apostatise from him. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. Rev. 3. 15, 16.

g Mat. 5. 25. ch. 12. 58. Heb. 12. 14.

h Mat. 16. 24, 25. & 19. 27—29. ver. 26, 27. Phil. 3. 7—9. Ps. 73. 25, 26.

i Col. 4. 6. Mat. 5. 13. Mark 9. 49, 50. ver. 28, 29. with Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Heb. 10. 26, 38. & 6. 4—8. Tit. 1. 16. Is. 66. 3, 24. & 1. 11—15. Christ's doctrines, graces, and ministers are useful for reforming and preserving; but if once professors and ministers turn erroneous and carnal, they are most useless, contemptible, and ripened for misery.

k Ch. 9. 44. & 3. 8. Mat. 11. 15. & 13. 9. Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29. & 3. 6, 13, 22.

25. ¶ And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26. [b] If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27. [c] And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. 28. [d] For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it?* 29. Lest haply, after he had laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him, 30. Saying, [e] This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31. Or what king, going to make war against another king, [f] sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? 32. Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he [g] sendeth an embassage, and desireth conditions of peace. 33. So likewise, [h] whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. 34. ¶ [i] Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? 35. It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. [k] He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Verses 25—35. Multitudes followed Christ probably in hopes to share in that temporal kingdom which they expected the Messiah would set up. To undeceive them, he lets them know,

1. The terms of discipleship. They will not find that ease, affluence, and honour, with which they flattered themselves, but the very reverse: they must be ready to quit their nearest and dearest relations, when Christ's service calls for them; must be content to leave all behind, and to be banished from their best friends; if parents' commands come in competition with our duty to him, we must not hesitate whom we shall obey: nay, our own lives must not be dear to us, when his glory requires us to lay them down. The love of him must constrain us stronger than death: every cross which he is pleased to lay upon us, cheerfully should we take up; content to be nailed to it, if he so ordain. And if without such entire surrender of ourselves to him, we cannot be his disciples, much less may we think we belong to him, if we are afraid to disoblige a friend or a relation for his sake, if we cannot bear a name of infamy, or a badge of reproach. Such as shrink from these lesser trials, and are ashamed to make profession of him, will certainly never go with him to prison or to death.

2. He exhorts his followers seriously and deliberately to weigh the difficulties and dangers, before they embark in his cause; lest after having made a profession, they should expose themselves to contempt, and bring heavier ruin upon their souls, by drawing back unto perdition: and this he illustrates by two comparisons, (1.) By a man sitting down to build a tower, who makes an estimate of the charge before he begins the fabric; lest otherwise, rashly embarking in a work for which his abilities are not sufficient, the unfinished ruins should expose him to contempt. We have this tower of salvation to build on, Jesus, the sure foundation; it will cost us much labour, prayer, self-denial, reproach, loss, perhaps of life itself, ere it be finished. Before, therefore, we commence professed disciples, we should well weigh the consequences, whether we have really power from on high, divine faith, and a vital principle of grace to carry us through. Many have begun, and failed, and thereby exposed themselves to just contempt; for even the wicked world, to whom they return, will ridicule and despise those who draw back from their holy profession. (2.) By one king going to war against another. Before he takes the field, he will weigh the danger, and consider whether he is a match for his antagonist; and if he finds his strength utterly unequal, it is wisest, before matters are driven to extremities, to send ambassadors, and seek peace. Such is our case: a Christian is a soldier, who must expect and prepare to endure *hardness;* the powers of earth, corruption, and hell, under Satan, their king, are the *twenty thousand* with whom we have to conflict. Clothed, therefore, in the panoply of God, and supported with his might in the inner man, we should go forth; and the sword once drawn, we must never sheath it till death. But if deterred by difficulties, persecutions, and sufferings, we seek an ignominious peace with the world *which lieth in wickedness:* under the government of that wicked one; and instead of *forsaking all*, stagger in the hour of trial; the case is desperate, we shall continue enslaved by sin and cannot be Christ's disciples.

3. He warns them against apostasy, whether ministers or people. *Salt is good;* my gospel and they who dispense it, are the salt of the earth; *but if the salt hath lost his savour*, and those who profess to spread the lively truths of God, adulterate the word, and grow degenerate in their temper and manners, *wherewith shall it be seasoned?* The case appears desperate, where such rooted departure from the truth in practice and principle prevails; *it is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill;* such persons are not only useless, but noxious, and therefore *men cast it out;* all good men abandon such faithless professors, and they should be cast out of the church, as they will infallibly be separated eternally from the communion of the faithful in heaven. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear;* and let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

CHAP. XV.—anno domini, 32.

Christ vindicates himself from the cavils of the Pharisees, offended at his conversing with publicans and sinners, ver. 1, 2. *In three parables,* 1. *Of the lost sheep,* ver. 3—7. 2. *Of the lost silver,* ver. 8, 9, 10. 3. *Of the prodigal son,* ver. 11—32.

1. THEN drew near unto him, [a] all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. 2. And the Pharisees and scribes [b] murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. 3. ¶ And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

a Ch. 14. 21. & 5. 29—32. & 7. 29. Mat. 21. 31, 32. & 9. 10, 13. Mark 2. 15, 16. Ezek. 18. 23. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

b Mat. 9. 11. & 20. 15. ch. 5. 30. & 19. 7. Acts 11. 3. ch. 19. 7. 10. Gal. 2. 12

4. [c] What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? 5. And when he hath found *it*, [d] he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6. And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* [e] friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. 7. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine [f] just persons, which need no repentance. 8. ¶ Either what woman having ten [g] pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and [h] seek diligently till she find *it?* 9. [i] And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. 10. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.*

c Mat. 18. 12, 13. Jer. 50. 6. Ezek. 34. 6, 8, 16, 23. Is. 53. 6, 10—12. John 10. 11, 16. 1 Pet. 2. 25. Ps. 119. 176. Is. 63. 1, 4. & 27. 12, 13. & 45. 22, 24. Ezek. 34. 16. Phil. 1. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16. ch. 9. 10.

d Is. 40. 11. & 46. 3, 4. & 63. 9. & 53. 10. ch. 19. 9. & 23. 43. & 7. 36—50. John iv. Acts ix. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16.

e Ver. 7, 9, 10. Rev. 11. 15. & 12. 10. & 18. 20. & 3. 21. ch. 2. 13, 14. 1 Thes. 2. 19.

f Ch. 5. 32. Prov. 30. 12. Mat. 18. 13.

g *Drachma* was seven-pence three farthings, i. e. equal to the Roman penny. Mat. 18. 28.

h Mat. 18. 11. ch. 19. 10. Ezek. 34. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 2.

i See ver. 6, 7.

* This consideration should inflame the zeal and quicken the industry of the spiritual shepherd for the conversion of sinners, as knowing this is a work so highly acceptable to the God of heaven.—*Whitby.*

Verses 1—10. Offended, perhaps, with the hard sayings of the former chapter, many of his attendants withdrew, and made way for another set of hearers.

1. *The publicans and sinners drew near to hear him.* The *publicans* were usually persons of the most infamous character, and the *sinners* were either public and notorious offenders, or, it may be, some of the heathen, as from the multitude of strangers who dwelt there, the country was called *Galilee of the Gentiles;* these assembled around him, they needed such a gracious Saviour.

2. The proud Pharisees and Scribes hereupon expressed their displeasure; offended, that one who professed himself a prophet, should deign to permit such wretches to approach him, receive them with kindness, and sit with them at the same table. Their insolent self-conceit would have said, *Come not near me;* but he, who came to be the sinner's friend, did not disdain their company; they were the lost he came to save. *Note,* The censure of the self-righteous falls heaviest usually on the most excellent persons, in the noblest exercises of charity.

3. Christ vindicates himself from their reproaches, in two parables: and shows that the highest glory would redound to God from the conversion of these sinners, and joy fill the celestial host on that occasion. We have,

(1.) The parable of the lost sheep, wherein we may observe, [1.] The case of the miserable sinner: he is *lost*, gone astray from God's fold; wandering endlessly in mazes of ignorance and error; a stranger to all spiritual comfort and happiness; running headlong to destruction, and ready to perish everlastingly. [2.] The peculiar care of the Saviour towards his people in their lost estate; like a shepherd who leaves his flock in the wilderness to seek one straying sheep, so doth the Lord pursue his wanderers; he finds them when they do not seek him, takes them up in the arms of his grace, weak and impotent of themselves to return, and brings them back to his fold with that effectual power and tender pity, which secures them from all harm. (3.) There is greater joy in heaven over one such sinner recovered by sovereign grace, than *over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance;* which seems to be spoken with a peculiar reference to the Pharisees who trusted that they were righteous and needed no repentance. These our Lord *left in the wilderness* of unregeneracy, to perish in their pride; the conversion of one poor Gentile sinner, the recovery of the most notorious offender, was matter of greater rejoicing in heaven, and brought more glory to God than that form of godliness in which they boasted.

(2.) The parable of the lost piece of money, which is nearly of the same import as the foregoing. The *woman* represents the Lord, the possessor of all; the *silver*, the souls of men, infinitely more precious: the *nine pieces*, design the Scribes and Pharisees, and all self-righteous persons; the *one lost piece*, the heathen or any poor perishing sinner, sunk in the dregs of pollution, or lost in the dirt of worldly mindedness and sensuality; *The candle* is the blessed gospel which shines in this dark place the world, where the sinner lies buried in corruption; *the sweeping the house* represents the diligence of the faithful ministers of Christ, whose instrumentality he uses to seek after lost souls; and when he hath designs of grace towards a soul, he never ceases seeking him, till the means are made effectual to his conversion and salvation: and great is the joy arising from this happy event. The angels of God rejoice in it, and the more desperate the case seemed, and the more unexpected the recovery, the more sensible is the pleasure. To see the chief of sinners brought to repentance, raises their loudest songs of praise. Those therefore, who made such objections to his receiving sinners, evidently showed themselves destitute of a heavenly mind, and unlike the angels of God.

11. ¶ And he said, [k] A certain man had two sons: 12. And the younger of them said to *his* father, [l] Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living. 13. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a [m] far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. 14. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; [n] and he began to be in want. 15. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to [o] feed swine. 16. [p] And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and [q] no man gave unto him. 17. And when [r] he came to himself, † he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18. [s] I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, 19. [t] And am no more worthy to be called thy son: [u] make me as one of thy hired servants. 20. And he arose, and came to his father. [x] But when he was yet a great way off, [y] his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. 21. And the son said unto him, Father, [z] I

k Mat. 21. 28. *i. e.* Jews and Gentiles, or moralists and profane persons.

l Mal. 2. 10. Is. 64. 8. Num. 16. 22. Heb. 12. 9.

m Eph. 2. 13, 17. Ps. 73. 27. Is. 57. 19. Rom. 1. 21—32. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Is. 1. 4. Jer. 2. 13, 17.

n Prov. 5. 11. Hos. 2. 14. Amos 8. 11.

o Ps. 4. 6. Tit. 3. 3. Eph. 2. 1—3. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

p Ch. 16. 21. Job 15. 16. & 20 12—16. Is. 55. 2. Ezek. 7. 19. Hos. 12. 1.

q Rev. 3. 17. Ps. 142. 4.

r Eccl. 9. 3. Acts 26. 11.

† He who lives a sinful life is beside himself; he acts against his reason, his judgment, and his conscience.—*Whitby.*

s Hos. 2. 7. Mat. 11. 28. Lam. 3. 40. Jer. 31. 18, 19. ch. 18. 13. Dan. 4. 26. Prov. 5. 21. Ps. 51. 4.

t Gen. 32. 10. Jer. 3. 5, 19. ch. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Tit. 3. 3. Eph. 2. 1—3, 12. 1 Tim. 1. 13.

u John 6. 28. Acts 2. 37. & 16. 30. Rom. 10. 3. & 9. 31. Ps. 84. 10. Jer. 31. 18, 19.

x Ch. 18. 13. Acts 2. 39. Rom. 4. 5. Eph. 2. 12, 13, 17.

y Ezek. 16. 6—8. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Is. 49. 15. Hos. 11. 8.

z Ver. 18, 19. ch. 18. 13. Josh. 7. 9. Jer. 3. 13. Rom. 7. 8—14. Gen. 32. 10.

have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. 22. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth [a] the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a [b] ring on his hand, and [c] shoes on *his* feet: 23. And bring hither the [d] fatted calf, and kill *it;* and let us eat, and be merry: 24. [e] For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry. 25. Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard [h] musick and dancing. 26. And he called one of his servants, and asked what these things meant. 27. And he said unto him, [i] Thy brother is come; and [k] thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. 28. [l] And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him. 29. And he answering said to *his* father, [m] Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and [n] yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: 30. [o] But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. 31. And he said unto him, Son, [p] thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. 32. [q] It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this [r] thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

a Mat. 22. 11. Rom. 13. 14. Rev. 19. 8. Ezek. 16. 10—12. Is. 61. 10. Gal. 3. 27.
b Ezek. 36. 27. 2 Cor. 1. 22. Eph. 1. 13, 14. Acts 10. 44—47.
c Song 7. 1. Eph. 6. 13.
d Prov. 9. 2. Is. 25. 6. Mat. 22. 4. & xxvi, xxvii. John 6. 51—58. Zeph. 3. 17. Is. 42. 21. & 53. 10. & 62. 5. Rom. 5. 11.
e Eph. 2. 1—8, 10, 12, 13, 19—22. & 5. 14. Col. 1. 13.
f Acts 26. 17, 18. Tit. 3. 3—7. 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
g Mat. 20. 10—12
h Acts 8. 39. Rom. 5. 1, 11. Phil. 4. 4. 1 Thes. 5. 16.
i Acts 13. 46—48 & 11. 17. & 28. 28. Eph. 2. 17—20. & 3. 6—8. Col. 1. 6, 23.
k Ver. 23. Eph. 3. 8.
l Acts 11. 2, 3. & 13. 45, 50. & 14. 2, 19. & 17. 13. & 18. 5, 6. & 22. 21, 22. Rom. 9. 30—33. & 11. 12. 1 Thes. 2. 16. Gal. 2. 12.
m John 8. 33, 41. ch. 16. 15. & 18. 11, 12. Is. 58. 2. & 1. 15. Rev. 3. 17. Is. 29. 13.
n Is. 58. 3. Mat. 20. 11, 12.
o Ver. 13, 22, 23.
p Exod. 19. 4—6. Deut. 32. 9. Ps. 147. 19, 20. Rom. 9. 4, 5. Mat. 13. 12. & 25. 29.
q Rom. 15. 9—13. Is. liv, lx—lxii.
r Song 8. 8, 9. Eph. 2. 1—10. Acts 26. 17, 18. see ver. 24. 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. Tit. 3. 3—7. Hos. 13. 9. ch. 19. 10. Ps. 22. 27—30.

Verses 11—32. Yet farther, to show how little cause the Scribes and Pharisees had to murmur at the favour shown to publicans and sinners, he added a third beautiful parable, wherein miserable and wretched sinners may ever read the compassions of a pardoning God, and be engaged by the riches of his grace to return to the arms of his mercy.

The certain man here spoken of, is God, the common Father of all: the *two sons* are either the Jews, the elder brother, and the Gentiles, the younger; or rather, by the one are meant the Scribes and Pharisees, by the other the publicans and sinners; both as descendants of Abraham, the children of God, in a covenant of peculiarity. And to this latter sense, the occasion of the parable seems to direct us.

The character of the miserable sinner is here drawn under the figure of the younger son. We have,

His departure from home, and the miseries into which his extravagance brought him.

(1.) He was *impatient* of restraint, as young men usually are; wanted to get from *his father's eye; conceited* himself able to manage better for himself than his aged parent for him, and therefore forwardly demands, *Give me the portion of goods which falleth to me*, as if he had a right to challenge them as his due: just such are we all by nature. (1.) Discontent under God's government, and affecting independency. (2.) Desirous to fly from him, and foolishly flattering ourselves that we can be hid. (3.) Puffed up with high imaginations of our own abilities and excellence. (4.) Looking upon God's gifts as our own property, for the use of which we are accountable to none. (5.) Coveting a present portion, and seeking all our happiness from the world careless and unconcerned about our future state.

(2.) The father, though he might justly except to such a forward demand, divided his substance, and gave the younger son his share; evidently showing, he was not that morose and harsh parent, which this headstrong youth probably represented him. Thus God bestows liberally the bounties of his providence on the evil and unthankful; and leaves his own children for a while to the devices of their own hearts, that dire conviction may teach them their folly and their sin.

(3.) No sooner had he got his share, than in haste to be gone, he stayed but a few days to pack up his all, and took his journey into a far country, where he apprehended no rebuke from his watchful father; and there giving a loose to every appetite, he soon dissipated his fortune among women, wine, and riotous living. How exact the representation! (1.) Such wanderers are we; as soon as we are born we go astray. (2.) In this alienation from God the sinner habitually continues, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. (3.) We are enslaved by vile affections, and naturally devoted to those youthful lusts which war against the soul. (4.) Present gratification usually weighs with us more than any considerations about futurity. (5.) As extravagance and whoredom have the most direct tendency to rob us of our substance, much more will these, and the like sins, infallibly ruin our souls.

(4.) Great were the miseries in which this prodigal now felt himself involved. *When he had spent all*, which would not hold long in such bad company as he kept, *there arose a mighty famine in that land; and* as those on whom he had lavished his money, now dropped off from his acquaintance as the leaves in autumn, *he began to be in want*, without a morsel of bread to appease the cravings of hunger. Reduced now to the utmost distress, without a farthing in his pocket, without a friend to assist him, necessity drives him to court the meanest drudgery to keep body and soul together, *he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine;* yet even there he could not earn enough to satisfy his hunger; he envied the very swine their husks, and *would fain have filled his belly* with them, but could not, or was not permitted that favour, and *no man* had the least compassion for his case, or *gave unto him* the least morsel of sustenance: such is the misery of the sinner. (1.) He is in *want* of all true comfort, and destitute of all grace; the favour of God, as the dew of heaven, is withheld; his hard heart produces nothing good, and he pines away in his iniquities. (2.) He is the vilest slave in nature; the devil is the citizen, in whose hard service he is employed; he is like the swine, wallowing in the lusts of uncleanness, or grovelling in worldly-mindedness. (3.) His soul is harassed with raging desires, which none of his pursuits can gratify; for they who depart from God, to seek satisfaction in the creature, must feel the curse of incessant hunger, and find nothing but husks before them. The world, and all the things of it, can provide no solid food for an immortal soul.

Some give a different interpretation of the words. They suppose the *citizen of that country* to be a *Pharasaical legal preacher* to whom the awakened sinner flies under his distress. He sets him to work *in his fields;* directs him to moral duties, to the law, to the conditions of the covenant, in order to obtain peace with God: but the husks of self-righteousness are unsatisfactory; conscience is unappeased; guilt unatoned for; corruption unmortified; and he continues a companion of swine.

2. Distress at last brought him to consider the wofulness of

his state, and what possibility there yet was of preventing his dying for want in that strange land. *When he came to himself*, for hitherto he had acted as a madman, or one possessed, he began to reflect on the plenty which reigned in his father's family, where there was not a hired servant, *but had bread enough and to spare; and I*, says he, *perish with hunger*. He resolves therefore to return, and cast himself on his father's mercy, acknowledging his sin against heaven and against him, owning it his just desert to be disowned for a son, and begging it, as the highest favour he dares to ask, to be admitted among the hired servants. And what he resolved, he immediately executed: his urgent want admitted of no delay: happy the soul in whom such a gracious purpose is stirred up! *Note*, (1.) Every impenitent sinner is *beside himself;* all his thoughts, words, and ways bespeak the madman; fancying himself wise, great, happy, when infatuated, poor, and miserable; and putting a value upon the straws of his cell, the gain and pleasures of this world, as if they were sterling gold, whilst he is insensible to all the eternal glories that are above. (2.) In our most desperate estate, whilst there is life there is hope; it is never too late to return unto God; the vilest sinner may find mercy, the most abominable be converted and changed. (3.) Afflictions are often made the blessed means of driving our souls to God; softened by the rod of correction the heart is made tender, and disposed to listen to the words of wisdom, which were before despised and rejected. (4.) Though the conversion of the soul to God is alone effected by the power of divine grace, yet he works in such a way as that it is our own choice, and the result of reason, consideration, and conviction. He opens our understandings to see our true state, and beholding the inevitable ruin which is before us, we are driven by mere necessity to Christ for pardon and salvation. (5.) None need perish who return unto God right humble: there is with him grace abounding, *bread enough and to spare*. (6.) In our returns to God, we must all adopt the prodigal's spirit and language; *we have sinned* more than we can express or conceive; we should reflect upon all the aggravations of our sin, how ungratefully we have behaved towards the Father of mercies, how impiously affronted the Most High, whose throne is in the heavens, that so we may truly loathe ourselves for all our abominations. (7.) We are never truly humbled for sin, till we feel and own our unworthiness of the least mercy, and our just desert of being utterly abandoned and rejected of God; so that if the least favour be shown us, we shall acknowledge it with deepest gratitude. (8.) Vile and wicked as we may have been, we must not forget that endearing name of *Father*, to encourage our hopes, to awaken genuine and godly sorrow, and to embolden our faith to approach him. (9.) When God is working with our hearts, all depends upon our immediate obedience to his calls and warnings. To-day, whilst it is called to-day, harden not your hearts.

3. His reception was unspeakably beyond his expectations. *He came to his father*, and was welcomed with open arms. Let offended parents learn such compassion towards their returning prodigals. *When he was yet a great way off*, as if the father's longing eyes had been looking out for his coming, *he saw him*, and though in rags and nakedness, emaciated and changed, so that another could scarce have known him, he discerned the long-lost child. Melted with compassion at his piteous case, yet overjoyed once more to behold him, *he ran* with eagerness *and fell on his neck*, embracing him with the warmest emotions of paternal tenderness, *and kissed him*, the token of welcome, the seal of pardon: such are the tender mercies of our God towards poor sinners; he sees, well pleased, the first rising desire in our hearts towards him; he pities our miseries though we have brought it upon ourselves, and have so highly dishonoured him: his arms of grace are open to receive us, he will not upbraid our folly, but is ready instantly to pardon our sin, and through Christ Jesus to forgive and forget all that is past, sealing our pardon, and speaking peace to our souls. The prodigal deeply affected with his own vileness, and now more deeply struck with his ingratitude than ever, under the reception of such amazing tenderness as his father showed him, with grief and shame unfeigned, cries, *Father, I have sinned*, &c. The sense of God's pardoning love, instead of making the sinner proud, abases him to the dust, and makes him abhor himself for having ever offended a God so gracious. The son would have proceeded, but the father's heart is so overjoyed, he prevents him with blessings and loving-kindness, commanding the most splendid dress and the noblest entertainment to be provided for him. So far is the Lord from upbraiding poor returning penitents, that their iniquities, like a cloud, are blotted out, and glory and honour are put upon them.

[1.] The father commands his servants to bring forth *the best robe*, to put *a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet*, that his nakedness may not only be covered, and his filthy garments taken away, but that he may be adorned as became a dear child of that noble family: and how much more glorious the provision which Jesus hath made for his returning prodigals! *A robe of righteousness*, perfect and everlasting, is provided for them, arrayed in which they appear without spot even in the presence of God. Their filthy garments of sin are taken away, and beautiful in holiness impressed as well as righteousness imputed, they all are seen to be the children of a king. *The ring*, the seal of reconciliation and union, the Spirit of Jesus gives, sealing them unto the day of redemption; and shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, they run the way of God's commandments with delight.

[2.] The noblest entertainment is ordered. *Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry*. Hungry and faint, he had long been a stranger to such rich provision; and pining in want and wretchedness, was a stranger to joy: but now he shall be fed to the full, and partake of the general gladness which his return occasions. *Note*, (1.) In the gospel, the richest provision is made for the hungry; Christ with all his fulness is provided, and faith feeds upon him, to the strengthening and refreshing of the soul. (2.) They who are brought by grace to taste of the sweetness of God's love, will truly say, that every thing compared with that, is but husks. (3.) There is joy among all the household of God when one poor sinner returns to join the happy family.

[3.] The cause of the father's joy is this, *My son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found;* he was as bad as dead, yea, worse than dead, whilst living in riot and excess: lost to his family, undone himself; but his return is life from the dead. *Note*, (1.) Every impenitent sinner in the midst of life is in death; spiritually dead to God, and ready to suffer the wages of eternal death in hell. (2.) The soul lost in sin, is lost for ever, unless recovered by sovereign grace. (3.) Though God's dearest children may lie down in common with others, sunk under guilt, and enslaved by corruption, yet in God's purposes they are still his: and this blessed and happy change shall pass upon them: The dead, shall live, the lost be found.

4. The family readily joined the master of the house, rejoicing with him on the present happy occasion. The elder son alone appeared discontented; he was in the field when his brother returned, and heard with surprise, as he drew near to the house, the music and dancing. Inquiring of one of the servants, he soon learns the occasion, and expresses his disgust and discontent against his father's behaviour, as if the kindness shown to his brother was an injury done to himself; who, he conceives, had deserved so much better at his father's hand. This character properly belonged to the Pharisees, and is applicable to all who are influenced by the same spirit of pride and self-righteousness. They are *in the field* of this world, in a state of unregeneracy; the slaves of earth, minding worldly things, working for life, and expecting to receive the harvest of eternal glory as the fruit of their own labours. They *draw nigh to the house*, the church

of God, in profession, but never enter it by a spiritual union with the head of the church, Christ Jesus. *They hear the music and dancing*, the sweet sound of the great and precious promises, which makes the hearts of the miserable and guilty dance for joy; and strangers to the divine consolation themselves, they are vexed that any others should partake of it; and *angry*, that those should be admitted to the enjoyment of all the riches of his grace who had behaved so profligately, and be put on a level with themselves, who have, as they conceit, deserved so well at God's hands. *They will not go in*, not submitting to the righteousness, nor content to receive the salvation of God freely, as lost and undone as much as the vilest of mankind. In vain the Lord, by the ministry of the word, remonstrates with them on their perverseness, and urges upon them the necessity of a better righteousness than their own; *entreating* them to accept of that provided by the Redeemer, and thus come in and partake of the feast. They vaunt their own meritorious services, and in their own conceit fancy *they never transgressed at any time the commandments*, and therefore have a claim to the divine favour. They cannot regard publicans as their *brethren*, and think the kindness of God to perishing sinners is injustice to them, and unbecoming him; that these, instead of being received into his arms, should smart under his rod; and at least ought only to be received into a lower place, after having done long penance for their offences.

Some suppose that the *elder brother* represents a gracious man, who having himself escaped from the grosser pollutions that are in the world, is apt to entertain too high thoughts of himself, and too little compassion towards such as have more grossly offended. To avoid which, we should learn, (1.) To entertain the lowest thoughts of ourselves, and especially to watch against spiritual pride. (2.) Never to complain of God as *unjust* to us, but to acknowledge ourselves *unworthy* of the least of all his mercies. (3.) Not to harbour unkindness against, and treat with severity, those who may have dishonoured their profession by their unfaithfulness, but to be happy to give them again the right hand of fellowship, whenever they return to God. (4.) To rejoice in the gifts and graces of those who have been most eminent sinners, and not to envy them their distinguished mercies, though they may now far outshine and eclipse ourselves.

5. The father silences and rebukes his unreasonable murmurs. *Son, thou art ever with me*; the Scribes and Pharisees, or the Jewish people, enjoyed peculiar privileges, the ordinances of worship, and the special presence of God in the midst of them: *and all that I have is thine*; if by their unbelief they did not cut themselves off, the mercy shown to Gentiles to the chief of sinners, would prove no diminution of the favours they should enjoy. *It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found*; the conversion of the Gentiles and other notorious sinners, dead in trespasses, and ready to perish for ever, so far from being a ground of discontent, should be to all matter of rejoicing. *Note*, (1.) They who are truly God's children, may be assured that *all things* are theirs, all spiritual blessings in time and in eternity. (2.) The abounding grace of God is never exhausted by the myriads who partake of it; the happiness of others is no diminution of our own, but rather increases our delight. (3.) Whatever God doth is well done; every murmur must be silenced before him; and in all the dispensations of his providence and grace, he is ever to be acknowledged as righteous, just, and good.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

We have here, 1. *The right use of worldly enjoyments represented in the parable of the unjust steward*, ver. 1—13. 2. *A reproof of the Pharisees for their covetousness*, ver. 14—18. 3. *The danger of setting our hearts on an earthly portion, illustrated in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus*, ver. 19—31.

1. AND he said also unto his disciples, [a] There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he [b] had wasted his goods. 2. And he called him, and said unto him, [c] How is it that I hear this of thee? [d] give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. 3. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: [e] I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. 4. [f] I am resolved what to do; that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. 5. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto *him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? 6. And he said, An hundred * measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty. 7. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred † measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. 8. And the lord commended the unjust steward, ‡ because he had done [g] wisely: [h] for the children of the world are in their generation wiser than [i] the children of light. 9. And I say unto you, [k] Make to yourselves friends of the [l] mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. 10. [m] He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous ‡ mammon, who will commit to your trust the [n] true *riches?* 12. And if ye have not been faithful in ° that which is another man's, who shall give you that [p] which is your own? 13. [q] No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. [r] Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 14. ¶ And the Pharisees also, [s] who were covetous, heard all these things: and they [t] derided him. 15. And he said unto them, Ye are they which [u] justify yourselves before men; but [x] God knoweth your hearts: [y] for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in

[a] Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 10, 11. & 115. 16. Is. 66. 1.
[b] Deut. 32. 14, 15. Ezek. 16. 15—21. Hos. 2. 8, 9. ch. 15. 13, 30. Jam. 4. 3.
[c] Gen. 3. 11. & 4. 10. & 18. 20. Is. 1. 2.
[d] Eccl. 11. 9. & 12 11. Mat. 12. 36. Rom. 14. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 5. Rev. 20. 12.
[e] Tit. 1. 12. Is. 56. 10. 2 Thes. 3. 11.
[f] Jer. 4. 22. Jam. 3. 15. Is. 29. 15.
* A *bath* contained a little more than three pecks and three pints English.
† A *cor* contained ten baths, or eight bushels.
‡ We may read here, *commended the prudence of the unjust steward.*
[g] Prov. 6. 6—8. 1 Tim. 6. 19. see ver. 4.
[h] Ps. 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19.
[i] 1 John 3. 10. Eph. 5. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 5, 8. John 12. 36. & 3. 3, 5.
[k] Dan. 4. 27. Prov. 19. 17. Mat. 6. 19. & 19. 21. ch. 14. 14. & 11. 41. & 19. 8. Acts 10. 4. 1 Tim. 6. 17—19. Mat. 25. 34—40.
[l] Or *riches.* Mat. 6. 24.
[m] Mat. 25. 21. ch. 19. 17.
‖ Or *riches.*
[n] Mat. 6. 20, 33. ch. 12. 33. & 18. 22. Prov. 8. 18. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 4. Phil. 3. 7—14. Rev. 3. 18.
[o] Job 1. 21. Ezek. 16. 15—21. Hos. 2. 8, 9. Ps. 115. 16. Ezek. 46. 17. Mat 25. 14—29. ch. 19. 12—26.
[p] Ch. 10. 42. Ezek. 46. 16. Is. 55. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 1 Pet. 1. 4.
[q] Mat. 6. 24. Rom. 8. 5—8. Phil. 3. 18, 19. ch. 9. 50. & 11. 23. Tit. 1. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5.
[r] Josh. 24. 14. Mat. 4. 10. Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15, 16. Tit. 2. 12.
[s] Mat. 23. 14. & 13. 22. Ezek. 33. 31. ch. 20. 47.
[t] Ps. 22. 6. & 69. 9, 19, 20.
[u] Mat. 6. 2. ch. 18 11, 12. & 10. 29. & 20. 20.
[x] Ps. 7. 9. Jer. 17 10. Rev. 2. 23. John 21. 17.
[y] 1 Sam. 16. 7. Mat. 23. 13—30. ch. 11. 39. Jam. 4. 4.

the sight of God. 16. [z] The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. 17. [a] And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. 18. [b] Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

z Mal. 4. 4. ch. 1. 16, 76. John. 1. 17. Mat. 11. 12, 13. Mark 1. 14, 15, 38. 45. Mat. iii. Luke iii. The gospel dispensation hath been published, and both Jews and Gentiles have seemed earnestly desirous of its blessings.

a Mat. 5. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 25. Is. 40. 8 & 51. 6. Ps. 102. 26, 27. Josh. 23. 14. 1 Sam. 3. 19. & 15. 29. Rom. 9. 6.

b Mat. 5. 32. & 19. 9. 1 Cor. 7. 10—12. Rom. 7. 1—3.

Verses 1—18. To direct us in the right improvement of worldly wealth, we have here,

1. The parable of the unjust steward. God is our master and Lord; all who are intrusted with any of his gifts, are his stewards, and should improve them to his glory. This man was accused of wasting his master's goods; and how justly liable are we to the same charge? How often have we abused the substance we have enjoyed, and the abilities we have been blessed with, to God's dishonour? In consequence of his ill management, he is called to an account, ordered to leave the service: and a terrible reckoning will that be for us, if hurried away by death, we are called to God's bar, cut off in the midst of our sins, and banished for ever from his presence. Too lazy to dig for his maintenance, too proud to beg, he resolves, by deeper frauds, to secure for himself a maintenance, and calling privately his lord's debtors, whose accounts were in his hands, he agreed with them to draw a new state of their debts, abating twenty measures of wheat to one, and fifty of oil to another; thus endeavouring to make them his friends, that, when he was dismissed from his lord's service, he might have their houses to receive him. *Note*, (1.) One step in sin always tends to lead on to farther abominations. (2.) Pride and laziness often drive men to the most wicked methods to supply their wants, unable to bear the labours of honest industry for a subsistence, or to submit to ask relief. (3.) They who trust too much to stewards, and seldom inspect their own accounts, will usually suffer for it.

2. The Lord commended the unjust steward's conduct; not as truly laudable in itself, but as an instance of foresight, care, and contrivance, worthy imitation in a better way; *for the children of this world*, such as this man was, who place their happiness in earth and a portion here below, *are in their generation wiser*, act more prudently, and show greater industry to secure worldly advantages, *than the children of light*, do to obtain the infinitely more momentous acquisitions of grace and glory. Let us go to them, therefore, to learn, and be ashamed to see ourselves outdone in diligence by those who pursue a perishing world, when we have at stake the interest of an immortal soul and an awful eternity.

3. Christ applies the parable to his disciples. *I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*, employ your worldly goods in such a way, as shall be to your own advantage in the day of judgment; *that when ye fail*, and at death this perishing world is left behind with all its enjoyments, *they may receive you into everlasting habitations*; they who have received the comfort of your bounty, God's poor saints, or Christ and God himself, who will reward such works of faith, and labours of love, with everlasting glory. *Note*, (1.) This world's wealth is called *the mammon of unrighteousness*, or *of deceit*, because usually it is abused to the vilest purposes, and gotten by unjust and deceitful means. (2.) The only way of turning those riches to our advantage, which others abuse to their ruin, is by employing them for the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-creatures, and then they will be blessings. (3.) At death, all things fail us; nothing of our earthly affluence can go down with us to the grave; unless we have sent our treasures before us, they can then afford us no satisfaction. (4.) Our one great business here below is to secure for ourselves the everlasting habitations; and though no money can purchase a mansion in glory, yet will they, who have laid out their talents in God's blessed service, find themselves hereafter repaid with the richest interest.

Our Lord enforces his exhortation by the following arguments, (1.) That the misimprovement of the gifts of God's providence must effectually exclude them from the treasures of his grace, for as a servant who is faithful in a little matter, gains our confidence to be intrusted with more; so where he is unjust in trifles, no prudent master would care to employ him in matters of greater importance. If therefore we are unfaithful in the abuse of worldly things, it cannot be thought we should make a better improvement of the nobler talents, the means of divine wisdom and grace; and therefore these *true riches* he will justly withhold from us, ver. 11. and if we have behaved as dishonest stewards in that which God hath intrusted us with, and which is not our own, but his, how can it be expected that we should possess that *good part*, the riches of grace, which most properly may be called *our own* because once possessed, it shall never be taken *from us?* (2.) It is impossible to serve two masters: God and Mammon; because their demands being opposite and contradictory, so far as we love and serve the world, we must hate and disobey God: and on the other hand, if we love and serve him we must be dead to the world, and ready to forego all its honours, interests, pleasures, and esteem, whenever they stand in competition with his glory. God requires the heart, he cannot suffer a rival, nor will he admit of an allowed partition: to attempt reconciling the inconsistent services of God and Mammon, is all the devil asks to insure our ruin.

5. The Pharisees were highly offended with truths which touched them so nearly. Their character was drawn in this unjust steward, and their covetous, worldly minded hearts, under all their most plausible guise of religion, were the slaves of Mammon: they treated him therefore with the greatest disdain and contempt. *Note*, (1.) The inordinate love of this world is the bane of many a fair professor. (2.) When the word of God presses the conscience hard, the obstinate sinner often affects to despise, and turn off with a laugh, what he feels himself unable to answer. (3.) If we are treated with insult and derision by those to whom we minister the gospel, Jesus our master endured the like treatment before us.

6. Christ sharply rebukes their hypocrisy and worldly mindedness. He despised their reviling, yet warns them of their ruin, that they might yet repent of their sins before it was too late. *Ye are they which justify yourselves before men*, pretending the strictest piety, and most scrupulous devotion; *but God knoweth your hearts*, that they are full of deadly poison, of pride, envy, covetousness, falsehood, and oppression: *for that which is highly esteemed among men*, these pompous shows of exterior sanctity, *is abomination in the sight of God*, who sees the odious principles which actuate your whole conduct, and abhors all your pretended services. *Note*, (1.) The most rigid services of formal religion, instead of justifying men before God, render them only the more abhorred. (2.) The opinion of the world is a very fallacious rule of judgment: usually the most admired characters in the eyes of men, are in his regards an abomination; and they who are set up as patterns of piety, will be found in fact a sink of iniquity.

7. He turns to the poor publicans and sinners, whom the Pharisees despised, encouraging them to press into that kingdom which his grace had opened to them. The Old Testament dispensation was now at an end, since the preaching of John the Baptist: the prophecies concerning the Messiah were about to receive their accomplishment, and the free grace of the gospel

to be universally published through the world, when the distinction of Jew and Gentile should cease. Every man, therefore, without exclusion of any sinner, whatever crimes he may have committed, is welcome to the Saviour, and sure to find mercy. And these glad tidings engaged the hearts of many, whom the self-righteous Pharisees despised, to press into it amidst all opposition. *Note,* They must strive against the world who would enter into heaven.

8. He precludes an objection which his self-righteous enemies would be ready to start, that he meant to invalidate the authority of the divine law. No. The frame of heaven and earth shall sooner be dissolved than one tittle of the law can fail; all the prophecies, types, and figures, must receive their accomplishment; the precepts in their true spiritual meaning, were now more than ever explained by Christ's preaching, and magnified by his own obedience to them; and, far from admitting a laxer system of moral duty, this holy law must abide the unchangeable rule of righteousness; and conformity to it would now be enforced by the strongest motives: as for instance in the article of marriage: divorce under the law of Moses was permitted to prevent greater evils; but under the gospel it is entirely prohibited, and marriage restored to its primitive institution, nothing being admitted as a plea for its dissolution but unfaithfulness to the marriage bed. Whosoever therefore for any other cause putteth away his wife, and marries again, is an adulterer; as is he also who shall marry her who is divorced. The gospel, wherever it is truly received, strikes at the root of corrupt affections, and engages us to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

19. ¶ [c] There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20. [d] And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, [e] full of sores, 21. [f] And desiring to be fed with the crumbs * which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, [g] the dogs came and licked his sores. 22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and [h] was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and [k] was buried; 23. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and [l] seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24. And he cried and said, [m] Father Abraham, [n] have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that [o] he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time [p] receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26. And besides all this, between us and you there is a [q] great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that *would come* from thence. 27. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28. For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29. Abraham saith unto him, [r] They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear [s] them. 30. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, [s] neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. *

c Job 21. 7—15. Ps. 17. 14. & 73. 3—9. & 119. 70. Jam. 5. 5. Job 15. 27.

d Mat. 11. 5. Jam. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. Prov. 1. 7.

e Job 2. 7. 8. Ps. 73. 14. & 34. 19.

f Ps. 107. 5. & 142. 4. 1 Cor. 4. 11. Heb. 11. 37, 38.

* Campbell, and several other eminent critics, are of opinion that there is no foundation in this expression for supposing, as our commentator has done, that the poor man was refused even the crumbs.

g Rom. 8. 28. Hos. 2. 18.

h Heb. 1. 14. Ps. 91. 11, 12.

i Mat. 8. 11. ch. 13. 28. & 23. 43. Ps. 73. 24. Phil. 1. 21, 23.

k Is. 14. 18. Gen. 50. 9, 10.

l Ch. 13. 28. Mat. 8. 11, 12.

m Ch. 3. 7. John 8. 33, 39. Mat. 3. 9.

n Jam. 2. 13. ch. 19. 42—44. Rev. 22. 11. Jer. 22. 23.

o Zech. 14. 12. Is. 33. 14. & 66. 24. Mark 9. 44—48. Rev. 14. 10, 11.

p Job 12. 6. & 21. 13. Ps. 37. 35—37. Is. 57. 2. 20. 21. Rev. 14. 13. & 20. 15. & 21. 8. ch. 6. 24.

q Ps. 50. 22. John 7. 26. 2 Thes. 1. 9.

r Is. 8. 20. & 34. 16. Mal. 4. 4. John 5. 39, 45. Acts 15. 21. & 17. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 15—17.

s John 12. 10, 11.

* It should be recollected that many of those who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus, were not induced to believe in Christ, even by that stupendous miracle.

Verses 19—31. This parable seems to be particularly designed to rebuke the pride of the Jews, who, enriched with outward privileges, treated the poor Gentiles with disdain, as unworthy a place among the dogs of their flock; and yet there was grace in store for the poor diseased sinners whom they despised, whilst, through their unbelief and impenitence, they themselves would be rejected and ruined. It is also more generally applicable to what we see sadly verified every day, that rich epicures wallow in luxury, whilst God's dear children pine under want and hunger; whose end will be as it is here represented; where the veil is taken off from the world to come, and we behold the glories of the one, and the unutterable miseries of the other.

1. The state of a rich wicked man is set before us. *There was a certain rich man,* whose fortune enabled him to gratify every appetite; he appeared in the most splendid robes, equalling the majesty of princes, *clothed in purple and fine linen;* and his table was spread with every delicacy, *he fared sumptuously every day.* It may be said, Where is the harm of this? he was born to his estate, and the expense was no more than he could afford. Admit the fact. The harm was not in the use, but the abuse, of the creatures of God. He lived a life of sensuality, and sat unconcerned about the miseries of others. And it is designed to teach us, (1.) That this world's riches are often given to those who know not God, and that his love and favour are never to be judged of by outward things. (2.) That wealth and affluence are dangerous to the soul, and affording the means to gratify men's bestial appetites, often plunge them in perdition and destruction.

2. The state of the poor godly man. He is called *Lazarus:* and to the miseries of poverty were added the more afflicting portion of a nauseous disease; wanting a morsel of bread, overspread with ulcers, without even rags to cover them, unable to walk, he is carried to the rich man's gate, and laid on the cold ground, desiring to be fed, if but with the crumbs which fell from the table. We hear no complaints, no murmuring at his condition; he was reduced to want, and not ashamed to beg; but from what appears, he begged in vain; either his requests were refused, or, which amounted to the same thing, neglected and disregarded: but the dogs possessed of more humanity than their master, came and licked his sores. Behold here the condition of a dear saint of God, and learn of him, (1.) Not to estimate a man's spiritual state by his afflictions: for it is often seen, that those whom the Lord most loveth he is pleased most severely to exercise. (2.) Patient submission to God's providential chastisements is a gracious proof of our adoption. (3.) The cries of the poor, which have been rejected or unnoticed, will by and by be remembered to the confusion of those who thus unkindly treated them. (4.) They will have a grievous account to answer for, who have spent more on their dogs than they ever gave to the necessitous; and see them well fed, when many of their fellow-creatures are famishing.

3. Death at last came, with friendly hand to remove at once all the poor beggar's miseries. Emaciated with hunger and disease, worn down with pain and misery, he closed his eyes, and bid adieu to human wretchedness; seeking a refuge in the grave, where the wicked cease from troubling. We hear of no burial given him; probably some hole was dug to remove the nuisance from the gate; and, buried with the burial of an ass, not a friend followed the bier, not a tear was dropped over the grave; but he rests in peace, and now his eternal triumphs begin: attending angels, who minister to the heirs of salvation, and hover round their dying beds, received the departing spirit, and, on their wings mounting to the skies, shouted aloud, Lift up your heads ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, that an heir of glory may come in. Led to his seat on high, admitted to the richest entertainments of that blessed world, he is placed next to Abraham, and receives that distinguished honour of leaning on the patriarch's bosom. What a glorious prospect does this present! amidst all our present evil, how should such a hope support and comfort us! Death must be the farthest limits of a believer's sufferings; beyond the grave, all is happiness eternal, and bliss uninterrupted.

4. *The rich man also died, and was buried.* Probably his funeral was pompous, as his living was grand. A noble tomb received the corpse, and spices and perfumes made the clods of the valley sweet unto him, whilst perhaps charity wept on the monument, and the flattering marble proclaimed his munificence, liberality, and every virtue that ever yet adorned man. How vain this pageantry! to which the body is now insensible; and the soul, alas! whither is it fled? *In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments,* the just punishment of his abused affluence; and now how changed are the circumstances! He sees with astonishment, *Abraham, afar off,* and *Lazarus,* the poor despised Lazarus, *in his bosom,* admitted to this state of highest honour and dignity. *Note,* (1.) The misery of the wicked, and the happiness of the just, immediately commence at their death. (2.) Every sight in hell is aggravating; even the prospect of heaven before the damned can only torment them with the views of that glory into which they must never enter.

5. In this fearful situation we have the rich man's request. *He cried,* with eagerness and importunity, extorted by the pangs he felt. How different from the songs of riot that before echoed through his palace! *Father Abraham, have mercy on me;* perhaps in his cups he had ridiculed the old story of Abraham; or it may be he had depended upon his outward privileges as descended from him, but now found how vain were his expectations. *Note,* Many, who had never prayed before, will pray loud enough in hell, but pray in vain. His request seems small; *Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame:* how is his proud crest fallen? he who did not give this poor beggar a crumb from his table, now would fain crave a drop of water at his hands. He little thought once he should be so reduced. Observe, (1.) His complaint, *I am tormented in this flame.* Damned sinners have nothing but wrath before them, that preys like fire upon their souls, as much as their bodies are tormented by the everlasting burnings. They who will not hear and fear, and do no more wickedly, in this day of mercy, will then feel, when every pang will be embittered with despair. (2.) The day is near when they who despised the people of God would be glad to receive from them the least favours.

6. Abraham's answer is most confounding and upbraiding; for in hell no requests are granted, not even a drop of water to cool a flaming tongue. They who neglect the day of grace have nothing before them but misery, without abatement, and without end. *Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* (1.) He addresses him as a *son,* the remembrance of which relation aggravated the guilt of his degenerate conduct. Our abused privileges will increase the measure of our guilt. (2.) He bids him *remember;* for conscience then will be awake, and self-tormenting reflections embitter every pang. The sinner will remember every means of grace he hath trifled with, every call of God he hath slighted, every affliction which he hath misimproved, every blessing he hath abused. (3.) He reminds him of the *good things* which he had received, and misapplied; unthankful for them; placing his happiness in them; prostituting them to the basest purposes of serving his lusts and pleasures; and, as he reckoned these during life his chief good, he had his all in hand, and nothing to expect after death but wrath to the uttermost. (4.) He leads him to reflect on the *evil things,* Lazarus had received, which patiently he had borne, though denied at his gate a crumb which fell from the table. (5.) He bids him now observe how the tables are turned; *he is comforted:* the miseries of a child of God, however sharp, are comparatively speaking, light afflictions, which are but for a moment: death will put an end to every sorrow, and instantly his everlasting bliss will commence. *But thou art tormented,* the triumphing of the wicked is but for a moment; they can carry nothing with them into the grave; and the joys and delights, in which they wallowed before, will only make the change more terrible, when they are driven into the everlasting burnings, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. (6.) He leaves him without hope of mercy, or prospect of the least relief: for, *besides all this between us and you there is a great gulf fixed,* impassable on either side, *so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot;* if a glorified saint wished to afford the least relief to a damned sinner, it would be in vain; not that he will ever feel such a desire, but will approve and applaud the justice of God in their eternal torments. *Neither can they pass to us that would come from thence;* when once the pit of hell hath closed its mouth upon the miserable soul, despair seals up the door of mercy; no gleam of hope ever reaches that dire abode: the decree once gone forth is irreversible; as the tree falleth it must lie. How awful! how awakening the thought! Sinner, hear and tremble. The door of mercy is not yet shut against thee. Oh flee quickly thither. Cry mightily to God, if yet there may be hope; in a moment it will be too late to knock when the door is shut.

7. Again he prefers another request, but meets with a second repulse. Since he is doomed to despair to suffer himself, he cannot, without increasing horror, reflect on meeting his brethren at that place of torment, whom he probably had been greatly instrumental to ruin by his bad example and influence, and whose bitter upbraidings he wished to prevent: for not love of their souls, but desire to prevent an increase of his own miseries, seems to have dictated the request. Earnestly, therefore doth he entreat, that, if Lazarus may not come to him, he may go to them, and prevent *their* eternal ruin, if he may not alleviate *his* torment. *Note,* (1.) They who have been tempters to others, and companions in sin, will shortly become mutual tormentors. (2.) Even a tormented sinner in hell expresses a concern for the souls of his brethren, when thousands on earth never give themselves a thought about them.

Abraham denies the request: it is unnecessary as it is impossible. *They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.* They wanted not the means of conviction and conversion, if they did not obstinately harden their hearts. *Note,* The Scriptures are the ordinary means God employs to turn men's hearts. They who neglect to attend to these sacred oracles, are left to their own devices, and sealed up under wrath.

8. Once more he redoubles his plea, yet meets with no more success. In hell no prayers are answered; it is here alone that prayers can profit us. He replied, *Nay, father Abraham;* though they may pay no regard to Moses and the prophets, too long it may be, accustomed to treat all revelation with contempt: *yet, if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent;* such a

messenger must needs carry conviction along with him, and compel them to turn from the error of their ways. So ready are foolish men to be requiring evidence which God is not pleased to give, and which, should he comply with our request, would still be utterly ineffectual: for, as Abraham declares, *if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.* Indeed it is impossible they should. One from the dead could not speak with more authority and certainty than the Scriptures. We should have much more reason there to suspect a delusion, than in the oracles of truth. And though we might perhaps be terrified with the apparition, our hearts could never be changed thereby, since that the power of God alone can effect. We should by degrees recover from the fright, or be laughed out of our fears, and our corruption would soon get the better of our convictions. The word of God therefore is ordinarily the alone, and sufficient means he is pleased to use: it is presumption in us to prescribe, and folly to desire any other. If we harden our hearts against the warnings therein contained, visits from the dead, yea being dragged through the belly of hell itself, and sent back again to earth would be utterly ineffectual to convert our souls. *To the law therefore and the testimony,* Isa. viii. 19, 20.

CHAP. XVII.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter, 1. *Christ teaches his disciples to take heed of giving offence, and to forgive the injuries done them,* ver. 1—4. *To pray for the increase of their faith,* ver. 5, 6. *And then teacheth them humility, whatever service they had done for God,* ver. 7—10. 2. *He cleanses ten lepers, one only of whom thanks him, and he a Samaritan,* ver. 11—19. *He discourses with his disciples upon occasion of an inquiry of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should appear,* ver. 20—37.

1. THEN said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe *unto him* through whom they come? 2. [b] It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. 3. ¶ [c] Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. 4. [d] And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. 5. ¶ And the apostles said unto the Lord, [e] Increase our faith. 6. [f] And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you. 7. But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? * 8. And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, [g] and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? 9. Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. 10. So likewise ye, [h] when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants:† we have done that which was our duty to do.

a Mat. 18. 6—9. & 5. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 11. 19. 1 John 2. 19. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. Mat. 26. 24. Mark 9. 42—48.

b Mark 9. 42. Mat. 18. 6. & 25. 41—45. & 26. 44. 2 Thes. 1. 6—9.

c Mat. 18. 10, 15—17. Lev. 19. 17. Prov. 17. 10. & 27. 5. Jam. 5. 19. Prov. 9. 8, 9.

d Mat. 18. 21, 22. 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 7. Eph. 4. 31, 32. Col. 3. 12, 13. Rom. 12. 19, 20.

e Mark 9. 24.

f Mat. 17. 20. & 21. 21. & 13. 31. Mark 9. 23. & 11. 23. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

* An amended punctuation will enable us to read this verse thus: *Would any of you who hath a servant, &c. say to him on his return from the field,* Come immediately *and sit down,* &c.

g Ch. 12. 37.

h Job 9. 2, 3. & 22. 3. & 35. 7. Ps. 16. 2. & 130. 3. & 143. 2. Rom. 11. 35. 1 Cor. 9. 16. with Mat. 25. 30. Rom. 3. 12. Phil. 3. 8, 9. Isa. 6. 5. & 64. 6.

† Or *we have conferred no favour.*

Verses 1—10. This discourse is particularly addressed to the disciples, and contains,

1. A *warning* against giving offence. It must needs be, considering the corruption of our nature, the craft of Satan, and the temptations of the world, that offences come; but wo to *persecutors,* who discourage and oppose the work of God; wo to *seducers,* who corrupt the truth, and deceive the souls of men with pernicious heresies; wo to *faithless professors,* whose carnal lives stumble the weak and harden the wicked: better were it for them to die with the vilest of malefactors than live to increase their everlasting misery.

A *command* to forgive all injuries. *Take heed to yourselves,* as not to give offence, so also not to take it. When others are provoking, hold in your own spirit, and in patience possess your souls: let no angry thought, no passionate word nor wish, no violence break forth. Mildly endeavour to convince an offending brother, and the moment he expresses his repentance, let the arms of forgiveness and reconciliation be open to him; yea, if he, through carelessness or forgetfulness, seven times in a day repeat the offence, and turn again, professing his sorrow, and promising greater watchfulness, we must still forgive, and neither upbraid him, nor keep in mind his repeated provocations.

3. Here is *instruction* given, how we can alone discharge this difficult duty. *Lord,* says the apostles, *increase our faith.* This is the root from whence all other graces flow; as this strengthens, they are in exercise. The apostles themselves were conscious of the weakness of their faith; they knew his grace alone could supply their wants: therefore in prayer to him they make their application. We must go to the same Saviour, and he will not send us empty away. To their request the Lord replied, *If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you;* such being the mighty efficacy of divine faith; and every duty, under its influence, becomes practicable.

4. Christ enjoins upon them humility in all their services. Whatever works they were enabled to perform, whatever difficulties they might be called to encounter, they must regard themselves as his *servants,* and fulfil the duties of their station, nor think they had merited any thing by their labours: for, as a servant, when he returns from his work in the field, doth not expect to be attended, but is required first to wait on his master before he sups himself, nor is thanked for so doing, because it is his duty; in like manner must Christ's ministers and servants, when they have done their best, acknowledge they are unprofitable servants, and, if they had indeed performed *all things* commanded them, they would have done no more than was *their duty to do,* and would have no merit to plead: *our goodness extendeth not to God,* we can never make him our debtor for duty, whilst we must daily own ourselves his debtors for pardoning and sanctifying grace.

11. ¶ And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he [i] passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers,

i John 4. 4. ch. 9 51.

which stood [k] afar off: 13. And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, [l] Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. 14. And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, [m] Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, [n] they were cleansed. 15. And [o] one of them, [p] when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, 16. And [q] fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a [r] Samaritan. 17. And Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? [s] but where *are* the nine? 18. [t] There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. 19. And he said unto him, [u] Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

k Lev. 13. 45, 46. Num. 5 2. 2 Kin. 7. 3. & 5. 27. 2 Chr. 26. 20, 21. ch. 18. 13.
l Mat. 15. 22. & 8. 2. & 20. 30, 31. Mark 9. 22. ch. 18. 13, 30, 39.
m Lev. xiii, xiv. ch. 5. 14.
n Ps. 19. 11. & 33. 9. & 107. 20. Mat. 8. 3. & 11. 5.
o Exod. 23. 2. Rom. 12. 2.
p Ps. ciii, cxvi, cxiv, cv, cvii, xviii, xcv.
q Gen. 32. 10. Ps. 116. 12. & 75. 1, 2. & 115. 1, 2.
r John 4. 9. & 8. 48. 2 Kin. 17. 24—41. Ezra iv, v. Neh. iv, vi. ch. 9. 51, 52.
s 2 Chr. 32. 25. Ps. 106. 13. Rom. 1. 21. Mat. 7. 14.
t Mat. 8. 10. & 15. 28. John 4. 29.
u Is. 11. 10. Gen. 45. 10. Mat. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 41, 43. & 20. 16.

Verses 11—19. The leprosy was a disorder not only incurable, and most nauseous, but which rendered the unhappy patient ceremonially defiled, and excluded him from the comforts of human society. We have here the miraculous cure of ten men afflicted with that miserable disease.

1. They met Christ on his journey, bearing, it may be, of his coming that way, and assembled to move his compassion, and unite their supplications to him. Keeping at a humble distance, they lifted up their voice and cried aloud for mercy to him whom fame had proclaimed the Saviour of the miserable. *Note*, (1.) A humble sense of our own vileness should deeply affect our souls in all our approaches to God. (2.) Joint sufferers should unite their prayers, and thus more powerfully besiege the throne of grace.

2. Christ sent them to the priest for inspection, whom the law had made the judges of leprosy. And herein he intimated his design to cleanse them, if they in faith obeyed his direction; and withal hereby his power and glory would be made evident to those in the sanctuary, who, pronouncing these persons clean, might learn by what means the wondrous cure was wrought.

3. *As they went they were healed.* They did not hesitate about the journey, or say, To what purpose should we go? but went in faith, and were accordingly healed; for in the way of duty we may expect Christ's powerful hand of grace to work effectually for us, where we are utterly unable to help ourselves.

4. One of the poor lepers no sooner received his cure than he immediately returned, *with a loud voice glorifying God*, adoring the power of grace which he had so richly experienced, and fell at *the feet of Jesus*, with warmest gratitude expressing his acknowledgments of the mercy which he had received. *Note*, The least we can render to God for his goodness towards us is praise; and therein we are bound to be speedy and hearty, deeply sensible that we are less than the least of all his mercies.

5. Christ expresses his approbation of his conduct, and encourages his faith. Nine out of the ten went on; but this man, though *a Samaritan, a stranger* to the commonwealth of Israel, evidenced deeper gratitude and more unfeigned religion than those who professed to know the true God. Our Lord therefore dismisses him with an assurance of his salvation. His faith had not only obtained the cure in common with the rest, but had saved his soul also. *Note*, (1.) Ingratitude is a common sin. How many more receive mercies from God than are thankful for them? (2.) We often meet with the greatest gratitude where we least expected it; whilst sometimes they who make profession of religion most grievously disappoint us.

20. ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God* cometh not [x] with observation. 21. Neither shall they say, [y] Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is [z a] within you. 22. ¶ And he said unto the disciples, [b] The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see *it*. 23. [c] And they shall say to you, See here! or, see there! go not after *them*, nor follow *them*. 24. [d] For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be [e] in his day. 25. But [f] first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. 26. [g] And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. 27. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28. [h] Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; 29. [i] But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. 30. [k] Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. 31. [l] In that day, he which shall be upon the house top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. 32. [m] Remember Lot's wife. 33. [n] Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. 34. [o] I tell you, in that [p] night there shall be [q] two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. 35. Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 36.* Two *men* shall be in the field: the one shall be taken, and the other left. 37. And they answered and said unto him, [r] Where, Lord? And he said unto

* Or, *the reign of God.*
x Or *with outward show.* Zech. 4. 6. Dan. 2. 44. John 18. 36. Rom. 14. 17. & 12. 2.
y Mat. 21. 23. ch. 21. 8. Mark 13. 21.
z Or *among.* John 1. 26.
a Mat. 12. 28. & 21. 43. Rom. 2. 29. & 14. 17. Col. 1. 27. John 3. 3, 5. Gal. 6. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 17. 1 Sam. 16. 7.
b Mat. 9. 15. John 7. 33, 34. & 8. 21. & 12. 35.
c Mat. 24. 23. Mark 13. 21. ch. 21. 8. 1 John 4. 1.
d Mat. 24. 27. Is. 30. 13, 14. & 24. 1—6.
e Mat. 24. 30. & 25. 31. & 26. 64. Rev. 11. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Acts 17. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 7.
f Mat. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19. ch. 9. 22. & 18. 31. & 24. 7, 26.
g Mat. 24. 37—41. Gen. vi, vii. Job 22. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20. 2 Pet. 2. 5. & 3. 6. Heb. 11. 7. Phil. 2. 21. ch. 18 8. 1 Thes. 5. 2, 3. Is. 30. 13, 14.
h Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 20. Ezek. 16. 49, 50. Gen. 19. 4—14. Is. 22. 12, 13. Phil. 2. 21. Jam. 4. 3, 4. & 5. 5.
i Gen. 19. 24. Deut. 29. 23. Job 18. 15. Is. 13. 19. Jer. 50. 40. Hos. 11. 8. Amos 4. 11. Zeph. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 6. Jude 7.
k Ver. 24. Mat. 26. 64. & 24. 30 & 25. 31. Rev. 11. 10, 15. & 20. 11, 12. 1 Thes. 6. 2, 3. ch. 18. 8. 2 Thes. 1. 7.
l Mat. 24. 16, 17, 18. Mark 13. 14—16 Job 2. 4. Mat. 6. 25. Jer. 45. 5.
m Gen. 19. 26. ch. 13. 3, 5.
n Mat. 16. 25. & 10. 39. Mark 8. 35. ch. 9. 24. John 12. 25.
o Mat. 24. 40, 41.
p Joel 2. 31. Zeph. 1. 14, 15. Amos 8. 9, 10. & 5. 30. & 8. 22. & 13. 9, 10.
q 1 Cor. 4. 7. 1 Thes. 4. 17. Ps. 20. 8. Job 22. 20. Ps. 26. 9. & 28. 3.
* This verse is wanting in many Greek copies.
r Mat 24. 28. Job 39. 29. Dan. 9. 26, 27. Amos 9. 1—4. 1 Thes. 2. 16. ch. 19. 43.

† The Roman armies shall hunt out and destroy the corrupt Jews wherever they are.

them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will† the eagles be gathered together.

Verses 20—37. We have here our Lord's answer to the Pharisee's question, *when the kingdom of God should come;* that glorious temporal kingdom of the Messiah which their prejudices taught them to expect.

1. He informs them that it will come with none of that outward show which they imagined, nor occasion any such observation; as when a prince makes his progress through his kingdom, every mouth is full of it, *Lo here* he comes, or *lo there* he resides: *for behold the kingdom of God is within you;* the heart is the seat of the Messiah's kingdom; there he sets up his throne, bringing the soul with all its faculties, into obedience to his blessed Self. *Note*, (1.) Christianity knows no sect or party; Christ is not confined here or there; but all who believe in him and love him in sincerity, are subjects of his happy government. (2.) We must look into our hearts, whether Christ be formed in us. All true religion is internal and experimental, and without this the form and show of godliness avail nothing.

2. He directs his discourse to his disciples, with a view to warn them of the difficulties they must encounter. Far from becoming great men in this world, esteemed and honoured as they flattered themselves, they would meet with such seasons of distress and persecution, as would make them look back with desire and regret upon one of these days, when they enjoyed Christ's personal presence with them, and wish for it in vain.

3. He foretells them of his speedy and unexpected appearance to destroy the Jewish people; when driven to extremities, they would be ready to hearken to every impostor who pretended Christ was here or there, ready to rescue them from the power of the Romans; but, like lightning he would appear and utterly consume that devoted city and nation. Or this may represent also the mighty efficacy of his gospel, which, with irresistible power and rapidity, should spread to the ends of the earth, notwithstanding all opposition.

4. He informs them the Messiah *must suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation:* but when, by death, he hath accomplished the salvation of his people, then all his enemies and theirs must fall before him.

5. His coming to destroy Jerusalem would be sudden and terrible, as the flood which consumed the old world, and the fire that devoured the cities of Sodom; whilst the sensuality and carnal security of the Jewish people would be like that which prevailed in the days of Lot and Noah, whose warnings were despised and disbelieved, till the threatened ruin came, and, too late, brought the dire conviction of their truth. So would the unbelieving Jews reject the warnings of Christ and his apostles, and perish as these despisers of old. *Note*, (1.) The inordinate pursuit of this world's gratifications are apt to lull the soul into a fatal security. (2.) It is common for sinners to go fast asleep into eternal misery, and not to be apprehensive of their danger till they lift up their eyes in torments. (3.) A few, in the most evil days, are rescued, whom God will take care of amidst every danger. (4.) The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ will be matter of the same surprise to a careless world at the last day as his judgments of old have been.

6. He admonishes his disciples, as soon as they saw the danger approach, and the Roman army advancing to Jerusalem, to flee without delay; nor to regard what they may have left behind in the city, nor stop to cast a look thitherwards, lest, as Lot's wife was made a monument of divine vengeance, a like destruction should overtake them, if, solicitous about what they left, they should look back, or go back to save it. In these days of persecution, when tempted to save their lives by base compliances, they must remember this would be the sure way to perish everlastingly; whilst readiness to meet death itself in the way of duty, would most effectually secure their eternal life and glory. *Note*, (1.) We should often remember Lot's wife, and tremble at the thought of drawing back. (2.) If we would make a right estimation of our gain and loss, we must look forward to eternity, and take that into the reckoning.

7. God's distinguishing providence will in that day take care of his own people, who, though exposed to the same dangers as others, shall be then singularly preserved, and escape from the grand desolation. *Note*, God knoweth those that are his, and will always take care they shall be safe, either beneath the sun or above it.

8. In answer to his disciples, who inquired, *Where, Lord?* what will become of those who are left, and where shall the judgment light? he informs them, *where the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together;* wherever the Jews are, the Romans, as eagles, will pursue them, seize them in their fastnesses, and utterly root them out of the land. And this may be applied to Christ himself, to whom all people eagerly flock, and feed on him, to the great strengthening and comfort of their souls.

CHAP. XVIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The parable of the importunate widow, designed to teach us fervency in prayer,* ver. 1—8. 2. *The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, designed to teach us humility, and humiliation for sin in prayer,* ver. 9—14. 3. *Christ's favour to little children that were brought to him,* ver. 15, 16, 17. 4. *The rich man who loved his wealth more than Christ,* ver. 18—30. 5. *Christ's foretelling of his own death and sufferings,* ver. 31—34. 6. *His restoring sight to a blind man,* ver. 35—43. *And these four passages we had before in Matthew and Mark.*

1. AND he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought [a] always to pray, and not to faint; 2. Saying, There was in a city a judge, [b] which feared not God, neither regarded man: 3. And there was a [c] widow in that city: and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. 4. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; 5. Yet, [d] because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. 6. And the Lord said, [e] Hear what the unjust judge saith. 7. [f] And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? 8. I tell you that [g] he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, [h] when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

[a] 1 Thes. 5. 17. ch. 11. 5—8. & 21. 36. Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18. Col. 4. 2. Gen. 32. 26.
[b] 1 Sam. 2. 12. Job 21. 14, 15. Mic. 3. 1—3.
[c] Ps. 83. 3, 4. Deut. 27. 19. Is. 1. 17, 23.
[d] See ver. 7. ch. 11. 8.
[e] Mat. 7. 11. ch. 11. 16. & 16. 8.
[f] Ch. 11. 8. Ps. 9. 18. & 13. 1. & 22. 1, 2. & 103. 9. John 13. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7. Rev. 6. 10, 11. Hab. 2. 3. Heb. 10. 35—37.
[g] 2 Pet. 3. 8, 9. Ps. 46. 5. Heb. 10. 37. Rev. 18. 8.
[h] 2 Tim. 3. 1. & 4. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 3. When Christ comes to destroy the Jews and judge the world, he will find little real religion among them.

Verses 1—8. The intention of the parable before us, as we are informed in the first verse, is to encourage us in persevering prayer, even though we may not always find the immediate answer of our requests. We have,

1. The parable of the importunate widow and unjust judge. He was a man of abandoned principles, destitute of religion and honesty, *neither fearing God nor regarding man;* and miserable is that country where such magistrates are in office. A poor oppressed widow appealed to him for redress; cruelly taking

advantage of her weakness, some crafty or covetous wretch had defrauded or injured her: and, with ceaseless importunity, at the judge's gate, she cried for justice to be done her. Deaf for a while to her entreaties, he paid no regard to her cause, till, wearied out with her perpetual clamour, merely to get rid of it, he granted her suit, and redressed her wrongs.

2. Christ applies the case, for the encouragement of his praying people. If the unjust judge was thus prevailed upon by importunity, how much more *shall God avenge his own elect, who cry to him day and night, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.* *Note*, (1.) God's people are his *elect:* they have not chosen him, but he hath chosen them. (2.) Dear as they are to him, they meet with many a sore trial, and much oppression in this world: and to him they carry all their complaints. (3.) We must not be weary, though our requests do not immediately succeed; but patiently persevere in calling upon God day and night. (4.) God *bears long* with his enemies, to see if they will yet repent and turn to him; and he defers *long* the prayers of his people to exercise their graces; but he will *speedily* avenge them, punishing their enemies, and rescuing them from their sufferings.

3. He foretells his disciples how little faith would be found among the Jewish people when he came to judge them; and at his second coming the remnant of the faithful would be alike small; a fearful consideration! Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall, and redouble his prayers that he may never faint nor fail under any trials.

i Ch. 10. 29. & 16. 15. Phil. 3. 4—6. Rom. 9. 31, 32. & 10. 2, 3. Is. 65. 5.

* Or *as being righteous.*

k Mat. 21. 31, 32. ch. 7. 29, 30. & 15. 1, 2.

l Mat. 6. 2, 5, 16. & 23. 14. & 9. 14. Is. 1. 11—15. & 58. 2. Rev. 3. 17. 1 Sam. 15. 13. Mat. 23. 23. Phil. 3. 4—6. Gal. 1. 14. Rom. 10. 2, 3.

† Or *But.*

m Ezra 9. 5, 6, 15. Jer. 31. 18, 19. & 3. 13, 25. Ezek. 16. 63. ch. 23. 48. Acts 2. 37. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Ps. 40. 12. Job 40. 4. Rom. 7, 24.

n Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 2. 16.

o Mat. 23. 12. ch. 14. 11. & 1. 52. Job 22. 29. Prov. 3. 34. & 15. 33. & 18. 12. & 29. 23. Jam. 4. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6.

9. ¶ And he spake this parable unto certain which [i] trusted in themselves * that they were righteous, and despised others: 10. Two men went up into the temple to pray; [k] the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11. [l] The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13.† And the publican, [m] standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14. I tell you, this man went down to his house [n] justified *rather* than the other: [o] for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Verses 9—14. The purport of this parable is intimated in the opening of it, *He spake this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* They were puffed up with a vain conceit of their excellence above other men; they presumed their own doings and duties would insure their acceptance with God: and, high in self-opinion, looked down with contempt on the herd of vulgar sinners as far beneath them; though in God's sight they were infinitely more vile and abominable than those whom they despised. We have,

1. The account of two men of very different characters, who went up to the temple to pray. The one a *Pharisee*, proud, self-righteous, who, confident of his own goodness, expected the admiration of men, and counted even God his debtor. The other a *publican*, a poor, broken-hearted, self-condemned sinner, who, feeling his misery fled to God for mercy. *Note*, (1.) Prayer is every man's duty. They must be inexcusable who live in the neglect of it. (2.) The temple was the type of Jesus Christ, through whom alone our prayers can come up before God with any prospect of acceptance.

2. The Pharisee's address to God bespoke the abominable arrogance of his heart. *He stood and prayed thus with himself*, in some conspicuous place where others might admire his devotion and piety, *God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.* He pretends to thank God, but in fact all he said was merely a compliment on himself. Much evil he had avoided, much good he had done; not only abstaining from grosser vices, from extortion, adultery, injustice, but also he was often in fastings, and scrupulous in paying tithes of all that he possessed; and with much self-complaisance congratulates himself that he was so much superior to other men, and boasts to God how far he exceeded in goodness that vile publican, whom he passed in the outer court of the temple. Thus spoke this swelling worm: what he called his prayers breathed nothing but the language of pride, uncharitableness, and censure. Yet, detested as this character appears, how many who hope for heaven come short of it, and live indulging these vices, from which even this Pharisee was free?

3. The publican's prayer was just the very reverse. In humility, self-abhorrence, and earnest desire after mercy, he bows into the dust before God. He *stood afar off*, keeping a humble distance from the Pharisee, whom he counted so much his superior; or in the outer court of the Gentiles, as unworthy a place among true Israelites; *and would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven;* with downcast looks, which bespoke the deep dejection of his soul, as if he was unworthy to turn even his eyes towards God's holy habitation; *but smote upon his breast*, where that vile heart lodged in which so much evil had dwelt, and against which he would express a holy indignation. Then raising, as it were, a deep sigh from his inmost soul, in one short ejaculation he breathed forth the desires of his sinful soul, *God be merciful to me a sinner!* He *owns his guilt*, by nature, by practice, ill-deserving, hell-deserving; he disclaims all hope and dependence upon himself, and trusts alone upon the promised *mercy* of God through the blood of atonement; assured he must otherwise eternally perish: and therefore he casts his soul down before the throne of God's grace, earnestly begging that mercy which he so greatly needed. A pattern which every poor sinner must imitate: and in this way alone may the miserable hope to find mercy. We are all in this publican's state; and, if ever we would be saved, we must learn his spirit and adopt his prayer.

4. Very different was the acceptance which these men's prayers met at a throne of grace. However to outward view the specious Pharisee might be generally among men preferred to this despised publican, God seeth not as man seeth: *this* poor, self-abased, and penitent sinner *went down to his house justified*, his sins pardoned, his person accepted, his prayer granted, and peace spoken to his soul; *and not the other;* the proud self justifier was left to his native guilt and sin, abhorred of God, his very prayers an abomination, and all his boasts were but delusion, and must prove his destruction. And the reason of this is added, which contains also an axiom which will be for ever proved true; *every one that exalteth himself*, in the vain imagination of his own self-sufficiency and righteousness before God, looking down with disdain upon others, as so much his inferior in goodness, he *shall be abased;* his pride will be mortified, his sins will take hold of him, and the wrath of God in hell for ever abideth upon him, whilst *he that humbleth himself*, taking shame for his sinfulness and baseness before God, confessing his guilt, and acknowledging his unworthiness of the least mercy, *shall be exalted* to the favour of God in this world, and to his eternal glory in a better.

15. ¶ And [p] they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, [q] they rebuked them. 16. [r] But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. 17. [s] Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

p Mat. 19. 13—15. Mark 10. 13—16. Gen. 48. 14. 15. 1 Sam. 1. 24. Jer. 49. 11.

q Mat. 15. 23. & 16. 22. & 20. 31.

r Heb. 2. 17. Is. 65. 1, 2. Ps. 34. 11. & 45. 10, 11. Prov. 8. 17. & 4. 1. & 23. 26.

s Mat. 18. 3, 4. John 3. 3, 5. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Ps. 131. 2.

Verses 15—17. This passage or story hath before been twice recorded; and a third time it is profitable to consider it:

1. As an encouragement to parents early to bring their babes to Jesus, in prayer committing them to his benediction, by baptism offering them to become visible members of his church, and engaging to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

2. We must not be disheartened in our application, if we find those discountenance us from whom we hoped for encouragement; the Master himself will treat us more kindly.

3. The longest day we live, we need still to set before us a little child for our pattern. In the school of teachableness, humility, and simplicity, the best and wisest have yet many lessons to learn.

18. ¶ [t] And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 19. And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [u] none *is* good save one, *that is*, God. 20. [x] Thou knowest the commandments; Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. 21. And he said, [y] All these things have I kept from my youth up. 22. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, [z] Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. 23. And when he heard this, he [a] was very sorrowful; for he was very rich. 24. ¶ And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful he said, [b] How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! 25. For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 26. And they that heard *it* said, [c] Who then can be saved? 27. And he said, [d] The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. 28. ¶ [e] Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. 29. And he said unto them, [f] Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, 30. Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time,* and in the world to come life everlasting.

t Mat. 19. 16—30. Mark 10. 17—26. ch. 10. 25—30. John 6. 28. Acts 2. 37. Rom. 9. 30, 32. & 10. 2, 3.

u 1 Sam. 2. 2. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Ps. 119. 68. Jam. 1. 17.

x Ch. 10. 26—28. Exod. 20. 12—17. Rom. 13. 9. Gal. 5. 21. & 3. 10, 12. & 5. 14. Jam. 2. 8. Deut. 5. 16—21. Col. 3. 20.

y Ver. 11, 12. Gal. 1. 14. Phil. 3. 6. Rom. 10. 2, 3.

z Ch. 12. 33. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. Mat. 6. 19, 20. Acts 4. 34.

a Ch. 8. 7, 14. & 21. 34. Judg. 18. 23, 24. Ps. 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

b See ver. 23. Job 31. 24. Ps. 62. 10. Prov. 11. 28. 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. Jam. 2. 5. & 4. 4. Mat. 19. 23—26. Mark 10. 23—27.

c Ch. 13. 23. & 1. 34.

d Job 10. 13. & 42. 2. Jer. 32. 17. Gen. 18. 14. Zech. 8. 6. ch. 1. 37.

e Mat. 19. 27—29. Mark 10. 28—31. ch. 5. 11. Phil. 3. 7—9. Deut. 33. 9.

f Ch. 14. 26, 27. & 9. 23, 24. Phil. 3. 7—14. Ps. 19. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 1 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Rom. 6. 23. Rev. 2. 17. & 3. 21.

* From the joys of a good conscience and of the Holy Ghost, the sense of God's favour, and the hopes of treasures in heaven, and the affection of good Christians to him.—*Whitby.*

Verses 18—30. We have here,

1. Our Lord's discourse with the young ruler, who inquired after the way to eternal life. The inquiry was important, and what the greatest of men need seriously to consider; for they are dying worms as well as others. Could men keep the commandments, this would be still the road to glory; but since the fall, that door of paradise is barred, and none can any longer hope to enter heaven by personal obedience, since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. To flatter ourselves we have kept the commandments, would prove our ignorance of the spirituality of God's law, and of the corruption of our own hearts. Thus deceived was this young ruler; and the delusion was evident the moment he was called upon to part with all for Christ; when unable to bear that hard saying, he departed sorrowful. *Note*, Wordly things are usually dire hinderances in the way to glory: for the sake of some one darling lust, how many make shipwreck of their souls.

2. Our Lord took occasion from hence to warn his disciples, whose hearts were too full of the hopes of temporal grandeur, how difficult, and next to impossible, it was for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. And, when they expressed their astonishment thereat, he refers them to that almighty grace which can effect that for us which we could never do for ourselves. *Note*, Instead of grasping at abundance, we should tremble at the perilousness of our situation; if God in his providence gives us much, we have so many more hinderances in our way to heaven, unless he gives us also proportionable grace to improve our talents to his glory.

3. In answer to Peter's question, what they should have, who left all to follow him, Christ replies, they should be abundant gainers thereby, receiving *manifold more in this present time*, if not in kind, yet in comfort in the present graces and gifts of God's Spirit, and in the enjoyment of his love and favour; *and in the world to come life everlasting*, which will infinitely overpay all our present losses.

31. ¶ [g] Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.* 32. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, [h] and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; 33. And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again. 34. [i] And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

g Mat. 20. 17—19. Mark 10. 32—34. Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. 53. 2—10. ch. 9. 22. 44. & 13. 33. & 12. 50. & xxii—xxiv. Mat. xxvi—xxviii. Mark xiv, xv, xvi. John xviii, xix, xx.

* Better, *All that the prophets have written shall be accomplished on the Son of man.*

h Ps. xxii, lxix. Is. 50. 6. & liii. Dan. 9. 24—26. Mic. 5. 1. Zech. 13. 7.

i Ch. 9. 45. & 24. 25. John 16. 17, 19. & 12. 16.

Verses 31—34. We have here,

1. The warning Christ gave his disciples of the sufferings he must endure, to arm them against that dire event. He was about to suffer every indignity, and at last death itself. Nor ought this to surprise them, since the Scriptures had foretold that thus it must be; and not one jot or tittle of the divine word can fail. But as they declared his sufferings, they had insured his resurrection also; and therefore his disciples need not despond, having this glorious event in their view.

2. So strong were the unhappy prejudices the apostles had imbibed, that they understood none of these things. The prophecies which spoke of the Messiah's sufferings and reproaches were hid from them; they could not reconcile the glorious things spoken of his kingdom to such a scene of indignities and humiliation: and, having their eyes dazzled with the temporal grandeur of the Messiah's kingdom, they overlooked all beside. But then, now, and ever, ought we to remember, that the way to glory, both for the head and the members, lies through much tribulation; and *no cross, no crown.*

35. ¶ [k] And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging: 36. And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. 37. And they told him, that [l] Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. 38. And he cried, saying, [m] Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me. 39. And they which went before [n] rebuked him, that he should hold his peace; but [o] he cried so much the more, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me. 40. And [p] Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, 41. Saying, [q] What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? and he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. 42. And Jesus said unto him, [r] Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. 43. [s] And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

k Mat. 20. 29—34. Mark 10. 46—52. Mat. 9. 27. & 12. 22. & 11. 5. Mark 8. 22—25. John 9. 1—7, 39. Is. 59. 10.
l Ch. 1. 26, 27. & 2. 4, 39, 51. & 4. 16. John 1. 45. Mat. 2. 23.
m Is. 9. 6, 7. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Ezek. 34. 23. Rom. 1. 3, 4. 2 Tim. 2. 8. Rev. 22. 16. Mat. 1. 1. & 9. 27. & 12. 23. & 15. 22.
n Ver. 15. ch. 11. 52. & 19. 39.
o Mat. 15. 22—28. ch. 11. 8. Gen. 32. 26. Ps. 22. 2. Mat. 7. 7. ver. 1.
p Heb. 2. 17. & 5. 2.
q Gen. 32. 27. & 2. 9. John 20. 13. Mat. 7. 7. Rev. 3. 20. with Is. 35. 5.
r Ps. 107. 20. & 33. 9. ch. 7. 50. & 8. 48. & 17. 19. Mat. 15. 28.
s Mat. 9. 22. & 17. 15. & 7. 16. Ps. 103. 1—3. & 116. 12. & 115. 1. & ciii—cviii, cxxxiv—cxxxvi, cxlv—cl. ch. 1. 46—55, 64—79.

Verses 35—43. It was prophesied of the Messiah, that he should open the eyes of the blind: here we see him fulfilling the prophetic word. And he who gave light to the darkened body, shines still with brighter beams, as the Sun of Righteousness, into the benighted soul, and communicates also the faculty of spiritual vision to those whose souls the god of this world hath blinded.

1. The patient here was blind and poor; and such beggars have a claim upon our charity.

2. He sat by the way-side, where he hoped for relief, and there he found more than his most sanguine wishes expected; for, whilst we are waiting upon God in his ways, he is pleased often to give us more than we can ask or think. He heard of the multitude that Jesus passed by, and now resolved to seize the happy moment to prefer his request; nor would be silenced by any rebukes of those who were near him, crying with loud and ceaseless importunity, *Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. Note,* Wherever God thus pours out a spirit of prayer and supplication, it is a sure earnest that he intends to grant our petitions.

3. Christ in his wonted compassion, calls the poor man, bids him prefer his petition, and grants his request, giving him sight according to his desire. The tender hearted Saviour feels for human wretchedness, and will not send the poor and humble supplicant away without an answer of peace. If we have faith to trust him, he hath power and willingness to heal all our infirmities, and to supply all our wants.

4. The poor beggar now restored to sight, with delight followed Jesus in the way, glorifying God for the mercy he had experienced; and all the people joined his praises. *Note,* (1.) If we have received spiritual sight, then shall we follow Jesus without delay in all his holy ways. (2.) The mercies of others demand our thankfulness, as well as our own; for we are members one of another.

CHAP. XIX.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The conversion of Zaccheus the publican at Jericho,* ver. 1—10. 2. *The parable of the pounds which the king intrusted with his servants, and of his rebellious citizens,* ver. 11—27. 3. *Christ's riding in triumph into Jerusalem, and his lamentation in prospect of the ruin of that city,* ver. 28—44. 4. *His teaching in the temple, and casting the buyers and sellers out of it,* ver. 45—48.

1. AND *Jesus* entered and passed through [a] Jericho. 2. And, behold, *there was* a man named Zaccheus, [b] which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. 3. And he [c] sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. 4. And he ran before, and climbed up into [d] a sycamore-tree to see him: for he was to pass that *way.* 5. And when Jesus came to the place, he [e] looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, [f] make haste and come down; for to-day [g] I must abide at thy house. 6. [h] And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. 7. And when they saw *it,* [i] they all murmured, saying, that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. 8. [k] And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold. 9. And Jesus said unto him, This day is [l] salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also [m] is a son of Abraham. 10. [n] For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

a Josh. 2. 1. & 6. 1, 26. 1 Kin. 16. 34. 2 Kin. 2. 18—21.
b 1 Cor. 1. 26. ch. 18. 24, 25. with 2 Chr. 17. 5, 6.
c Ch. 23. 8. & 9. 7.
d 1 Kin. 10. 27. Amos 7. 14. Is. 9. 10.
e Ezek. 16. 6, 8. John 1. 48.
f Eccl. 9. 10. Prov. 27. 1. Mat. 11. 28. 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2. Is. 55. 1—7.
g Eph. 3. 20. John 4. 4. & 10. 16. 1 Tim. 1. 15. ver. 10.
h Ps. 119. 59, 60. Gal. 1. 15, 16. 1 Tim. 1. 13—17.
i Mat. 9. 11. ch. 5. 30. & 7. 29. & 15. 2. Job. 5. 2. Eccl. 4. 4.
k Mat. 3. 8. & 21. 31, 32. ch. 7. 29, 30. & 18. 13, 14. 1 Cor. 10. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 7. 11. ch. 12. 33. & 16. 9. & 18. 22. & 3. 14. Exod. 22. 1.
l Ch. 2. 30. Ps. 98. 3. Is. 45. 17, 22. & 49. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 15. ver. 10.
m Ch. 13. 16. Rom. 4. 11, 12, 16. & 9. 8. Gal. 6. 16. & 3. 7, 26.
n Mat. 18. 11. & 1. 21. & 20. 28. & 10. 6. & 15. 24. & 9. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Ezek. 34. 16. Is. 63. 1. Hos. 13. 9. Heb. 7. 25. Acts 13. 47.

Verses 1—10. Whilst the conversion of every sinner's heart bespeaks the great power of God, the change wrought on some appears still more worthy to be remembered and admired; as in the case of Zaccheus.

1. He was a publican, yea *chief among the publicans,* and rich; two great obstructions, in human view, to the salvation of his soul; but Christ has his elect among the great and wealthy, as well as among the poor, and nothing is too hard for his almighty grace. The chief of sinners he can make the chief of saints.

2. He took great pains to get a sight of Christ, and to satisfy a curiosity which the great fame of him had raised: being short, and unable to overlook the crowd of people that usually attended Jesus in his travels, he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree, that he might see him as he passed by. *Note,* (1.) They who would gain a sight of Jesus must break through every obstacle in their way. (2.) Curiosity, though often blameable,

in many cases is praiseworthy. To see and hear those of whom there are strange reports, is the best way to judge for ourselves.

3. There the eye of Jesus discovered him; and, as he had led him to that tree by the hand of his providence, he now surprises him with the call of his grace, and, by name addressing him, desires him to come down quickly, intending to be that day his guest. With joy the publican obeyed, little expecting such a favour, and received him with heartiest welcome. *Note*, (1.) Many who have come merely through curiosity to hear and see some minister, whose fame hath been spread abroad, have been graciously surprised with the call of God, and from that hour converted unto him. (2.) There is a wondrous providential disposition of our affairs, which, when we are turned to God, we can reflect upon with amazement, and see his hand leading us when we had not one thought of his designs. (3.) When Christ calls we should gladly run; his word can open for him a welcome into our house and our hearts, and make us with delight reply, *Come in, dear Lord, to me.* (4.) *Come down*, is the gospel call: we must sink low in our own eyes, to rise high in God's favour.

4. Many, who were present, were exceedingly offended, that one, who professed himself a prophet of such distinguished sanctity, should go to eat with a person who was so notorious a sinner. His profession made him odious as a publican, his riches might be reguarded as the fruit of extortion, and his character might be known as infamous: but it did not follow, because he had been bad, that he was so, as their censure implied: nor was Jesus to be blamed for visiting those, who, the more desperate their case seemed, so much the more needed his healing grace.

5. Whatever Zaccheus had been, he now gives the most undoubted proofs of genuine and unfeigned repentance. The grace of Jesus had powerfully wrought upon his heart, and the effects of it appeared visible in his words and actions. However grasping he had been of wealth, and intent on gain, now at a stroke half his goods he gives to the poor, and, if any man had ought to lay against him of fraud or extortion, he was ready to make the utmost restitution which the law demanded. *Note*, (1.) One of the best symptoms of real conversion to God is deadness to the world. (2.) There can be no true repentance without restitution, at least without the desire to make it to the utmost of our power. (3.) They who would show the spirit of true charity, should not leave it merely to their wills to bequeath their wealth to pious uses, but employ it during their lives.

6. Christ testified his approbation of Zaccheus' conduct, and comforted him with the assurance of that salvation which was now come to him and to his house, forasmuch as he also was a son of Abraham. He now showed himself a genuine descendant of this father of the faithful; his salvation was therefore secured, his sins pardoned, his person accepted, and eternal glory his portion, whilst all his family also shared his mercy. And what Christ had done in this case was in direct conformity with the great design of his coming into the world, *to seek and save that which was lost.* *Note*, (1.) Every sinner is a lost soul; lost in error and sin, unable to recover himself, and ready to perish eternally; and a great point is gained, when we begin to be deeply convinced of this alarming truth. (2.) Christ is the Saviour of the desperate: none are so far gone as to be past his recovery. (3.) He must first seek us, or we shall never seek to him for salvation.

11. ¶ And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because [o] they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. 12. [p] He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a [q] far country [r] to receive for himself a kingdom, and [s] to return. 13. And he called his ten servants,* and [t] delivered them ten† pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. 14. But [u] his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us. 15. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, [x] then he commanded these servants to be called unto him to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16. Then came the first, saying, Lord, [y] thy pound hath gained ten pounds. 17. And he said unto him, [z] Well, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. 18. And the second came, saying, Lord, [a] thy pound hath gained five pounds. 19. And he said likewise to him, [b] Be thou also over five cities. 20. And another came, saying, [c] Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: 21. For I [d] feared thee, [e] because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. 22. And he saith unto him, [f] Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: 23. Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? 24. And he said unto them that stood by, [g] Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds. 25. (And they said unto him, Lord, [h] he hath ten pounds.) 26. For I say unto you, [i] That unto every one which hath shall be given; [k] and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. 27. [l] But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

o Ch. 17. 20. Acts 1. 6. 2 Thes. 2. 2, 3.
p Mat. 25. 14—30. Mark 13. 34. ch. 9. 6, 7. & 12. 13.
q Mark 16. 19. ch. 24. 51. Acts 3. 21. ch. 20. 9.
r Mat. 22. 18. Phil. 2. 9—11. Eph. 1. 14.
s Acts 1. 11. & 17. 31. Heb. 9. 28. Rev. 1. 7.
* More correctly, *having called ten of his servants.*
t Rom. 12. 6—8. Eph. 4. 11—13. 1 Cor. 12. 7, 11, 28, 29. Mat. 21. 33. 2 Cor. 3. 5.
† A *mina* contains 50 shekels, or £3 14*s.*
u John 1. 11. 1 Sam. 8. 7. Mat. 22. 5, 6.
x 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 12—15. & 4. 5. Rom. 14. 12. Eccl. 12. 14. ch. 16. 2.
y 1 Cor. 15. 10. Col. 1. 28, 29. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Rom. 12. 3, 6—8. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20. Prov. 16. 31. & 11. 30. James 2. 18.
z 1 Cor. 4. 5. Rom. 2. 29. Mat. 25. 21. & 24. 47. Ps. 49. 14. Rev. 2. 26, 27. ch. 16. 10. & 22. 30. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Gen. 30. 4.
a 2 Cor. 8. 12. Rom. 12. 3, 6, 7, 8. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. 2 Tim. 4. 2. & 2. 15. 1 Cor. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 16.
b See ver. 17.
c Mat. 7. 21. ch. 6. 46. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16.
d Mat. 25. 25. Rev. 21. 8. 1 John 4. 18. Ps. 53. 5.
e Ps. 50. 21. Is. 5. 19. Jer. 17. 15. Ezek. 18. 25, 29.
f Job 15. 5, 6. 2 Sam. 1. 5—16. Mat. 12. 37. & 25. 26, 27. Tit. 3. 11.
g Mat. 25. 28. & 13. 12. Ezek. 46. 17. 1 Sam. 16. 14. Zech. 11. 17. ch. 8. 18.
h Ver. 16.
i Mat. 13. 12. & 25. 29. Mark 4. 25. ch. 8. 18. John 15. 2—4. Rev. 22. 11. Ps. 27. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 10.
k Ezek. 33. 13. & 46. 17. 2 John 8. Gal. 3. 4.
l Mat. 22. 7. ver. 42, 43, 44. & 21. 20—24. Prov. 1. 24—32. Ps. 21. 6—12. & 69. 22—28. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. 1 Sam. 15. 38. Num. 14. 36, 37. The Jews shall be fearfully destroyed.

Verses 11—27. What Christ had said to Zaccheus gave occasion to some, who heard him, to conclude that the temporal kingdom of the Messiah was about to be set up in the world, and that, on his arrival at Jerusalem, he would declare himself openly. To rectify such a mistake therefore he spoke the following parable, intimating to them therein, that the generality of the Jewish people would not submit to the kingdom of his glory,

and that the kingdom of his glory was more distant than they imagined.

1. *A certain nobleman*, a person of high birth, *went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom;* to be invested with sovereign authority, as the governors of Judah were by Roman emperors: *and to return*, with full power and authority, to reward or punish his subjects. Thus the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, to receive the mediatorial kingdom, and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; being quickly to return from thence in the mission of his Spirit, to spread his gospel through the earth; in the destruction of the Jewish people and nation; and finally at the day of judgment. And as surely as he once came into the world, so surely will he return again, and will not tarry.

2. He committed to his servants a certain sum of money, that during his absence they might *trade* (πραγματευσασθε) and improve their capital, in order that at his return he might receive the fruits of their industry. The ministers of Christ in particular, and all his people in general, are those servants: each hath his portion of gifts, natural or providential, which he is required to employ for his Master's honour and interest. All we have is derived from him, and should be devoted to him. Till he comes, we are called upon to use all diligence. Every soul won by us will prove our own unspeakable gain: and whatever be the success of our labours whether more or less, if we approve ourselves faithful to him till death, we are sure not to lose our reward.

3. Two of the servants, on their master's return, with satisfaction appeared before him, and rendered him a faithful account of the trust committed to them. The one had gained more, the other less; but both had been diligent, received his commendation, and were preferred according to the advantages they had made. Whence we are taught, (1.) That we must one day be called upon to give a solemn account to our great Lord and Master of all the means and mercies, gifts and grace, which we have enjoyed, and our profiting thereby. (2.) They who are found faithful will receive the approbation of the Chief Shepherd, and be rewarded by him. (3.) Whatever success we have, we must, to the glory of our Lord, own, that it is *thy pound* hath gained it; for not to our endeavours, but to his grace, are we indebted for the effect of our ministry. (4.) If we have the Saviour's commendation of our diligence we need not care who may find fault with us. (5.) They who are most zealous in their labours for Christ will receive the greater reward, exalted, as one star differeth from another star in glory.

4. The third, sunk in sloth and carelessness, began to seek excuses: and, having produced the pound committed to his charge, pretended his fear of his master's austerity, as if he would cast on him the blame of his own idleness. But out of his own mouth was this wicked servant condemned; since that apprehension he pleaded of his master's austerity should at least have led him to place the money at the bankers, where, with lawful interest, he might have received his own. Justly therefore he commands the pound to be taken from him, and given to him who had gained the ten pounds; for his having so much is so far from being an objection as some present intimated, ver. 25. that it was a reason why he should have more, having made so good a use of the former trust; whilst he, who made no use, or so bad a one, of the pound delivered to him, justly deserved to have it taken from him. *Note*, (1.) Not only the abuse of our gifts, but our negligence to improve and employ them for Christ's honour and the good of men's souls, will be esteemed highly criminal. (2.) The pleas of slothful professors, in a judgment-day, shall turn to their everlasting confusion and condemnation. (3.) Idle servants are wicked servants. Ministers who are not active in Christ's service, effectually serve the interests of Satan. (4.) Hard thoughts of God are at the bottom of every unhumbled sinner's heart. (5.) Diligence to improve the gifts and graces, which the Lord hath bestowed on us, is the sure way to have both abundantly increased under his blessing; whilst sloth makes all our attainments to wither and decay.

5. He foretells the ruin of the Jewish people in general. They were the *citizens* who sent after him in his absence, refusing to submit to his government; they paid no regard to his apostles and ministers when he was ascended into heaven: and, having filled up the measure of their iniquities by rejecting his gospel, he seized the rebels with his arm of judgment, and the Roman sword miserably massacred innumerable multitudes of this devoted people, and ruined their country. And such will be the case with all impenitent sinners. They say, in the pride and rebellion of their hearts, *We will not have this man to rule over us*, rejecting the government of his laws and the warnings of his servants: but their terrible destruction approaches: the King, their Judge, clothed with vengeance, is ready to be revealed from heaven, when wrath to the uttermost will come upon them; and they who refused to bow to the sceptre of his grace shall be broken with the rod of his judgments. They who will not be *ruled* must be eternally *ruined*.

28. ¶ And when he had thus spoken, [m] he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. 29. [n] And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount* of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, 30. Saying, Go ye into the village over against *you;* in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him* [p] *hither*. 31. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him?* thus shall ye say unto him, Because [o] the Lord hath need of him. 32. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. 33. And as they [s] were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? 34. And they said, The Lord [p] hath need of him. 35. And they brought him [t] to Jesus: and [q] they cast their garments upon the colt, and they [r] set Jesus thereon. 36. And as he went, they spread [u] their clothes in the way. 37. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the [s] mount of Olives, [t] the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice [s] for all the mighty works that they had seen; 38. Saying, [u] Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the [x] Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.* 39. [x] And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said [y] unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. 40. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should [†] hold their peace, [y] the stones would immediately cry out.†

[m] Ch. 12. 4. & 13. 33. & 18. 31. Ps. 40. 8. John 18. 11. ch. 12. 50.

[n] Mat. 21. 1—11. Mark 11. 1—15. John 12. 12—16.

[o] Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 10, 11. Acts 10. 36. Heb. 1. 2, 3. John 3. 35. & 17. 2. & 13. 13.

[p] 2 Cor. 8. 9. Zech. 9. 9.

[q] 2 Kin. 9. 13. Mat. 21. 7. John 12. 13.

[r] Mat. 21. 5, 7. John 12. 14, 15. Zech. 9. 9.

[s] 1 Kin. 11. 7. 2 Kin. 23. 13. Zech. 14. 4. Mark 13. 3. & 14. 26. Acts 1. 11, 12.

[t] Ps. 8. 1, 2. & 118. 22—26. ch. 7. 16. & 17. 15. & 18. 43. John 12. 12, 13.

[u] Ps. 118. 26. & 72. 17—19. Zech. 9. 9. ch. 2. 10—14. Col. 1. 20. Eph. 1. 10. & 2. 14. & 3. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Rev. 5. 9—13.

[s] Mark most fully describes this triumphant progress of our Lord.

[x] Is. 26. 11. Acts 4. 2. & 13. 45. Job 5. 2. Eccl. 4. 4. Mat. 23. 13. James 4. 5.

[y] Hab. 2. 11. Mat. 27. 19, 24, 5, 54.

† The expression is proverbial, but the calling of the Gentiles seems here alluded to.—*Scott*

Verses 28—40. Eager to accomplish the salvation of his people, the blessed Jesus hastens to the scene of his sufferings, not intimidated by all the dreadful events he foresaw. Was he so willing to die for us, and shall we be cowards in his service? We have here what we met with twice before:

1. The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, amidst the acclamations of the multitude. He was mounted, not as a conqueror on a triumphal car, but, as Zion's lowly king, on an ass' colt; and that not his own. He sent to borrow it for this occasion; and, having the dominion over all creatures, and in his hands the hearts of all men, the owners readily sent him at the Saviour's bidding. Mounted thereon, the garments of his poor disciples were the trappings, and served as carpets spread to adorn his entry; whilst filled with wonder and praise at all the miracles they had seen, the multitude cried, *Blessed be the king*, Messiah: may all happiness and prosperity attend him *that cometh in the name of the Lord*, invested with divine authority and power: *peace in heaven;* let the God of heaven bless his undertaking, and crown it with success, appearing now a reconciled God to us; *and glory in the highest;* let the greatest honour, praise, and adoration, redound to him for this salvation, and be ascribed to him by men on earth and angels in heaven.

2. Christ vindicates his disciples from the envious cavils of the Pharisees, who could not bear to hear such acclamations, and would insinuate that it was the highest pride to permit such incense to be offered to him. But though he came in great humility, the present occasion demanded these praises; and if the multitude had been silent, he assured these cavillers the very stones would cry out, reproaching their stupidity, and ascribing to God the glory due unto his name.

41. ¶ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and [z] wept over it,
42. Saying, [a] If thou hadst known, even thou at least in [b] this thy day, [c] the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now [d] they are hid from thine eyes.
43. [e] For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side.
44. [e] And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.
45. ¶ [f] And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought;
46. Saying unto them, It is written, [g] My house is the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.
47. ¶ [h] And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him.
48. And could not find what they might do: for all the people [i] were very attentive to hear him.

z Jer. 9. 1. Hos. 11. 8. Mark 3. 5. John 11. 33.
a Deut. 4. 29. & 32. 29. Lam. 1. 9. Is. 26. 11.
b Ps. 32. 6. Is. 55. 6. ch. 3. 9. & 21. 30, 31.
c Ch. 2. 11, 14. Heb. 2. 1, 3. & 4. 1. Acts 13. 26, 46.
d 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Rom. 11. 7—12, 25. Is. 6. 9, 10. & 29. 10, 14. & 42. 19. & 44. 18. Rom. 11. 8.
e Ps. 37. 13. Deut. 28. 47—52. Is. 29. 3. Jer. 6. 3, 6. ch. 21. 20—24. Mat. 24. 2, 15—22. 1 Kin. 9. 7, 8. Mic. 3. 12. Ps. 21. 8—12. Dan. 9. 27. Prov. 1. 24—32. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. 1 Pet. 2. 12. & 4. 17, 18. All this was fulfilled when Titus and his Roman army besieged and destroyed Jerusalem.
f Mat. 21. 12, 13. Mark 11. 15—17. John 2. 13—16. with Deut. 14. 25, 26.
g Is. 56. 7. & 60. 7. Ps. 93. 5. Ezek. 43. 12. with Jer. 7. 11. Hos. 12. 7. Mark 11. 17.
h Mat. 21. 14, 15, 45, 46. Mark 11. 18. & 12. 12. & 14. 1. John 7. 19. & 8. 37.
i Or *hanged on him.* Neh. 8. 3. Acts 16. 14.

Verses 41—48. We have here,

1. The tears of Jesus shed over the devoted city Jerusalem. Being now in full view of that rejected place, and foreseeing the impending miseries ready to overwhelm the inhabitants, *he wept over it*, as man feeling the tenderest compassion towards them; *saying, If thou hadst known*, or, *O that thou hadst known! even thou*, a wicked and bloody city as thou hast been, *at least in this thy day*, when the most abundant means of grace have been vouchsafed to thee, *the things* which belong *unto thy peace*, temporal and eternal; *but now they are hid from thine eyes;* thou art abandoned to judicial blindness, and utter reprobacy, the consequence of which will shortly be utter ruin; when thine enemies shall besiege and enter into thee, massacre thy inhabitants, and leave not one stone upon another: *because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation;* rejecting the light of my gospel, the warnings of my ministers, and the overtures of mercy which were vouchsafed to thee. *Note*, (1.) A Christian's heart, like his Master's, feels the tenderest compassion towards perishing sinners and grieves to behold their approaching miseries. (2.) There is a time of visitation, when the Lord is pleased to set before us the things which belong to our pardon, peace, and salvation, and to urge them upon us by his providence, his word, his Spirit: not to know, or abuse this day of grace, is to be undone. (3.) However long we have trespassed on God's patience, or however greatly we have provoked him; if at last we are prevailed upon to return to him, it is never too late to find favour with him. Let none therefore despair, who desire *now* to return without delay to the Lord. (4.) Justly are they given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, who reject the counsel of God against their own souls. (5.) All the threatenings of Jesus will be as surely fulfilled, as we have seen this against Jerusalem accomplished in the total overthrow of that city and people. Let every sinful city, every sinful soul, take warning by her fall.

2. Being come to Jerusalem, he goes immediately to the temple, cleanses it from the profanations there practised; casting out the *buyers and sellers*, who had made that *house of prayer a den of thieves:* testifying his zeal for his Father's honour: and when he had thus purged this holy place from such gross abuses, he preached there to the people the doctrines of his rich grace. *Note*, The preaching of the gospel is the great glory of every temple devoted to the Saviour's honour.

3. The chief priests, scribes, and rulers, were highly exasperated at his discourses and conduct, which so deeply reflected on their corruptions, and therefore sought how to murder him immediately; but they could not just then contrive any scheme for the execution of their bloody purposes, the people in general being very attentive to his discourses, (ἐξεκρέματο) *they hung upon* his lips, eagerly catching every word which dropped; for he spoke with such power, energy, and conviction, as from their own scribes they had never heard before.

CHAP. XX.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's answer to the chief priests' question concerning his authority,* ver. 1—8. 2. *The parable of the vineyard let out to the unjust and rebellious husbandmen,* ver. 9—19. 3. *Christ's answer to the question proposed to him concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cesar,* ver. 20—26. 4. *His vindication of the resurrection of the dead and the future state, from the foolish cavils of the Sadducees,* ver. 27—38. 5. *His puzzling the scribes with a question concerning the Messiah's being the son of David,* ver. 39, 44. 6. *The caution he gave his disciples to take heed of the scribes,* ver. 45—47.

1. AND [a] it came to pass, *that* on one of those days as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, [b] the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him*, with the elders, 2. And spake

a Mat. 21. 23—32. Mark 2. 11, 27—33.
b 1 Chr. xxiv. Exod. 19. 7. Num. 11. 16. Ruth 4. 4. 1 Sam. 15. 30.

unto him, saying, Tell us, [c] by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority? 3. And he answered and said unto them, [d] I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: 4. [e] The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? 5. And they reasoned with themselves, [f] saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? 6. But and if we say, Of men; [g] all the people will stone us:* [h] for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. 7. And they answered, [i] that they could not tell whence *it was*. 8. And Jesus said unto them, [k] Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

c Ex. 2. 14. Acts 7. 27. & 4. 7. Mat. 7. 29.
d Mat. 10. 16, 17. Eph. 5. 15. Job 5. 12, 13.
e Ch. 3. 1—20. & 7. 29, 30. Mark 1. 1—11. Mat. iii. John 1. 6—36. & 5. 32—35. Prov. 15. 28. & 26. 4, 5.
f Mark 11. 31. Mat. 21. 25, 31, 32. ch. 7. 29, 30.
g Mat. 21. 26, 46. & 14. 5. Mark 11. 32. & 12. 12.
* They had themselves taught the people this violence. See John 10. 31. Acts 11. 19.
h Mat. 14. 5. Mark 6. 20. John 5. 35. ch. 7. 26—29.
i Rom. 1. 18, 21, 22, 28. 2 Cor. 2. 15. & 4. 3, 4. 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10.
k Prov. 26. 4. Job 5. 13.

Verses 1—8. Whilst Jesus was engaged in the blessed work of preaching to the people the glad tidings of salvation, the chief priests, scribes, and elders came upon him to interrupt him in these labours of love. *Note*, We may not wonder if in the service of the gospel we meet with many interruptions from the great enemy of souls, and his emissaries.

They demanded his authority for what he said and did; insinuating, that as it belonged to them to judge of the pretensions of those who assumed the prophetical character, unless he produced his commission, they must proceed against him as a deceiver. He answers their question by another, respecting the baptism of John, which not caring to answer for fear of the people, and unwilling to own the divine mission of the Baptist, they pretended ignorance, and gave him a just reason to refuse them a farther account of himself, seeing they had already rejected the plainest evidence. *Note*, It is but lost labour to endeavour to persuade those who are before resolved not to be convinced.

9. ¶ Then began he to speak to the people this parable: [l] A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to [m] husbandmen, and went into [n] a far country for a long time. 10. And at the season he [o] sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: [p] but the husbandmen beat him, and sent *him* away empty. 11. And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty. 12. And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out. 13. Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? [q] I will send my beloved son: it may be† they will reverence *him* when they see him. 14. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is [r] the heir: come, [s] let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. 15. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed *him*. [t] What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? 16. He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard *it*, they said, God forbid. 17. And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, [u] The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? 18. [x] Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. 19. ¶ [y] And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

l Mat. 21. 33—46. Mark 12. 1—12. Is. 5. 1—4. Song 8. 11, 12. Jer. 2. 21. Ps. 80. 8—14. 1 Cor. 3. 6—9.
m Num. iii, iv, viii. Deut. 1. 15. & 16. 18. & 17. 9—15.
n Ch. 19. 12. Acts 1. 11. & 3. 21. Eph. 20. 21. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Ps. 110. 1.
o 2 Kin. 17. 13, 14. 2 Chr. 36. 15, 16. Neh. 9. 29, 30. Jer. 44. 4, 5. Hos. 6. 5.
p 1 Kin. 22. 24. 2 Chr. 16. 10. & 23. 19, 21. & 36. 16. Jer. xx, xxvi, xxxvi—xxxviii. 1 Thes. 2. 15. Neh. 9. 26. Heb. 11. 35—37. Mat. 23. 31—37. Acts 7. 52.
q Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6, 7. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Ezek. 34. 23, 29. John 3. 16. & 1. 14. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 1. 6.
† Better, *surely they will, &c.*
r Heb. 1. 2. Ps. 89. 27.
s Mat. ii, xxvi, xxvii. Mark xiv, xv. ch. xxii, xxiii. John v, vii, viii, x, xviii, xix. Acts 3. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Heb. 13. 12. 1 Thes. 2. 15. Gen. 37. 18. John 11. 50, 53.
t See Mat. 21. 41, 43. & 8. 11. 12. Ps. 21. 8—12. & 69. 22—28. Prov. 1. 24—32. Rom. 11. 7—25. Acts 13. 46. & 18. 6. Mark 16. 15, 16.
u Ps. 118. 22 Acts 4. 11. Mark 12. 10. Mat. 21. 42. Is. 28. 16. Mat. 16. 18. Eph. 2. 11—22. & 1. 20—23. Phil. 2. 9—11. 1 Pet. 2. 7.
x Is. 8. 14, 15. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Mat. 21. 44. Zech. 12. 3. Ps. 2. 9. 1 Thes. 2. 16. 2 Cor. 3. 14 & 4. 3, 4. Dan. 2. 34, 35, 44.
y 2 Tim. 4. 3. ch. 11. 45, 53, 54. Mark 12. 12. Mat. 21. 45, 46. ver. 6.

Verses 9—19. This parable is designed for a warning to the priests and rulers, of the ruin coming upon them and their nation for their persecutions of the messengers of God, and their rejection of the Messiah.

1. This vineyard was the Jewish people, which had been taken under God's peculiar care; and having instituted a magistracy and ministry among them, he expected suitable returns of love and duty from them; but instead of that, they treated with the greatest cruelty those divinely appointed messengers, whom he sent to remind them of his just expectations, and now were about to murder the son, who was come on the same errand, the consequence of which would be the ruin of the nation, and the eternal destruction of these miscreants. *Note*, (1.) The best of men have met with the cruellest usage from those, whose good alone was the object of their labours. (2.) The end of obstinate transgressors is to be rooted out at the last.

2. Struck with the denunciation of vengeance, they could not but deprecate the wrath threatened, and express their abhorrence of such a crime as the murder of the Messiah: but Christ with deepest concern beheld them, assured of their determined obstinacy, and approaching ruin. Though their efforts would be all fruitless, that stone which these Jewish builders rejected, would, notwithstanding, become the head of the corner. This Jesus, whom they despised, would be exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, and invested with all power and authority in heaven and in earth; and his enemies, who were offended at him, and on whom his vengeance would light, must terribly perish.

3. The chief priests plainly perceived the drift of the parable, and rage boiled in their bosoms. They would gladly have seized and murdered him on the spot, but were deterred through fear of the people, and forced reluctantly to defer their bloody purpose to a more convenient opportunity. So little effect has the fairest warnings upon those who harden their hearts against conviction.

20. [z] And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so [a] they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor. 21. And they asked him, saying, [b] Master, we know that thou [c] sayest and teachest rightly, neither ac-

z Mat. 22. 15—26. Mark 12. 13—17. Ps. 38. 12. Jer. 18. 18. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 2, 3.
a Mat. 20. 19. & 27. 1, 2. John 18. 28—32. & 11. 50.
b Mat. 22. 16. Mark 12. 15. Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. Mat. 26. 49. 50.
c 2 Cor. 2. 17. 1 Thes. 2. 4. Gal. 1. 10. Acts 10. 34, 35. Is. 11. 2

ceptest thou the person *of any*, but teachest the way of God* truly: 22. [d] Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cesar, or no? 23. But [e] he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, [f] Why tempt ye me? 24. Shew me a [g] penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, [h] Cesar's. 25. And he said unto them, [i] Render therefore unto Cesar the things which be Cesar's, and unto God the things which be God's. 26. And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they [k] marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

* Or *of a truth.*

d Mat. 22. 17—21. Ezra 4. 13. Acts 5. 37. Jer. 42. 2, 3.

e Ch. 5. 22. & 6. 8. & 11. 17.

f Ver. 20. ch. 11. 16, 53, 54. Mat. 12. 38. & 16. 1. & 19. 3. Ps. 90. 9.

g See Mat. 18. 28. & 20. 2. & 22. 19, 20.

h Ch. 2. 1. & 3. 1. & 23. 1.

i Mat. 22. 21. & 17. 25. Rom. 13. 7. Prov. 21. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 17.

k Mat. 22. 21, 33, 46. 1 Cor. 1. 19, 20. Job 5. 12, 13. ver. 39, 40.

Verses 20—26. Resolved if possible to destroy him, and not having the power in their own hands, they determined to try if they could not ensnare him and render him obnoxious to the Roman government, as a seditious person: for which purpose we have here,

1. The insidious question proposed to him by certain of the Pharisees and Herodians, who, under the guise of conscientious regard to their duty, pretended a great concern to know whether it was lawful to give tribute to Cesar or not, and thereby acknowledge themselves the subjects of a foreign power. They suggest their fullest confidence in the rectitude of his decisions, their opinion of his integrity unawed by the fear of men, and their satisfiedness in that divine commission under which he acted; and thus they endeavoured to flatter him into an unguarded freedom, which either must embroil him with the civil powers, or render him odious to the people. *Note*, (1.) The garb of piety hath often served to cover the vilest designs. We need to be on our guard against some who feign themselves just men, and not credulously trust to every specious professor. To be wise as serpents is our duty, as well as to be harmless as doves. (2.) It hath been the common artifice of persecutors to endeavour to represent the faithful as enemies to the state, and thus to gain the civil powers to oppress them.

2. His answer confounds and silences his enemies. *He perceives their craftiness;* for from him nothing is hid, nothing is secret; and out of their own mouth draws a decision of the question, to which they cannot object. As they own their money bore Cesar's image and superscription, he had certainly a right to his own; though this interfered not with God's demands, to whose worship and service their hearts and lives must be devoted. Unable to object, in sullen silence they held their peace, marvelling at his wisdom, yet obstinate in their infidelity.

27. ¶ [l] Then came to *him* certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection, and they asked him, 28. Saying, Master, [m] Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 29. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. 30. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. 31. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. 32. Last of all the woman died also. 33. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. 34. And Jesus answering said unto them, [n] The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: 35. But they which [o] shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead,* neither marry nor are given in marriage: 36. [p] Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. 37. Now that the dead are raised, [q] even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. 38. [r] For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

l Mat. 22. 23—33. Mark 12. 18—27. Acts 23. 6, 8. 1 Cor. 15. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

m Deut. 25. 5, 6. Gen. 38. 8, 26. with Job 1. 2. & 42. 13. The design of the Sadducees here seems not so much to have been to draw out a discourse from our Saviour, which might have touched his life —which was the Pharisee's design — as to have exposed him by bringing him into an absurdity.—*Poole.*

n Ch. 17. 27. 1 Cor. vii. 1 Tim. 4. 3. & 5. 14. Heb. 13. 4.

o 2 Thes. 1. 5. Rev. 3. 4. Jam. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 7. 29.

* Our Lord, agreeably to the Jewish style of the period, calls that only the *resurrection*, which is a resurrection to glory. — *Campbell.*

p 1 Cor. 15. 53—55, 42, 49. 1 John 3. 2. Rom. 8. 23. Col. 3. 4. Ps. 17. 15. & 16. 10, 11. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

q Exod. 3. 6. Gen. 17. 7. & 28. 21. & 32. 9. Lev. 26. 12. Acts 7. 32. Heb. 11. 16. Mark 12. 26. Mat. 22. 32.

r Rom. 4. 17. Col. 3. 3, 4. Is. 26. 19. John 11. 25. & 4. 14. & 6. 40, 54. & 14. 19. Eccl. 12. 7.

Verses 27—38. This confutation of the Sadducean objection to the resurrection of the dead was considered before, Matt. xxii. 23. Mark xii. 18. But our Lord here enlarges somewhat concerning that awful state which after death succeeds. *The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage;* necessary it is that the world should thus be supplied with inhabitants, and the ravages of death be repaired by the rising generation: *but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead,* have higher joys than even the marriage state can afford, and need not to increase, where death is swallowed up in victory. They are said to *be accounted worthy*, not that in and of ourselves we have any merit; our worthiness consists in being found in Christ, justified by his blood, complete in his righteousness, and sanctified by his Spirit. In that unseen world to which the blessed go, [1.] *They neither marry nor are given in marriage;* their holiness and happiness is complete without it; the delights of sense are swallowed up in the infinitely surpassing ecstasies of the soul. [2.] *Neither can they die any more:* that world needs not to be replenished with new inhabitants, where life eternal reigns, and death never enters. [3.] *They are equal to the angels;* partaking in their service, enjoying the same bliss; glorious and immortal as these seraphic spirits. [4.] They *are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection;* as adopted sons they have now the title to the eternal glory, and at the resurrection day will be put in possession of the purchased inheritance.

39. Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. 40. And after that [s] they durst not ask him any *question at all.* 41. ¶ And he said unto them, [t] How say they that Christ is David's son? 42. And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, [u] The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 43. Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. 44. David therefore calleth him Lord, [x] how is he then his son? 45. ¶ Then, [y] in the audience of all the people, he said unto his disciples,

s Mat. 22. 33, 34, 36. Mark 12. 34.

t Mat. 22. 41—46. Mark 12. 35—37.

u Ps. 110. 1. Acts 2. 31. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Heb. 1. 3, 13. & 8. 1. & 10. 13. Eph. 1. 20—23. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Ps. 21. 8—12 & 110. 5, 6. & 92. 9. & 69. 22—28.

x Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. John 1. 14. Rom. 1. 3, 4. & 9. 5. Rev. 22. 16. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Gal. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 8. ch. 1. 35.

y Mat. 23. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 20. Is. 58. 1. Ps. 40. 9, 10. ch. 12. 1.

z Mat. 23. 3, 5—7. Mark 12. 38—40. ch. 14. 7. 3 John 9. Prov. 16. 18. & 18. 12. & 29. 23. Hab. 2. 4.

a Mat. 23. 14. Mark 12. 40. ch. 11. 43. 2 Tim. 3. 5, 6. Gal. 4. 17. 1 Thes. 2. 5. Ezek. 20. 25.

b Mat. 11. 22, 24. ch. 10. 12, 14, & 12. 47, 48.

46. z Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; 47. a Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: b the same shall receive greater damnation.

Verses 39—47. The scribes, the established expositors of the law, expressed their high approbation of his answer to their Sadducean opponents; and, struck with the surprising wisdom which appeared in all his discourses, declined attempting any further to encounter him, conscious of his superiority. But though they had done with him, Christ had not done with them.

1. He proposes to them a question, which seemed of easy solution, but which quite disconcerted them for an answer. Ignorant of the mystery of the person of the Messiah, in whom the divine and human natures should be united, they could not account how David's Son should be David's Lord. To us this mystery is unfolded; we behold God and man in one Christ.

2. He condemns the hypocrisy and covetousness of the scribes, and cautions his disciples against them. They made a vast parade of profession, and with flowing robes in solemn stateliness as they passed, expected homage, as due to their superiority; delighted in hearing the incense offered to their vanity; proudly affected precedency; and whilst by their long prayers they insinuated themselves into the confidence of widows, they basely and wickedly abused the trust reposed in them, and devoured their substance. *These shall receive greater damnation;* wickedness committed under such a veil of piety, brings the most aggravated guilt on the conscience, and must be attended with the most terrible vengeance of God.

CHAP. XXI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's approbation of a poor widow that cast two mites into the treasury,* ver. 1—4. 2. *A prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the second coming of Jesus Christ to judge the world, under the type and figure of that,* ver. 5—33. 3. *A practical application of this by way of caution and counsel,* ver. 34—36. 4. *An account of Christ's preaching, and the people's attendance on it,* ver. 37, 38.

a Mark 12. 41—44. 2 Kin. 10. 9. Mark 7. 11.

b See Mark 12. 42. *i. e.* a fifth part of a farthing.

c 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3, 12. & 9. 6, 7. Prov. 11. 24, 25. & 3. 9.

* The treasure designed for the use of his temple.—*Whitby.*

1. AND he looked up, a and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. 2. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither b two mites. 3. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, c that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: 4. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: * but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

Verses 1—4. The commendation of this poor widow's offering we heard, Mark xii. 41. We may observe, (1.) That it is the duty of all, according to their ability, to contribute to the service of the sanctuary, the maintenance of a gospel ministry, the education of youth, and the relief of the necessitous. (2.) The least mite which is given to the offerings of God from a heart zealous for his glory, and breathing fervent charity, shall be remembered, and infinitely recompensed in the great day.

d Mat. 24. 1—8. Mark 13. 1—8.

5. ¶ d And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, 6. *As for* these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which e there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 7. ¶ And they asked him, saying, Master, f but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass? 8. And he said, g Take heed that ye be not deceived: for h many shall come in my name, saying I am *Christ;* and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. 9. But i when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but k the end *is* not by and by. 10. l Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: 11. And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven. 12. But before all these, m they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you,* delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. 13. And n it shall turn to you for a testimony. 14. o Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: 15. p For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which q all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. 16. q And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death. 17. And ye shall be hated of all *men* r for my name's sake. 18. s But there shall not an hair of your head perish. 19. t In your patience possess ye your souls.

e Ch. 19. 44. Mat. 23. 38. Jer. 5. 10. & 26. 18. Mic. 3. 12. 1 Kin. 9. 7. Ezek. 7. 20—22.

f Mark 13. 3, 4. Mat. 24. 3. Dan. 12. 4, 6, 8. John 21. 21. Ps. 111. 2.

g Jer. 29. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 9. & 15. 33. & 3. 18. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 2. 8, 18. 2 Thes. 2. 3. Gal. 6. 7. 1 John 3. 7. & 4. 1.

h Jer. 23. 21, 25. & 14. 14. John 5. 43. Mat. 24. 5, 23, 24. Mark 13. 6, 21—23. with Acts 5. 36, 37.

i Jer. 4. 19. & 5. 10, 11. Ps. 46. 2, 3. & 27. 1—3. & 112. 7. Is. 8. 12. & 51. 12, 13.

k Mat. 24. 6, 14, 15. Jer. 4. 27. & 5. 10, 18. & 46. 28.

l Hag. 2. 22. Heb. 12. 27. Dan. 2. 34, 35, 44. Zech. 14. 13. Acts 11. 28. Joel. 2 30.

m Mat. 10. 17—22. & 24. 9—14. Mark 13. 9—13. John 15. 20. & 16. 2. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. ch. 13. 34. & 19. 14. Acts iv—xxvi. Rev. 2. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 12, 14.

n Phil. 1. 28. 2 Thes. 1. 5

o Mat. 10. 19. Mark 13. 11. ch. 12. 12. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7.

p Deut. 33. 25. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Exod. 4. 12. Is. 54. 17. ch. 12. 12. Jer. 1. 6, 9, 19. Acts 2. 4, 37, & 4. 1, 17, 32. & 5. 13. & 6. 10.

q Mic. 7. 5, 6. Jer. 9. 4. Mat. 10. 21, 22. John 16. 2. & 15. 20. Acts 7. 59. & 12. 2.

r Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 3. 12. & 2. 12. & 4. 7. Rev. 2. 3, 13. & 3. 10.

s Mat. 10. 30. Is. 41. 10. & 46. 4. Ps. 122. 3, 8. 1 Sam. 14. 45. & 25. 29. 2 Sam. 14. 11.

t Heb. 6. 11, 12. & 10. 35, 36. Jam. 5. 8. Ps. 27. 14.

Verses 5—19. The disciples, vastly pleased with the magnificence of the temple, and the gifts with which it was enriched, could not but grieve at the thoughts that it should be utterly destroyed, and fain would move the Saviour's compassion to reverse the sentence he had pronounced; but he confirms the doom of that devoted place, and in answer to their request informs them of the signs preceding the threatened desolation.

1. False Christs would arise, making great profession of delivering the Jews from the Roman yoke, and affirming the time fixed in the ancient prophecies was near, when the temporal kingdom of the Messiah should be set up. But they are to beware of such deceivers, and neither follow nor be led by them. His kingdom they had been often advised was not of this world, nor must they look for any other Messiah but himself.

2. Terrible commotions and awakening judgments would pre-

cede the day of his coming to destroy the Jewish nation. Bloody wars and tumults would ravage the country; earthquakes rock the ground; famines and pestilence desolate the land; and fearful sights in the heavens terrify the beholders, and portend the approaching dire calamities. But they must not be *terrified*, at the signs, nor apprehensive of the consequence; for they shall be under the peculiar care of the divine providence, though greater evils are still behind.

3. They must expect fiery persecutions, and will find their nearest and dearest relations, filled with enmity against the gospel, their bitterest enemies. They will be scourged in the synagogues by their own countrymen; cast into prison; brought before heathen magistrates and kings; hated of all men; and called to resist unto blood, sealing the truth they professed with martyrdom. But to support and encourage them herein, Christ assures them, [1.] That their sufferings and persecutions shall tend to make the gospel-word more diffused, and be a testimony against those who maliciously and cruelly persecuted them. [2.] He promises them extraordinary aid in times of extraordinary trials. They need not be solicitous about the answer they should make, when cited before the tribunals of magistrates and kings: nor must depend on their own prudence for their defence, but expect divine assistance. *I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist.* The Holy Ghost should furnish them with *matter* and *words*; fill their mouths with such arguments, and give such energy to their discourse, as should quite confound and silence their persecutors, if it did not convince them. And all God's faithful ministers and people, when suffering for truth's sake, and called in defence of the gospel to answer before the rulers, may still depend on the same superior help, see Acts iv, v, vi. [3.] Out of all their severest trials God will save them harmless. *Not an hair of your head shall perish:* either literally he would strangely deliver them from the most imminent perils, as he saved them out of Jerusalem when the Romans came to besiege the city; or, figuratively, it expresses his singular care of them; so that though they should be delivered to prison, or to death, his eye should be upon them for good, and give them at least, a happy issue out of all their afflictions; bringing them through these tribulations to eternal life and glory; so that they should be infinitely gainers by all their sufferings. [4.] He exhorts them patiently to bear up under every temptation, and not to be ruffled or discomposed, but with holy serenity and calm resignation to cast their care upon God, and quietly wait for his salvation. *Note*, (1.) In trying times the hardest conflict is within, to preserve the tranquillity of our own souls by humble confidence in God. (2.) A little patience will bring us to the end of every human wo.

20. [u] And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21. [x] Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; * and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. 22. [y] For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23. [z] But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! [a] for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. 25. ¶ [b] And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26. [c] Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. 27. [d] And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28. And when these things begin to come to pass, then [e] look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

u Mat. 24. 15—28. Mark 13. 14—23. ch. 19. 43. Dan. 9. 27.
Gen. 19. 15, 16. Job 2. 4. Mat. 6. 25. Prov. 22. 3.
* Or rather, *let those in the city make their escape.*
y Mat. 24. 21. Mark 13. 19. Lev. 26. 14—36. Deut. 28. 15—68. Ps. 21. 8—12. Prov. 1. 24—32. Is. 65. 12—15. Zech. 11. 1.
z Mark 13. 17. ch. 23. 29. Hos. 13. 16. Deut. 28. 56, 57. Lam. 4. 10.
a See ver. 22. 1 Thes. 2. 16. Heb. 6. 8. & 10. 26—31. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. ch. 19. 27, 43, 44. Mat. 21. 41, 44. & 22. 7. & 3. 7, 10, 12. Rom. 11. 25. Rev. xix. Dan. 9. 27. & 12. 7.
b Mat. 24. 29—35. Mark 13. 25—31. Joel 2. 30, 31. Acts 2. 19, 20. Zeph. 1. 14—18. Amos 5. 20. & 8. 9, 10. with Is. 8. 21, 22. & 5. 30. & 13. 10. Ezek. 32. 7. Rev. 6. 12—17. 2 Pet. 3. 10.
c Lev. 26. 36. Deut. 28. 32, 34, 65. Heb. 10. 26, 27. Is. 24. 4.
d Dan. 7. 10, 13. Zech 14. 5. Mat. 16. 27, 28. & 26. 64. Rev. 1. 7. Acts 1. 11. 1 Thes. 4. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 8—10. Mat. 25. 10, 31.
e Ps. 50. 1—6. & 96. 11—13. & 93. 5—9. Is. 25. 8, 9. Rom. 8. 23.

Verses 20—28. Having exhorted them to bear up in these dangerous days that should precede the final destruction of Jerusalem, he passes on to describe her utter overthrow.

1. After a variety of fearful signs, at last the destroying army of the Romans shall approach, the signal for the faithful to leave the devoted place, and fly for their lives, as history informs every Christian did, so that not one perished in Jerusalem. The days of vengeance then shall come upon the Jewish nation for all their wickedness, and especially for that blood of the Messiah, the curse of which they imprecated upon their heads, and now shall terribly seize them. Great indeed would be the distress of those who fled, especially of such as were with child, or who gave suck, because this must retard their speed, and add to their other afflictions; yet greater far would be the misery of those who remained, on whom the full vials of wrath would be poured out; the sword making the most fearful ravages among them, and the few who remained alive after the siege being led captives, and dispersed into all nations; whilst their once glorious city, rased from the foundations, should long lie in ruins, and never be restored to its former grandeur, but continue under the power of the Gentiles, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;* when the fulness of them in the last days being come in, we have hope that Israel shall again be gathered, and Jerusalem, as some suppose, be again restored, and inhabited by the Jewish converts. This desolation of Judea would be terrible, as if the very elements were dissolving around them: their whole civil and ecclesiastical polity would be utterly destroyed; and, half dead with terror and dismay, the wretched inhabitants would sink under the load of complicated evils. Then to their confusion they will too late perceive, that he whom they crucified was the true Messiah, when, according to his predictions, they shall behold him coming thus terribly to take vengeance on them, and to set up his gospel kingdom, in defiance of all opposition. Such fearful signs shall also precede the final dissolution of all things, when the Judge of quick and dead shall at last be revealed from heaven, taking vengeance on all that know not God, and obey not his gospel.

2. Christ encourages his disciples, when these calamities begin, to lift up their heads in joyful hope, knowing that their *redemption draweth nigh.* The destruction of the Jewish people, who were the most inveterate persecutors of the first Christians, would be to them a great deliverance, and afford matter for their thankfulness to God, who had avenged them of these bitter enemies. And thus in the day of final judgment shall the destruction of the ungodly be the triumph of the saints.

29. And he spake to them a parable; [f] Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

f Mat. 24. 32—35. Mark 13. 28—31.

30. When they now shoot forth,* ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. 31. So likewise ye, [g] when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. 32. Verily I say unto you, [h] This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. 33. [i] Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. 34. ¶ [k] And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares. 35. [l] For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36. [m] Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be [n] accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. 37. [o] And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, [p] and abode in the mount that is called *the* [q] *mount* of Olives. 38. [r] And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

* *When ye observe them shooting forth.*

g Jam. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Heb. 10. 37. Mat. 11. 16. & 16. 28. & 23. 36. Ezek. 7. 2—13. & 12. 22—28.

h Mat. 24. 34. & 16. 28. & 23. 36. ch. 11. 50, 51.

i Ps. 102. 27. Is. 51. 6. & 10. 3. Mat. 5. 18. & 24. 35. 2 Pet. 3. 7, 10. 1 Pet. 1. 25.

k Rom. 13. 11—13. 1 Thes. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 4. 7. Phil. 4. 5.

l Is. 24. 17. Eccl. 9. 12. Mat. 24. 42—44. 1 Thes. 5. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 3. 3. & 16. 15.

m Mark 13. 33—37. & 14. 38. Mat. 24. 42—44. 46. & 25. 13 ch. 11. 40. & 18. 1. Eph. 6. 18, 19. 1 Thes. 5. 6, 17.

n Ch. 20. 35. Rev. 3. 4. 1 John 2. 28. Prov. 22. 29. Ps. 1. 5. Eph. 1. 6. & 5. 27.

o John 8. 1, 2. & 4. 31. & 5. 4.

p Mark 11. 11, 12. & 14. 3. Mat. 24. 17. John 12. 1. ch. 22. 39.

q See ch. 19. 37.

r Mal. 3. 1. Hag. 2. 7. Gen. 49. 10 Is. 52. 13, 15.

Verses 29—38. These signs of the times which Christ had set before them, if duly remarked, would as clearly point out to them the approach of the threatened judgments, as the summer is known to be at hand, when the buds and flowers of spring appear. The time for the fulfilment of this prophecy was near, and the accomplishment of it sure: therefore,

1. He cautions them to beware of sensuality and security, lest the day of his coming should surprise them unprepared to meet him. *Note*, (1.) We are in jeopardy every hour: the day of death and judgment is uncertain: we need be every moment on our guard. They who are immersed in the cares and pleasures of the world, will be terribly surprised by it; and wo to those on whom it shall come as a snare, and seize them in their sins. (2.) If we would meet our Judge with comfort, and be found of him in peace, we must keep a strict rein on inordinate appetite, and learn to die daily to the world, and sit loose to all its cares and enticements. They who are dead to the world whilst they are in it, will be the readiest to go out of it at the most sudden summons. (3.) Surfeiting and drunkenness must necessarily unqualify us to meet our God. A glutton! a drunkard! what a fearful reckoning must he make in the day of judgment! (4.) The cares of this world as effectually stupify the conscience, as the fumes of liquor do the body; and though men are apt to think a sober worldling a decent character compared with a notorious drunkard, yet is their state equally dangerous, and perhaps the former the most difficult to be wrought upon. The drunkard sleeps and is sober: but the worldly-minded rises up as he lay down, *overcharged* with the same load of worldly anxiety and carking solicitude.

2. He exhorts them *to watch and pray always, that they may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man*, with comfort and confidence of his favour and regard. Not that our watchfulness and prayers confer any merit; we must be counted *worthy and accepted in the beloved*; but these are the means God hath appointed, in the use of which he hath promised his grace and blessing to us: and whilst we are awake, and expect our Lord's arrival, and look up to him for strength continually, he will bring us safe through every temptation, and give us to partake at last in his final salvation.

3. During these few days between his triumph and his sufferings, he continued indefatigable in his labours, preaching daily in the temple; and when the evening came, he retired to the Mount of Olives for prayer and meditation, returning in the morning to his delightful work in the temple, where an attentive auditory waited eager to hear his divine discourses.

CHAP. XXII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The plot to take Jesus, and Judas' coming into it,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Christ's eating the passover with his disciples,* ver. 7—18. 3. *The instituting the Lord's supper,* ver. 19, 20. 4. *Christ's discourse with his disciples after supper, upon several heads,* ver. 21—38. 5. *His agony in the garden,* ver. 39—46. 6. *The apprehending of him, by the assistance of Judas,* ver. 47—53. 7. *Peter's denying him,* ver. 54—62. 8. *The indignities done to Christ by those that had him in custody, and his trial and condemnation in the ecclesiastical court,* ver. 63—71.

1. NOW [a] the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. 2. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; [b] for they feared the people. 3. ¶ [c] Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. 4. And he went his way, and [d] communed with the chief priests and captains how he might betray him unto them. 5. And they were glad, and [e] covenanted to give him money. 6. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them * in the absence of the multitude.

a Mat. 26. 1—5. Mark 14. 1, 2. John 11. 55—57. Exod. 12. 15. Ps. 2. 1—5. & 22. 12, 16. ch. 19. 47, 48. & 20. 19. Acts 4. 27.

b See ch. 20. 6, 21.

c Mat. 16. 14—16. Mark 14. 10, 11. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12—14. & 9. 6. John 6. 70, 71. & 13. 2, 18, 21—30.

d Mat. 26. 15. Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. Rom. 3. 10—18. Mic. 7. 5, 6. Jer. 9. 4.

e Zech. 11. 12, 13. Exod. 21. 32. Mark 14. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 10.

* Or *without tumult.*

Verses 1—6 The awful hour now approaches, when the great Redeemer must offer himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people. We have,

1. The chief priests and scribes consulting how to perpetrate the bloody deed they had resolved. The fear of the people restrained them from open violence, and now they plotted how to take him off secretly.

2. Judas, the traitor, opportunely appeared to further their scheme. Satan, whose slave he had ever continued, even though advanced to the dignity of an apostle, now urged him on to the precipice of ruin; and going to the chief priests, in council assembled, who gladly embraced the offer he made, they soon struck up the bargain, and for thirty pieces of silver he engaged to betray his Master; and accordingly he watched for a secret opportunity, when, in the absence of the people, they might seize him without fear of a tumult. *Note*, (1.) All the malice of open enemies do not strike at the cause of Christ so deeply as the perfidy of false disciples. (2.) The devil watches the weak side of professors: and whether it be gold, or wine, or women, &c., he prepares the bait, and apostates readily catch at it.

7. ¶ [f] Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be †killed. 8. And [g] he sent Peter and

f Mat. 26. 17—19. Mark 14. 12—16. John 18. 28. Exod. 12. 6—28. & 13. 3. Lev. 23. 5, 6. Num. 9. 3. & 28. 16, 17. Deut. 16. 1—4.

† Or *sacrificed.*

g Mark 14. 13. Mat. 26. 17, 18.

John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. 9. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? 10. And he said unto them, [h] Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. 11. And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, [i] The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 12. And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. 13. And they went, and [k] found as he had said unto them: [l] and they made ready the passover. 14. [m] And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15. And he said unto them, [n] With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16. For I say unto you, [o] I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. 17. And he took the cup, and [p] gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: 18. For I say unto you, [q] I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come. 19. ¶ [r] And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave it unto them, saying, This [s] is [t] my body, which is given for you: [t] this do in remembrance of me. 20. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, [u] This cup [x] *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

h Is. 41. 22. & 42. 9. & 41. 8. & 45. 21. & 46. 10. John 16. 4. Acts 15. 18.

i Mat. 8. 25. & 21. 3. & 23. 8—10. & 26. 18. John 20. 16. & 11. 8, 28. Acts 10. 36. Col. 1. 15—18. & 2. 9, 10.

k Ps. 33. 9. Num. 23. 19.

l Sam. 15. 22. Exod. 23. 21. John 14. 15. & 15. 14.

m Mat. 26. 20—25. Mark 14. 17—21. Exod. 12. 6. Lev. 23. 5. Deut. 16. 1.

n This is a Hebraism, signifying, *I have heartily desired.* Ch. 12. 50.

o Ch. 14. 15. ver. 18. Acts 1. 3. Mat. 3. 2. & 4. 17. Dan. 2. 44. Rev. 11. 15. & 19. 7, 9.

p Deut. 8. 10. Exod. 23. 25. 1 Tim. 4. 5. ch. 9. 16. Mat. 24. 19. & 15. 36.

q See Mark 14. 25. Mat. 26. 29. ver. 16.

r Mat. 26. 26—28. Mark 14. 22—24. 1 Cor. 11. 23—29. & 10. 16, 17. with Rom. 14. 6. 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5.

s 1 Cor. 11. 24—26.

t 1 Cor. 2. 2. & 1. 24. Mat. 20. 23. & 1. 21. Tit. 2. 14.

u Mat. 26. 28. Exod. 24. 8. Zech. 9. 11. Heb. 9. 14—17. Rom. 5. 6—11, 15—21. 2 Cor. 1. 20.

x i. e. *Signifies.* Gen. 41. 26, 27. 1 Cor. 10. 4. Exod. 12. 11, 12. ver. 19.

Verses 7—20. The day of the preparation of the passover being come, we have,

1. The solemnization of it according to the law. His disciples, Peter and John, had been sent to make ready, and directed whither to go; and having followed the orders of their Master, and prepared the paschal lamb, at even he came and sat down with the twelve, Judas being still of the number, his treachery not having yet openly appeared. Being seated, with warm affection he addressed them, saying, *With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.* He was happy to have this last meeting with them; he longed for the hour when the great work he had undertaken should be accomplished, and that was now at hand. He welcomed those approaching sufferings which procured their salvation, and was now about to put a period to all the ceremonial institutions. Therefore he adds, *I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God:* for when as the Lamb of God, *he* should be offered, who was the true passover, this typical ordinance must cease of course. In the gospel kingdom, the supper he was now about to institute would supersede it; and in the great day of his appearing and glory, most eminently they should rejoice together in the final accomplishment of their glorious liberty; when departed from this world, the house of their prison, they should enter with him into the heavenly Canaan of eternal rest. Presenting therefore the passover cup to the disciples, in which it was usual for the company to pledge the master, he takes a solemn farewell of *the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God come;* either when, after his exaltation, his gospel should be spread through the earth, and his presence be manifested in the midst of his church, where his disciples assembled to partake of his supper: or when the heavenly kingdom shall come, where his redeemed people shall be for ever satisfied with the pleasures that are at his right hand.

2. The institution of *the Lord's supper,* which should be continually celebrated in his church, in memory of a greater redemption than that from Egypt, even the deliverance which he hath obtained for us by the sacrifice of himself, from Satan, sin, death, and hell. The bread is broken in token of his body being broken on the cross; it is given us as spiritual food for our immortal souls, that by faith feeding upon the great doctrines of his atonement and righteousness, we may be comforted and strengthened with might in the inner man. And the wine represents to us that blood he shed for the remission of our sins, and seals to us all the promises of the everlasting covenant of which we are assured partakers, when faith realizes the signs, and makes Christ's flesh meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, for then we have *everlasting life* in him.

21. ¶ [y] But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table. 22. [z] And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but [a] woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! 23. [b] And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. 24. ¶ [c] And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. 25. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. 26. But [d] ye *shall* not *be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. 27. For [e] whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? [f] but I am among you as he that serveth. 28. Ye are they which have continued with me [g] in my temptations: 29. And [h] I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30. That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 31. ¶ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, [i] behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: 32. [k] But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art [l] converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33. And he said unto

y Mark 14. 18—22. Mat. 26. 20—25. John 13. 18, 21—30. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13. John 6. 71.

z Gen. 3. 15. Ps. 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. 52. 14, & 53. 2—12. & 50. 5, 6. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7. Acts 4. 27, 28. & 2. 23.

a Ps. 55. 15—23. & 109. 1—20. Mat. 27. 3—5. Acts 1. 16—20. Is. 3. 11.

b Mat. 26. 22. John 13. 21—25.

c Mat. 20. 24—28. Mark 10. 41—45. & 9. 34—37. ch. 9. 46, 48. Hab. 2. 4.

d Mat. 20. 26, 27. & 18. 3, 4. & 23. 8—12. ch. 14. 11. & 18. 14. John 13. 12—17. 1 Cor. 9. 19—23. Jam. 4. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 5. 3, 5.

e Ch. 17. 7—9. & 12. 37.

f Phil. 2. 7, 8. John 13. 5, 14. Mat. 20. 28. Heb. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 8. 9.

g Mat. 19. 28, 29. Heb. 4. 15. & 2. 18.

h Ch. 12. 32. 2 Cor. 1. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Rev. 3. 21. & 2. 26, 27. Mat. 19. 28. & 24. 47. & 8. 11. Rev. 19. 9. ch. 14. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. Ps. 49. 14.

i 1 Pet. 5. 8. Job 1. 11. & 2. 5. Rev. 12. 10. Zech. 3. 1. Amos 9. 9.

k Mat. 16. 18. John 17. 9, 11 15, 20. & 21. 15—17.

l Jer. 31. 18. Ps. 94. 17, 18. & 51. 12, 13. John 21. 15—17. Is. 35. 3. Heb. 12. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 4.

m Jer. 10. 23. & 17. 9. Mat. 26. 33, 35. Mark 14. 29, 31. John 13. 37. Ps. 30. 6.
n Mat. 26. 3. Mark 14. 30. John 13. 38.
o Mat. 10. 9, 10. ch. 9. 3. & 10. 4. Mark 6. 8, 9.
p Acts 14. 22. John 16. 33. 1 Cor. 4. 11—13. 2 Cor. 11. 25—27. Heb. 10. 34, 36. & 11. 36, 37. 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. & 3. 12. Ye have need of preparation against the approaching dangers.
q Is. 53. 12. Mark 15. 27, 28. ch. 23. 32. Mat. 27. 38. John 19. 18. Heb. 9. 28. 2 Cor. 5. 21.
r John 18. 36. 2 Cor. 10. 4. & 6. 4—7. Eph. 6. 10—18. 1 Pet. 5. 9.

him Lord, [m] I am ready to go with thee both into prison and to death. 34. [n] And he said, I tell thee Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. 35. ¶ [o] And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. 36. Then said he unto them, [p] But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. 37. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, [q] And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end: 38. And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, [r] It is enough.

Verses 21—38. Christ having finished the supper, addresses himself to his disciples.

1. He admonishes them, that, though strange the relation, yet one of them should betray him. That he should thus go, was ordained by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; yet dreadful would be the guilt of that wretch who should perpetrate the horrid deed. Astonished at the information, the disciples with anxious solicitude began to inquire which of them he pointed at, shocked with the thought of being guilty of such enormous wickedness. *Note,* (1.) There are in every age traitors, who eat of Christ's bread, and yet betray him. (2.) Though God foresees and permits the wickedness of sinners, yet will not this at all exculpate them from their guilt. (3.) Holy jealousy over ourselves, lest we should be faithless, is the surest way to preserve our fidelity inviolable.

2. He rebukes the sinful affectation of precedency, for which his apostles, whose heads were still full of his temporal kingdom, had been disputing among themselves. He corrects their vain imaginations, and assures them, that the kingdom he was about to erect, was in no ways like the kingdoms of the Gentiles, where the princes and rulers exercised despotic sway over their subjects, affected the title of benefactors, and were flattered with it by their subjects: but they who bore his commission must not imitate such examples, nor think of lording it over their brethren. The way in which his ministers can only hope to rise in eminence, is by condescending to every work and labour of love; to serve the meanest and least of his disciples; in honour preferring others to themselves, and being ever little and low in their own eyes. His own example was a powerful argument to enforce humility upon them. Though he was their master, and they his servants, he submitted even to wash their feet, that they might learn of him. Hitherto they had continued with him during all his trials and humiliations; they have only to persevere in the same way, expecting nothing on earth but sufferings, and looking for higher honours than the fading ones of this world; either in *the kingdom of grace,* in which they should fill the most important stations, be made eminent instruments of God for good to men's souls, and partake of the rich provision of gospel ordinances, or, *in the kingdom of glory,* where they should reign with their excellent Lord, filled with eternal consolations, and sit down on thrones prepared for them at his right hand, assessors with him in the judgment, as he himself was now about to take the mediatorial throne appointed to him by his Father, and should reign over his redeemed people in glory everlasting. *Note,* (1.) In Christ's kingdom humility is the only way to honour; and our ambition must be, not to be admired as *great,* but to lay ourselves out in doing *good.* (2.) They who faithfully adhere to the Saviour in the midst of manifold temptations, shall find, that as their tribulations abound for Christ, their consolations even in this world shall abound also, and that they shall, in the world to come, obtain a throne of glory that fadeth not away. (3.) Those who receive the kingdom of grace or glory, are purely indebted for it to the gift of Jesus. (4.) The saints of God are now usually despised and trampled upon; but shortly their revilers and persecutors shall see them exalted to a throne, and assessors with the great Judge, before whose bar they must stand trembling, and be covered with everlasting shame and contempt.

3. He warns Peter of his approaching fall, but assures him withal of his grace to recover him, that he should not finally be cast away, *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you,* even all of you, as he desired God's permission to tempt Job, without which he dared not touch a hair of his head: and his purpose is, *to sift you as wheat;* hoping either to prove them chaff, and destroy them by apostasy; or at least to distress, terrify, and scatter them in the hour of temptation: *but I have prayed for thee,* in particular, against whom the fiercest attack will be made, *that thy faith fail not,* totally and finally, though it will be grievously shaken. *And when thou art converted,* recovered from this grievous fall of temptation, *strengthen thy brethren;* taught by experience admonish others of the rock of self-confidence on which thou hast struck, and to beware of temptation: but if they are overcome, encourage them again to return, and not to despair, since there is mercy for the basest backsliders, and no repenting sinner is rejected. *Note,* (1.) Satan is unable without leave to hurt the least of God's saints. (2.) A person may be overcome by temptation, and yet his faith not utterly fail. (3.) Where true faith is in the heart, the soul cannot finally perish. (4.) All our perseverance and stability is not to be ascribed to any resolution of our own, but to the ceaseless intercession of our divine advocate. (5.) When we have fallen, we may not lie down in despair, but arise, and return with shame and humble confession to a pardoning God, that we may find mercy. (6.) They who have been most tempted and exercised themselves, are the best counsellors for others under the like trials, and will have most compassion for them, and be able by their own experience to comfort and encourage them in their distress.

4. He silences Peter's boasts with express assurances of his being about to deny him thrice. Peter resolutely declared, neither a prison nor death should ever make him be false to his Master, or quit him for a moment: but Christ assures him, that night he would have a dire conviction of the weakness of his resolutions, and the strength of the tempter's power over him, even so far as to make him deny that he ever knew his Master. *Note,* We could not suspect there was so much evil in our hearts, if in a day of temptation we had not proved it to our grief; but Christ knows it all, and provides the grace for our recovery, even before we have fallen.

5. He appeals to his disciples for his past care over them: and they own, that in all their journeys, when they travelled without money or provisions, they lacked nothing. *Note,* (1.) The more we reflect on the divine providence in the days that are past, the more we shall be compelled to acknowledge, that hitherto God hath helped us. (2.) Past experience of the Lord's goodness should engage our present confidence in his mercy. (3.) Christ's disciples must be satisfied with a little, and their Master will take care they shall not be destitute.

6. He bids them now prepare for and expect more perilous times, and days of greater distress. He was about to suffer among transgressors, in the greatest torment and ignominy, according to the ancient prophecies concerning him, all which now were ready to be accomplished: and they, for the testimony of

his gospel, would be exposed to want and suffering. They must now take all they have, and employ it in providing those necessaries for themselves which they will want; and need, though at the expense of their garments, to purchase a sword, as more needful for their own defence against the perils of robbers, which they may be called to encounter in their travels. Or, figuratively, this may rather refer to the persecutions and violence of their enemies, against which it would require all their fortitude and courage to bear up. The disciples, supposing that he meant literally, that they should repel force by force, replied, *Lord, here are two swords*, as if they wished to know whether they should procure more; but *he said unto them, It is enough;* these were sufficient to answer the instructive design for which he mentioned them. It was not by those weapons of war that his kingdom was to be spread, or their safety secured; but by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and the left.

39. ¶ [s] And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. 40. [t] And when he was at the place,* he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. 41. [u] And he was withdrawn from them † about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, 42. Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will but thine be done. 43. [x] And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. 44. [y] And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. 45. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow. 46. And he said unto them, [z] Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

s Mat. 26. 36—46. Mark 14. 26, 32—42. John 18. 1. ver. 28.

t Mat 26. 41. & 6 13. Mark 14. 38. ch. 11. 4. Eph. 6. 18, 19. ver. 46. 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9.

* The garden of Gethsemane.

u Mat. 26. 36, 39, 42, 44. Mark 14. 35, 36. Heb. 5. 7. John 18. 14 & 5. 30. & 6. 38. & 12. 27. Ps. 40. 8.

† Whether from the eight, or from Peter, James, and John also, doth not appear.—*Poole.*

x Ps. 91. 11, 12. Mat. 4 11. & 26. 53. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Heb. 1. 14.

y John 12. 27. Gal. 3. 13. Heb. 5. 7. Jon. 2 3. Mat. 26. 37, 38. Ps. 22. 1, 2, 14, 15. & 69. 1, 2. & 18. 5, 6. & 116. 3.

z Jon. 1. 6. Prov. 6. 9. see ver. 40. ch. 21. 34, 36.

Verses 39—46. We have here Christ's agony in the garden, the account of which the other evangelists had given us in nearly the same words. See Matt. xxvi. 36. Mark xiv. 32. Three circumstances are here particularly taken notice of.

1. That *an angel appeared from heaven, strengthening him*, in his agony; probably suggesting to him, as man, some powerful inducements to encourage and support him under his unutterable distress; that the conflict would be short, the issue glorious, the victory sure, and the eternal salvation of his people be the great reward. So low did the Son of God humble himself, as to need their services, who were the work of his own hands; and they who ministered to *him*, will not fail to perform the like kind offices to the heirs of salvation. If the Lord lays upon us heavy burdens, he will send us help in the needful time of trouble.

2. That *being in agony, he prayed more earnestly.* All the storms and billows of divine wrath were now going over him, and the great enemy of souls with all his fury hurled his fiery darts against him. With strong crying and tears he redoubled therefore his supplications, and was heard. *Note,* Prayer is at all times seasonable: but when we are under distress of body or soul, we are peculiarly called to cry mightily to him, whose strength is made perfect in weakness, and every *wrestling* Jacob will be a *prevailing* Israel.

3. *His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* The intenseness of his agony threw the humours of his body into so violent a fermentation, that though it was night, and he lay on the cold ground, the blood exuded with his sweat through the pores, and the reeking drops, trickling down, dyed the earth on which he lay. What a bloody baptism was he baptized with? My soul, behold, admire, and adore! It was love for thee that brought thy Saviour thus low: these drops of bloody sweat are the expiation of thy iniquities.

47. ¶ And while he yet spake, [a] behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus [b] to kiss him. 48. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with [c] a kiss? 49. When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? 50. ¶ [c] And one of them smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. 51. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far.* And he touched his ear, and healed him. 52. [d] Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? 53. When I was [e] daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is [f] your hour, and the power of darkness.

a Mat. 26. 47—57. Mark 14. 43—52. John 18. 2—11. Acts 1. 16. Ps. 2. 1. & 3. 1. & 22. 16.

b Ezek. 33. 31. Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. 2 Sam. 20. 9.

c John 18. 10. Mat. 26. 51, 52. Mark 14. 47. 2 Cor. 10. 4. Rom. 12. 19.

* Or, *let this suffice*, intimating that they were not to proceed further in the way of resistance, as it was not to such methods of defence that our Lord chose to recur. —*Campbell.*

d Mark 14. 48, 49. Mat. 26. 55. John 18. 3, 20. Ps. 22. 12, 16. & 2. 12. & 3. 1. & 69. 19.

e Ch. 20. 47, 48. Mat. 21. 14, 15, 45. 46. John 7. 19. & 8. 37.

f Acts 2. 22. & 4. 27, 28. Gen. 3. 15. John 12. 27. & 14. 30. Ps. 22. 11—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. liii.

Verses 47—53. The traitor with an armed band now appears, and we have,

1. Christ betrayed. The signal given by Judas was a kiss. Adding hypocrisy to his treachery, he approached him; and Jesus, who well knew his design, with one kind word of expostulation on his baseness, readily surrendered himself into the hands of his enemies. *Note,* The Lord is privy to the secret thoughts of apostates in heart, and sees the traitor under all the specious profession he makes.

2. The disciples, who instantly would have stood on their defence, and rescued him, asked his leave to unsheath their swords; but Peter, too impatient to wait for an answer, drew, and aiming a blow at one of those who were active in seizing on his Master, a servant of the high priest's, the sword glanced down the side of his head and took off his right ear. But Christ rebuked Peter for his rashness, and desires his enemies not to resent the blow which Peter had struck, the damage of which he immediately repairs, and on the spot gave them an evidence of his power and grace, by healing the servant, and restoring his lost ear; which if their hearts had not been hardened as the nether mill stone, could not fail to have convinced them both of the wickedness and ingratitude of their conduct. May we learn of our Lord thus ever to render good for evil.

3. He expostulates with the chief priests, and the captains of the temple, and elders, some of whom, even at that unseasonable hour, forgetting their dignity, and instigated by their malice, now mingled with the soldiers, and came to make sure of their prey. Christ reasons with them on the uselessness of such a military force, when he never would have attempted resistance, nor ever meant to abscond, since he appeared daily in public at the temple: *But,* says he, *this is your hour, and the power of darkness.* Till that hour came, all the powers of earth and hell could not prevail against him; now it was come, they would

find no difficulty in performing what was the pre-determined counsel of God.

54. ¶ [g] Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought him unto the high priest's house. [h] And Peter followed afar off. 55. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall,* and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. 56. But [i] a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. 57. And he [k] denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. 58. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. 59. And about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him; for he is a [l] Galilean. 60. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. 61. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.† And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, [m] Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62. [n] And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

g Mat. 26. 57. Mark 14. 53. John 18. 12—14. Acts 8. 32. Is. 53. 7. Lam. 4. 20. Acts 2. 23.

h Mat. 26. 58, 69—75. Mark 14. 54, 66—72. John 18. 15—18, 25—27. with ver. 33, 34. Prov. 9. 6. & 13. 20 Ps. 1. 1. & 26. 4, 5. & 28. 3.

* Or rather *court*.

i Gen. 3. 13. & 16. 2. Eccl. 7. 26.

k Ver. 33, 34. Col. 3. 9. Zech. 8. 16. Eph. 4. 25.

l John 1. 43, 44. ch. 13. 1. Judg. 12. 6.

† What effect that look must have had on the heart and on the countenance of Peter, every one may perhaps in some degree conceive, but it is utterly impossible for any words to describe, or, I believe, even for the pencil to express.—*Porteus.*

m Mat. 26. 34. Mark 14. 30. John 13. 38. ver. 34.

n Mat. 26. 75. Mark 14. 72. Ps. 119. 59, 60. Ezek. 7. 16. Jer. 31. 18. Zech. 12. 10. 2 Cor. 7. 11. Is. 66. 2.

Verses 51—62. We have here,

1. Peter's sad fall. Willing to see what would be the end of his Master's trials, he stole into the palace, and hoped to pass unperceived among the crowd; but his look, his behaviour, his speech, discovered him, and excited repeated charges from the by-standers, which he solemnly disowned, declaring he did not know the man Jesus whom they spoke of, and confirming the horrid lie with the most profane oaths and perjury. One wilful lie has often led men to the most dreadful lengths. None know where they shall stop, when for a moment they deviate from the path of truth.

2. His gracious recovery. The cock crew to warn him of his guilt, and rung in Peter's ears a peal of loudest thunder; and one look of Jesus broke his heart with anguish. *He turned, and looked upon Peter;* and that glance spoke more than words could utter. It showed him, that though now on his trial, Christ was apprised of all that passed; it conveyed the deepest conviction, the tenderest expostulation, the kindest compassion, and the most effectual call of grace to his heart. Peter's guilt now rose in blackest colours to his view: his baseness, his ingratitude, every aggravating circumstance returned to his memory; and overwhelmed with grief, anguish, horror, and shame, *he went out, and wept bitterly.*

63. ¶ [o] And the men that held Jesus [p] mocked him, and smote *him*. 64. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? 65. And many other things blasphemously spake they against him. 66. ¶ [q] And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes, came together, and led him into their council, saying, 67. [r] Art thou the Christ? tell us. [s] And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: 68. And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go. 69. Hereafter shall the Son of man [t] sit on the right hand of the power of God. 70. Then said they all, Art thou then the son of God? And he said unto them, [u] Ye say that I am. 71. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

o Mark 14. 65—65. Mark 26. 59—68. John 18. 19—24.

p Mat. 26. 67, 68. Mark 14. 65. 1 Pet. 2. 23. ch. 7. 16. & 23. 11. Job 16. 10. Ps. 22. 6—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. 50. 6. & 52. 14. & liii. Mic. 5. 1.

q Mat. 27. 1. Mark 15. 1. Is. 53. 3 Ps. 22. 12, 16, 21. & 2. 1. & 3 1. Acts 4. 26.

r Mat. 14. 4, 5. & 16. 16. John 1. 20, 49.

s Is. 52. 13. Mat. 10. 16. Eph. 5. 15. Job 5. 12, 13.

t Ps. 110. 1. Dan. 7. 13, 14. Mark 16. 19. Acts 1. 11. & 3. 21. Heb 1. 3. & 8. 1. ch. 21. 27. 1 Thes. 4. 16. Rev. 1. 7. & 20. 11, 12.

u Mark 14. 62—64 Mat. 26. 64—66. John 5. 17. & 10. 30. This was a common mode of assenting to the affirmative of a question.

Verses 63—71. Behold with horror and indignation,

1. The insults put on this innocent sufferer by the abjects who gathered themselves against him. The servants who kept Jesus in custody till the council met, mocked him, buffeted him: and blindfolding him, in derision of his prophetical character, struck him on the face, and bid him tell who smote him: with other blasphemies, which he silently and patiently endured.

2. The injustice and cruel oppression which his judges, the chief priests and scribes, showed at his trial. Early they arose, at break of day, eager to hasten his condemnation; and, having brought him before them, demanded a direct answer, whether he were the Messiah, or no. Christ knew that their wicked design was to employ his own words as the ground of his condemnation, and therefore expostulates with them on their unfair and unreasonable proceedings. *If I tell you, ye will not believe;* they were resolved at all events, in hardened obstinacy, to reject his pretensions; *and if I ask you*, what you can object to the evidences of my divine mission which I have given, *you will not answer me;* unable to refute them, yet determined not to be convinced by them, though reduced to silence: *nor* will you *let me go*, though unable to prove a single charge against me. Therefore he refers them for conviction to his coming with vengeance on the throne of judgment; when they should know, to their cost, whether he really was possessed of that character which he assumed. With indignation they tumultuously asked, whether he dared arrogate the title of *the Son of God?* He boldly replied in the affirmative, so they said, and so indeed he was. With one voice they instantly condemned him as a blasphemer, counting any further witness unnecessary; when his own confession proved, as they concluded, the blasphemy of his pretensions. So were they given up to a reprobate mind, and blind to the clearest evidence of truth, wilfully rushed on their eternal ruin, filling up the measure of their iniquities.

CHAP. XXIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

This chapter carries on and concludes the history of Christ's sufferings and death. We have here, 1. *His arraignment before Pilate the Roman governor,* ver. 1—5. 2. *His examination before Herod,* ver. 6—12. 3. *Pilate's struggle with the people, to release Jesus; at last he condemns him to be crucified,* ver. 13—25. 4. *An account of what passed as they led him to be crucified,* ver. 26—31. 5. *An account of what passed at the place of execution,* ver. 32—38. 6. *The conversion of one of the thieves, as Christ was hanging on the cross,* ver. 39—43. 7. *The death of Christ, and the prodigies that attended it,* ver. 44—49. 8. *His burial,* ver. 50—56.

1. AND [a] the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. 2. And

a Ch. 22. 66. Mat. 27. 2. 11—31. Mark 15. 1—20. John 18. 28—40. & 19. 1—16. Ps. 2. 1—4. & 22. 1—21. & 3. 1. & 69. 1—21. Acts 2. 23. & 4. 27, 28. 1 Thes. 2. 15.

they began to accuse him, saying, [b] We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying that he himself is Christ a king. 3. And Pilate asked him, saying, [c] Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*. 4. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and *to* the people, [d] I find no fault in this man. 5. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching through all Jewry, beginning [e] from Galilee to this place. 6. When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a [f] Galilean. 7. And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto [g] Herod's* jurisdiction, he sent him unto Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. 8. ¶ And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was [h] desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. 9. Then he questioned with him in many words; but [i] he answered him nothing. 10. And the chief priests and scribes stood and [k] vehemently accused him. 11. [l] And Herod with his men of war† set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. 12. ¶ And the same day, [m] Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

b] 1 Kin. 18. 17. Jer. 38. 4. Acts 17. 6, 7. & 24. 5. John 18. 30. & 19. 12. with Mat. 17. 25. & 22. 21. ch. 20. 25, 27. Rom. 13. 7.

c] Mark 15. 2. Mat. 27. 11. John 18. 33—37. 1 Tim. 6. 13.

d] Mat. 27. 18, 19, 24. Mark 15. 10, 14. John 18. 38. & 19. 4, 6. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22, 24. & 3. 18.

e] Mat. 4. 12—25. Mark 1. 14. Luke 4. 16—44. John 1. 43. & 2. 1—11.

f] Ch. 13. 1. Acts 5. 37.

g] Ch. 3. 1. & 9. 7, 9.

* Herod Antipas, the same who had beheaded John. Herod, it is probable, was at this time in Jerusalem, on account of the passover.—*Hammond.*

h] Ch. 9. 7, 9. Mat. 14. 1. Mark 6. 14.

i] Is. 5. 3, 7. Ps. 38. 13, 14. & 15. 4. Mat. 7. 6. & 10. 16. Amos 5. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 23. Is. 58. 7. Ps. 39. 9.

k] Ver. 2, 5. Gen. 19. 9. Acts 6. 12—14. & 18. 18. & 24. 5.

l] Is. 53. 3. Ps. 22. 6. & 69. 9, 20. Prov. 29. 12.

† The military officers or attendants.

m] Acts 4. 27. Jam. 4. 4. Ps. 83. 5. with ch. 13. 1.

Verses 1—12. Though they had condemned our Lord as worthy to die as a blasphemer, yet not having the power of life and death in their hands, and this pretended crime not being of such a nature as the Roman government might deem capital; in order to execute their bloody purposes, the chief priests are obliged to have recourse to some other charge. Therefore,

1. They accuse him to Pilate, as a fomenter of sedition, setting up himself for king, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar; though he had so expressly enjoined it, when they meant to ensnare him; and so far from affecting royalty, had opposed the mistaken zeal of his followers, who would have set him up for their king, John vi. 15. but the purest innocence is no defence against the blackest calumny. Nay, in the present case, they knew themselves in their hearts to be the rebels; they abhorred the Roman government, and so far from thinking it a crime to oppose it, would gladly have embraced the first favourable occasion to revolt. And by the just judgment of God, that *pretended crime*, on account of which they demanded the condemnation of Jesus, was shortly after *the real crime*, for which themselves, and the whole Jewish nation, were destroyed by the Romans. *Note*, The poisoned chalice will return to him who mingled it.

2. Christ plainly and directly answers Pilate's interrogatories, and confesses himself indeed *King of the Jews;* but not in opposition to Cesar, with whose government he never interfered. His kingdom was of a quite different nature, not *of this world*, but purely spiritual over the hearts of men.

3. Pilate, convinced of the innocence of Jesus, declares he can find no fault in him; whatever religious doctrines he taught, they came not under his cognizance, and therefore he would have released him: but the chief priests, exasperated even to fury at the thought of his being discharged, insisted upon it they could prove him guilty of many seditious discourses, and attempts to raise insurrections through Galilee, the chief scene of his preaching, and in all Judea.

4. Pilate, on the mention of Galilee, having found he was of that country, would very gladly have rid himself of that disagreeable affair; and Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, being then at Jerusalem, to whose jurisdiction he belonged, he referred them to him: and thus was the scripture fulfilled, Psalm ii. 2. Acts iv. 26, 27.

5. Herod was highly pleased at the sight of Jesus. The fame of his mighty works had long excited a desire to see him, and he hoped his curiosity would be gratified by seeing some miracle now performed by him. But he was mistaken: as Christ knew the spirit with which he put the several questions to him relative to his miracles, he deigned not to make the least reply. The poorest beggar that came with his diseased body, would have met the kindest words and speediest relief, but he will not prostitute his power to gratify the curiosity of the proudest potentate.

6. Whilst Jesus held his peace, his accusers, with open mouths, belched out their malice, endeavouring to exasperate Herod against him, and to awaken his jealousy with charges of seditious conduct in Galilee: but Herod thought him an object rather to be despised than feared; and after treating him as a weak silly wretch, and suffering his soldiers to make sport of him, in derision of the pretences which Jesus was said to form, he decked him in a robe of mock majesty, and sent him back to Pilate, desirous, he should determine concerning him as he thought fit. *Note*, If we are set at nought, insulted, despised, and treated as fools or madmen, let it not be grievous to us; we are but like our Lord.

7. Pilate and Herod were on this occasion reconciled. They had been at enmity between themselves, on what account is not said; perhaps on account of the slaughter of the Galileans, Herod's subjects, mentioned chap. xiii. 1. but the mutual civilities which passed on this occasion, healed the breach, and made them friends again. He who come to remove the enmity which subsisted between God and man, is here the peacemaker even between his persecutors.

13. ¶ [n] And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, 14. Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, [o] as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined *him* before you, [p] have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: 15. No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.* 16. [q] I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*. 17. ([r] For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) 18. [s] And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas: 19. (Who for a certain sedition made in the city,

n] Mat. 27. 23. Mark 5. 14. John 18. 38. & 19. 4.

o] Ver. 2, 5.

p] Ver. 4. Dan. 6. 4. Acts 25. 16. & 26. 31. Ps. 35. 7.

* *He hath done nothing worthy of death.*

q] Mat. 27. 26. Mark 15. 15. John 19. 1.

r] Mat. 27. 15. with 26. 2, 5. Mark 15. 6. John 18. 39. with 2. 13. & 4. 45.

s] John 18. 40. Mark 15. 11. Mat. 27. 20. Acts 3. 14. & 21. 36. & 22. 22.

and for murder, was cast into prison.)
20. Pilate therefore, willing to release
Jesus, [t] spake again to them. 21. [u] But
they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify
him. 22. [x] And he said unto them the
third time, Why? what evil hath he done?
I have found no cause of death in him: I
will therefore chastise him, and let *him*
go. 23. [y] And they were instant with
loud voices, requiring that he might be
crucified. And the voices * of them and
of the chief priests prevailed. 24. [z] And
Pilate † gave sentence that it should be
as they required. 25. And he released
unto them him [a] that for sedition and
murder was cast into prison, whom they
had desired; but he delivered Jesus to
their will.

t Mark 15. 12. Mat. 27. 19, 21. John 19. 12.

u John 19. 15. Mat. 27. 22, 23. Mark 15. 14. Acts 3. 15.

x See ver. 20.

y See ver. 21. Ps. 22. 12, 16. & 3. 1. & 41. 4, 11.

* Or, *their clamours, and those of, &c.*

z Mat 27. 24—46. Mark 15. 15. John 19. 16.

† Or *assented.*

a John 18. 40. Mat. 27. 16. Mark 15. 7. Prov. 17. 15. Is. 5. 23. & 59. 14.

Verses 13—25. Jesus being brought again from Herod to Pilate.

1. He called the chief priests and rulers, and the people; and convinced of the innocence of the prisoner, he declares, after the strictest examination, he can find no shadow of a crime: nor had Herod testified the least mark of his displeasure against Jesus as a criminal, or as one deserving capital punishment. He offers, therefore, to *chastise* him, as if he were a criminal, to gratify them, and cover their persecution from the suspicion of malice: and since he must release one to them at the feast, he proposes Christ as the person; who, though his life was spared, would be thus stigmatized as a malefactor. Thus doth this corrupt judge desire to trim between his conscience and the people, unwilling to imbrue his hands in innocent blood, yet solicitous to show his utmost complaisance to them.

2. The proposal was abortive. The people, instigated by their priests and rulers, rejected the offer, demanding the release of Barabbas, whose notorious crimes of murder and insurrection called for the severest punishment, and cried out for the immediate execution of Jesus. In vain Pilate again and again remonstrated against the injustice and cruelty of such a demand, but they only grew more outrageous at his opposition: and, not satisfied with the chastisement he offered to inflict upon Jesus, demanded his crucifixion with such clamour, noise, and violence, as quite terrified Pilate into a compliance. He feared men more than God, and dared not disoblige a lawless multitude, though at the expense of innocent blood.

3. Pilate, though reluctantly, at last pronounces the sentence of execution upon the innocent Saviour; and having released that infamous criminal Barabbas, as preferred before him, *delivers Jesus to their will;* and the enmity which they had shown against him plainly foretold, that *their tender mercies* would be *cruelty.*

26. ¶ [b] And as they led him away,
they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyre-
nian, coming out of the country; and
on him they laid the cross, that he might
bear *it* after Jesus. 27. And there fol-
lowed him a great company of people,
and of [c] women, which also bewailed and
lamented him. 28. But Jesus turning
unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem,
weep not for me, but weep for yourselves,

b Mat. 27. 32. Mark 15. 21. John 19. 16, 17. Bearing his cross.

c Ver. 55. ch. 8. 2. & 2. 36. Mark 15. 40. Mat. 27. 55, 56. That sex which first sinned now adhered best to the Saviour from sin.

and for your children. 29. For, [d] be-
hold, the days are coming, in the which
they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren,
and the wombs that never bare, and the
paps which never gave suck. 30. [e] Then
shall they begin to say to the mountains,
Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.*
31. [f] For if they do these things in a
green tree, what shall be done in the
dry?

d Ch. 21. 23, 24. & 19. 43, 44. Mark 13. 17, 19.

e Is. 2. 19. Hos. 10. 8. Rev. 6. 16. & 9. 6.

* Strong expressions, signifying the greatness of the calamities that were about to fall on them.

f Jer. 25. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. Prov. 11. 31. Ezek. 20. 47. & 21. 3. Mat. 3. 10. & 12. 33. John 15. 6. Jude 12. Heb. 6. 8.

Verses 26—31. Behold the Lamb of God led to the slaughter, amidst the tears of Jerusalem's daughters.

1. His executioners seized on Simon, a Cyrenian, compelling him to bear the cross under which Christ was ready to expire; and not out of pity, but lest by death he should elude their malice, they released him for a moment that they might shortly bind him faster to it with iron.

2. A multitude followed him, and among them many women bewailing his unhappy fate, and touched with tenderest sympathy at his innocent sufferings. *Note,* A sight of the cross-bearing Saviour may well excite our deepest grief. For he bore our sins and carried our sorrows.

3. He addresses the mourners, and kindly bids them direct their tears into another channel: *weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children;* deep as his agonies were, he freely submitted to them; his sufferings were voluntary, and the issue of them would be glorious: but the judgments coming upon their people and nation, would be imbittered with the wrath of God, and end in their utter destruction. Then barrenness would be accounted a blessing, for better were it to be destitute of children, than to see them devoured by famine and the sword. A refuge then, under falling rocks and mountains would be welcome, rather than to meet the fearful executioners of God's vengeance; *for if they have done this thing in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?* If these wicked men have inflicted such sufferings on me, who am innocent, what shall be done to them, who by their sins, are as fuel prepared for the devouring flames? And if the Romans, whom they have instigated, are permitted to exercise such cruelty on me who have never given them provocation, what vengeance will they wreak on the Jewish people, when to the utmost exasperated, and consuming them as fire doth the dry wood? *Note,* (1.) Though barrenness is often counted a misery, the days may come when not to have children may be reckoned among our mercies. (2.) They who will not fly to the arms of Jesus for mercy, will cry in vain to rocks and mountains to shelter them from the frowns of his wrath. (3.) Every view of the sufferings of Jesus should fill us with horror at the dreadful evil and danger of sin; if when it was imputed to him only, the wrath of God fell so heavy upon him, with what an intolerable load must the impenitent soul be overwhelmed, when all the wrath of God due for his *own* sins shall light down on his devoted head. If Christ's sufferings were so great, what must the torment of the damned be?

32. ¶ And there were also two others,
malefactors, led with him to be put to
death. 33. And when they were come
to the place which is called [g] Calvary,
[h] there they crucified him, and the male-
factors, one on the right hand, and the
other on the left. 34. ¶ Then said Je-
sus, Father, [i] forgive them; for they
know not what they do. [k] And they

g Or *the place of a skull.* Heb. 13. 12.

h John 19. 17, 18. Mat. 27. 33, 38. Mark 15. 22, 27. 28. Is. 53. 12. Zech. 12. 10. & 13. 7.

i Gen. 50. 17. Mat. 5. 44. Acts 7. 60. 1 Cor. 4. 12. & 2. 8. ver. 48. Acts 2. 37, 38. & 3. 17.

k Mat. 27. 35. Mark 15. 24. John 19. 23. Ps. 22. 18.

parted his raiment, and cast lots. 35. ¶ And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them [l] derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be [m] Christ, the chosen of God. 36. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and [n] offering him vinegar, 37. And saying, if thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself. 38. [o] And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. 39. ¶ And [p] one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40. But the other answering, [q] rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41. [r] And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: [s] but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42. And he said unto Jesus, [t] Lord, remember me when thou comest into [u] thy kingdom. 43. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, [x] To-day shalt thou be with me in [y] paradise.

l Mat. 27. 39—43. Mark 15. 29—32. Ps. 22. 6—8, 12—17. & 35. 15. & 69. 7—12, 18—20.

m The elect of God. The title is adopted from Is. 42. 1.

n Ps. 69. 21. Mat. 27. 34, 48. Mark 15. 23, 36. John 19. 29.

o John 19. 19—22. Mat. 27. 37. Mark 15. 26. with Acts 4. 12. Jude 3. Mark 16. 15. Is. 45. 22.

p Mark 15. 32. Mat. 27. 44. 2 Cor. 28. 22. Jer. 5. 3.

q Eph. 5. 11. Josh. 7. 19. Lev. 19. 17.

r Ps. 51. 4. Dan. 9. 7. Jer. 3. 17. Ezek. 16. 63.

s Rom. 10. 10. ch. 12. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Song 5. 10.

t John 20. 28. Phil. 3. 8, 9. ch. 18. 13, 38, 39. 2 Tim. 1. 18. & 4. 8.

u John 18. 36. & 17. 2. Ps. 110. 1. Heb. 1. 3. & 8. 1. & 10. 18.

x 2 Cor. 5. 8. Phil. 1. 23.

y 2 Cor. 5. 1. & 12. 2, 4. Rev. 2. 7. *i. e.* heaven.

Verses 32—43. We have here,

1. The crucifixion of the Son of God between two malefactors; who, to increase the ignominy of his sufferings, were led with him to Calvary, the place of execution, and crucified on each side of him. There amidst the taunts and insults of his enemies, he was hung up, in torments to expire; and over his head, his pretended crime was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, *This is the King of the Jews.* Whilst they are mocking, let us bow down with adoration, and wonder at that love which fastened him to the accursed tree. If, as they challenged him to do, he refused to *save himself*, it was because he could not then have *saved us*, it was needful that he should die upon the cross, that we might not eternally perish under the wrath of God.

2. His prayer for his murderers. *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;* they were blinded by prejudice and ignorance, and as the dying sufferer forgave them, he became, as mediator, their advocate with his Father, that he might obtain their pardon, and prevailed. Some of those who nailed him to the tree, experienced the glorious efficacy of that atoning blood with which their hands were stained. *Note,* (1.) There are no crimes so great but the blood of Jesus can cleanse us from them; even murder itself is not unpardonable. (2.) The persecutors of God's people know not what they do, and that should be an argument with us, after our Lord's example, to bear with, forgive, pity, and pray for them.

3. The conversion of the thief upon the cross, wherein we behold a most glorious evidence of the mighty efficacy of the Saviour's grace, even in the lowest step of his humiliation, and a striking display of the great design of his sufferings, to save that which was lost. We are told by the other evangelists, that both the malefactors reviled him, as I am inclined to believe at first they did; though afterwards one of them by the effectual sovereign grace of God, became a signal monument of mercy, as is here related. One indeed continued hardened to the last, railing on him, and challenging him if he was the Christ, to save himself and them. Thus afflictive providences, without the grace of God, serve only to harden and exasperate, instead of humbling the impenitent. The other, snatched as a brand from the burning, is here held up an illustrious monument of the salvation of Jesus even to the uttermost; an object which stains the pride of human glory, and renders all self-wrought human righteousness contemptible, when such a wretch enters the eternal kingdom, from which the most devout, decent, and orderly Pharisee must be for ever excluded. The fears which some have expressed, lest this example should embolden sinners, and the many insinuations they have suggested to advance the good character of the thief, as if he had never heard of Christ before, this was the first crime, &c. appear unnecessary, not to say unchristian; and whatever specious shows of piety they bear, are calculated merely to tarnish the transcendent lustre of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to derogate from the sovereignty and freedom of the grace of God. It is enough that the Saviour was pleased to exercise a signal act of favour towards one desperate sinner, as an encouragement to the most miserable still to trust in his mercy.

(1.) The behaviour of this malefactor evinced the blessed influence which a sense of redeeming love instantly wrought in his heart. No sooner was he struck with the conviction, that this suffering man who hung by his side was the true Messiah, and God's eternal Son, than instantly his tone is changed to every expression of real penitence. (1.) He sharply rebukes his companion, *Dost thou not fear God?* When ready to appear at his tremendous bar, how unsuitable is such reviling in thy lips, *seeing thou art in the same condemnation,* suffering the same kind of punishment, and therefore humanity dictated mutual compassion. (2.) He reminds him of the justness of their punishment, and takes shame to himself for his crimes. *We indeed* suffer *justly, for we receive the just reward of our deeds,* and that should have covered them both with confusion, and sealed up their lips in silence. Thus every real penitent justifies God in his judgments, and owns all he suffers to be no more than his sins deserve. (3.) He bears testimony to the innocence of Jesus, *this man hath done nothing amiss;* he was fully convinced his sufferings were for sins not his own, and his confession seems to intimate he was well acquainted with the Saviour's character; and what he had seen of Christ's behaviour on the cross, his meekness, patience, and charity towards his murderers, were striking evidences of his innocence. (4.) He addresses himself to the dying Redeemer, as a dying sinner commending himself to his mercy. *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.* His *faith* staggered not at the ignominious circumstances in which he beheld the Son of God; he pays him the divine honours due to him as *the Lord* of life and glory; he professes unshaken dependence on his all-sufficiency to save even at the latest gasp, the vilest of sinners. Humbly he presents his request; one kind remembrance only he asks, unworthy the least regard; but if the Lord will think of him in that glorious kingdom, to which he is now assured he is about to be advanced, that will be enough to insure his salvation. Lord, give me like faith in thy power and love! Thus dying, may I be able to commend my spirit into thy hands! Content to stand on a level with this wretched malefactor, and founding all my hopes on thy rich and sovereign grace alone!

(2.) Christ is pleased most graciously to answer his request, and to give him even more than he asks. *Verily I say unto thee,* and my word is truth, my promises sure, *this day shalt thou be with me in paradise;* thy soul, as soon as it departs from the body, shall join the assembly of the blessed in that state of happiness and glory, which God hath prepared for his redeemed people. *Note,* (1.) The prayer of faith is sure of an answer of peace; the chief of sinners, when they return to God, shall be placed among his saints in glory everlasting. (2.) There is a

The Descent from the Cross

Engraved by J. Freeman from an Original Painting

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state of blessedness immediately prepared for the souls of the faithful, where they are in joy and felicity before the resurrection-day, when in body and soul their happiness will be complete. (3.) Where Christ is, there is heaven; to be with him, is to be eternally blessed.

44. ¶ [z] And it was about the sixth hour; and there was darkness over all the ‡earth until the ninth hour. 45. And the sun was darkened, [a] and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst. 46. ¶ And [b] when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, [c] Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. 47. ¶ Now [d] when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God,* saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. 48. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, [e] smote their breasts, and returned. 49. [f] And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

z Amos 8. 9. Mat. 27. 45—49. Mark 15. 33—38.
‡ Or *land.*
a Exod. 26. 31. 2 Chr. 3. 14. Mat. 27. 50—53. Mark 15. 38. Eph. 2. 14—18. Heb. 6. 19. & 10. 19. 2 Cor. 3. 14, 16. John 14. 6.
b Mat. 27. 46, 50. Mark 15, 34, 37. John 19. 30.
c Ps. 31. 5. Acts 7. 59. Heb. 9. 14. Phil. 2. 8.
d Mat. 27. 54. Mark 15. 39.
* Acknowledged these convulsions of nature to be an evidence of divine interposition.—*Hammond.*
e Ver. 34. Acts 2. 37. ch. 18. 13.
f Mat. 27. 55. 56. Mark 15. 40, 41. ch. 8. 2. ver. 27, 55. Job 19. 13. Ps. 38. 11.

Verses 44—49. We are told,

1. The prodigies which happened whilst Jesus hung on the tree. The sun was eclipsed from twelve o'clock at noon till three, and the veil of the temple rent, signifying the state of judicial blindness, to which the Jewish people were abandoned; the abolition of all the typical institutions, the one great sacrifice being now offered which they represented; and the free access which all, whether Jews or Gentiles, now have to a throne of grace, *through this new and living way consecrated through the veil, that is to say, his flesh*, Heb. x. 19, 20.

2. The last dying words of Jesus, which he uttered aloud, not as one exhausted, but as having still his full strength, *Father, into thy hands, I commend my spirit; and having thus said, he gave up the ghost.* He borrows the Psalmist's words, for Scripture language is ever most expressive in our addresses to God. He testifies the fullest confidence in the favour of God his *Father*, as the great high priest and sacrifice; he by the eternal Spirit, offers himself for the sins of his people; and now by his death, pays down the ransom in full to divine justice; he commits his human body and soul, that now were to be separated, to his Father's care, and waits in hope until the third day, when they should be re-united, and, he should rise again. And thus must the dying saints of God, by faith, cheerfully commend their departing souls to their Father's keeping, until the happy resurrection morn; when, fashioned like to Christ's glorious body, our sleeping ashes shall be re-animated, and we shall be taken to dwell with him in his eternal kingdom.

3. The centurion's confession. Deeply affected with what he saw, and heard, he could not refrain from expressing his fullest conviction of the innocence of Jesus; and, to the glory of God, acknowledges the righteousness of his eternal Son.

4. The spectators, many of them at least, perhaps some also, who had cried, *Crucify him*, now full of anguish and remorse, returned smiting on their breasts. The prodigies they beheld startled their consciences, and terrified them with the apprehensions of what would be the consequence of this atrocious deed, at which even the heavens above, and the earth under their feet, testified their indignation.

5. A multitude of his disciples, and of the women who followed Jesus from Galilee, stood at a distance, overwhelmed with grief at what they saw, and under the deepest dejection, as if the cross of Jesus was the death of all their hopes, when, in fact, by these sufferings alone his victories were to be obtained, and his kingdom established.

50. ¶ [g] And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just: 51. (The same [h] had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself [i] waited for the kingdom of God. 52. This man went unto Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. 53. And he took it down, [k] and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. 54. [l] And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. 55. ¶ [m] And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 56. And they returned, and prepared [n] spices and ointments; and [o] rested the sabbath-day, according to the commandment.

g Mat. 27. 57—61. Mark 15. 42—47. John 19. 38—42. 1 Cor. 1. 26. Ps. 22. 29.
h Is. 8. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 22. Eph. 5. 11. Prov. 1. 10.
i Ch. 2. 25, 38. Is. 8. 17. & 25. 9. Gen. 49. 18. Ps. 130. 5, 6. Lam. 2. 25.
k Mat. 12. 40. & 27. 59, 60. Mark 15. 46. John 19. 38—41. Is. 53. 9. with 2 Kin. 13. 21.
l Mat. 26. 62. & 15. 42.
m Ch. 8. 2. ver. 49. Mat. 27. 61. Mark 15. 45. ch. 24. 10.
n John 19. 39. 2 Chr. 16. 14. Mark 16. 1. ch. 4. 1.
o Exod. 20. 8—10. & 31. 12. & 35. 2. Is. 56. 2, 4, 6. & 58. 13, 14. Jer. 17. 24, 25.

Verses 50—56. The corpse of Jesus was now in danger of being cast with those of the malefactors into a common grave; but when none of his other disciples had courage to appear, or ability to give him an honourable interment, God is pleased to raise up one to discharge this last kind office.

1. His name and character are here given us. He was called Joseph, a man of signal piety and probity; *a counsellor*, probably one of the great Sanhedrim, *who consented not to the counsel and deed of them;* either he entered his protest against their proceedings, or, seeing opposition in vain, withdrew. *He was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God*, expecting, according to the prophecies, that it would shortly appear.

2. He went unto Pilate, and having obtained permission to take down the body from the cross, he wrapped it in linen, and laid it in his own new tomb, where never man before lay, in haste to finish the funeral, because the sabbath drew on. The women, the constant attendants of Jesus, followed the corpse to the grave; and returning, prepared spices and ointments, that they might come and embalm him, as soon as the sabbath was past; during which, they observed the rest enjoyed on that holy day. *Note*, The Lord's day now, as the sabbath of old, is sacred; all our affairs must be so ordered, as not to break in upon the hours expressly set apart for the immediate service of God.

CHAP. XXIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

We have here glorious testimonies borne to the resurrection of Jesus, 1. *By two angels to the women, who reported it to the apostles,* ver. 1—12. 2. *By Christ himself, to two of the disciples, as they went to Emmaus,* ver. 13—35. 3. *He appears to the eleven disciples themselves, the same day at evening,* ver. 36—48. 4. *He ascends into heaven, to the joy and praise of his disciples, whom he left behind,* ver. 49—53.

1. NOW [a] upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.* 2. And they found [b] the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. 3. And they entered in, and [c] found not the body of the Lord Jesus. 4. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, [d] two men stood by them in shining garments: 5. And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye [e] the living among the dead? 6. He is not here, but is risen: [f] remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, 7. Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. 8. [g] And they remembered his words, 9. [h] And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. 10. [i] It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles. 11. [k] And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. 12. ¶ [l] Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

a Mat. 28. 1—8. Mark 16. 1—8. John 20. 1—10.

* The women spoken of here are mentioned in the last verse but one of the foregoing chapter, as 'the women who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee.' They were probably now joined by some of our Lord's female disciples from Jerusalem. —*Campbell.*

b Mat. 27. 60, 66. & 28. 2. Mark 15. 46. & 16. 4. John 20. 2.

c John 20. 2, 6, 7.

d Mark 16. 5—7. Mat. 28. 5—7: Gen. 18. 2. & 19. 15. Josh. 5. 13. Acts 1. 10. Dan. vii, viii, x. Zech. i—vi.

e Or *him that liveth.* Rev. 1. 18. Heb. 7. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

f Mat. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19. Mark 8. 31. & 9. 31. & 10. 33, 34. ch. 9. 22. & 18. 33. Mat. 12. 40.

g John 2. 22. & 12. 16. & 14. 26.

h Mat. 28. 8. Mark 16. 8. ver. 22—24.

i John 20. 1. ch. 8. 2, 3. & 23. 49, 55. Mat. 27. 55, 56. Mark 15. 40, 41.

k Ver. 25. Acts 12. 15. Num. 11. 22, 23. Ps. 73. 22. & 126. 1. Gen. 18. 12. & 19. 14. 2 Kin. 7. 2.

l John 20. 2, 6—10.

Verses 1—12. The sabbath being ended, the good women who had prepared the spices to embalm the body, were early up, to visit the sepulchre; and, to their surprise, found the stone rolled away from the door: and, to the increase of their perplexity, on entering the sepulchre, they found not the body. Whereupon we are told,

1. The glorious vision which appeared to them of two angels, whose presence at first greatly terrified them, and with deep respect they bowed their faces to the ground; but these heavenly messengers soon relieved them from their distress, with words of kindest consolation, *Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen:* Jesus your Master is no longer the prisoner of the grave; he lives, for ever lives, the conqueror of all his foes; *remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee;* it need not surprise them when he had so repeatedly foretold the sufferings and death he must undergo from the hands of wicked men, and his resurrection which would follow; and on being reminded of this, they remembered the prediction which the angel mentioned. *Note,* We are strangely forgetful of the great things which Jesus hath spoken, and need to have our memories often refreshed, that we may not let them slip.

2. The haste the women made to apprize the apostles, and the rest of the disciples, of what they had seen and heard. But, though the fact was asserted by the women, so slow of heart were they to believe, that they treated the report *as idle tales and believed them not;* they imputed it to the power of imagination, and were sunk in despair, and so totally unapprehensive of Christ's resurrection, that they seem not to have had the least expectation of it, nor the least remembrance of the assurances concerning his rising again, which he had so repeatedly given them.

3. Peter roused by the report, resolved however to see for himself, and ran immediately to the sepulchre: and stooping down, saw the grave clothes regularly folded up, and laid separate, but the body gone; whereupon *he departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.* Not having the least expectation of his Master's resurrection, he could not account for these strange circumstances. Had he remembered the words of Jesus, his wonder must have ceased.

13. ¶ [m] And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs. 14. And they [n] talked together of [o] all these things which had happened. 15. And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, [p] Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16. [q] But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him. 17. And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? 18. And the one of them, whose name was [r] Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem,* and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? 19. And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was [s] a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20. [t] And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21. But we trusted that it had been he [u] which should have redeemed Israel: and, besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. 22. [x] Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23. And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that [y] they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. 24. [y] And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said; but him they saw not. 25. Then he said unto them, [z] O fools, † and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26. [a] Ought not Christ to have suffered these things,

m Mark 16. 12, 13. ver. 18.

n Deut. 6. 7. Acts 8. 28. Mal. 3. 16.

o Mat. 27. 45—53. & 28. 1—8. Mark 15. 33—39.

p Ver. 36. Acts 8. 30. Mat. 18. 20. Exod. 20. 14.

q John 20. 14. & 21. 4. Mark 16. 12. ver. 31.

r Or *Alpheus.* Mat. 10. 3. Mark 3. 18. ch. 6. 15. John 19. 25.

* *Art thou alone such a stranger in Jerusalem as to be unacquainted, &c.*

s Mat. 21. 11. John 4. 19. & 6. 14. Acts 3. 22. & 7. 37. & 10. 38. ch. 7. 16. & 2. 52. & 23. 47.

t Mat. xxvi, xxvii. Mark xiv, xv. ch. xxii, xxiii. John xviii, xix. Ps. xxii, lxix. Is. liii.

u Gen. 49. 10. Is. 9. 6, 7. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 30. 21. Ezek. 34. 23, 29. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Mic. 5. 2. ch. 1. 68. & 2. 25 Acts 1. 6.

x Ver. 3. 9—12. Mat. 28. 7, 8. John 20. 1—10.

y Ver. 12. John 20. 3, 10.

z Gal. 3. 1. Heb. 5. 11

† More literally, *O thoughtless men!*

a Is. 50. 6. & 52. 13—15. & liii. Ps. xxii, xvi, ii, lxix. Phil. 2. 6—11. Heb. 2. 8—10. & 1. 3. & 12. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Acts 17. 3. ver. 46.

and to enter into his glory? 27. And [b] beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 28. And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went; and he made as though he would have gone further. 29. But they [c] constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. 30. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, [d] and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them. 31. And their eyes [e] were opened, and they knew him; and he * vanished out of their sight. 32. And they said one to another, Did not our heart [f] burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? 33. And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven [g] gathered together, and them that were with them, 34. Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath [h] appeared to Simon. 35. [i] And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

b Gen. 3. 15. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 49. 10. Exod. xxv—xxx, xxxv—x. Lev. i—xvi. Num. 21. 9. Deut. 18. 15—18. Ps. ii, viii, xvi, xxii, lxix, lxxii, xlv, cxxxii. Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. 7. & 35. 3—6. & 11. 1—10. & 42. 1—7. & xlix. 1, lii, liii. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 30. 21. & 31. 22. & 33. 15, 16. Ezek. xxxiv. Dan. 2. 44. & 9. 24—27. Mic. 5. 2—4. Zech. 3. 8, 9. & 6. 12, 13. & 13. 7. Mal. 3. 1—3. Hag. 2. 7. John 1. 45. Acts 10. 43.

c Gen. 19. 2, 3. 2 Kin. 4. 8. & 5. 16. Acts 16. 15. Heb. 13. 2. Mark 6. 48. Gen. 32. 26.

d Ch. 9. 16. 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5. Acts 27. 35.

e Ver. 16. John 20. 16.

* Or *ceased to be seen.*

f Jer. 20. 9. & 15. 16. Job 23. 12. John 5. 35. Ps. 104. 34.

g John 20. 19, 26. Acts 1. 13.

h 1 Cor. 15. 5. Mark 16. 7. with ch. 22. 54—62.

i Mark 16. 10—13. John 20. 10. Mat. 28. 9, 10.

Verses 13—35. This passage just mentioned by Mark, is here more at large related. We have,

1. The discourse of two of the disciples as they walked to a village called Emmaus, about seven or eight miles from Jerusalem. Their business we are not told; perhaps despair had seized upon their hearts of ever again seeing their crucified Master, and they were now returning homewards. And as they went, the melancholy events which had passed were the subject of their conversation, together with the report which the women had spread of the resurrection of their Lord, on the probability of which they might be reasoning. *Note*, Godly conversation makes the most pleasing journey.

2. An unknown stranger to appearance, joins them on the road, as they were in deep discourse; and walking with them, kindly inquires what caused their melancholy looks and earnest conversation. They little thought who now was of their company; either their sight was miraculously affected, or their downcast eyes were never lifted up to look upon the person who had overtaken them. *Note*, (1.) Where two of Christ's disciples meet to talk about the things which appertain to his kingdom and glory, he will be in the midst of them, instructing and comforting them. (2.) The children of God are often without reason, sad, and fear their case is desperate, when their salvation is most secure; but *their eyes are holden;* through the weakness of their faith they cannot take the comfort which is offered them. (3.) When we are sad and dejected, solitude increases the evil, whilst the converse of a gracious friend serves to alleviate our sorrows; and where we are fellow-mourners, by comparing our cases, we should seek to be mutual comforters.

3. In answer to his question, Cleopas replied, *Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in those days?* The city had rung of the horrid execution of Jesus, and Cleopas presumes that no man who came from thence, could possibly be unacquainted with the transactions which had passed on that occasion.

4. When Christ still pretended ignorance of the things to which Cleopas alluded, in order to draw on farther discourse in answer to his question, Cleopas succinctly relates the past and present state of the affair. He begins with an account of his dear Lord and Master *Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet,* a teacher come from God, who confirmed his divine mission by the heavenly doctrine he taught, and the miracles he wrought; was evidently approved of the Most High, who endued him with such mighty powers, and bore witness to him from heaven; and was for a while greatly caressed and admired by the people, who in crowds attended his ministry. Him, at the instigation of the chief priests and rulers, the Roman governor had crucified, though confessedly innocent; the remembrance of which grievous scene deeply afflicted them: especially as they acknowledge themselves his disciples, and own their late sanguine hopes, that this *had been he, who should have redeemed Israel;* the promised Messiah, the great prophet, whom Moses had bid them expect. But, alas! their hopes were now almost buried in their Master's grave: it was true indeed, he talked about rising on the third day, which was now drawing to a period, and certain strange reports had been spread by some women of their company, who had been that morning at the sepulchre to look after the body, and astonished them with an account of having seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive, but they gave little credit to the report. Some of their men, however, hereupon ran to the tomb, and found the body gone as the women had said, but saw nothing of the angels, or their Master, which rendered the matter very suspicious, and made them suppose the women mistaken; since, if he was really arisen, they could not but conclude he would rather have notified it to his apostles than to them, so that on the whole they were deeply dejected, and scarce entertained the least prospect of ever seeing him again.

5. The unknown traveller hereupon took up the discourse. He begins with a just rebuke of their folly and unbelief; *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.* Had ye reflected upon, and embraced the prophetic writings, you might as soon have entertained suspicions about the rising of the sun, as the resurrection of Jesus: for *ought not Christ to have suffered these things,* according to the eternal counsels of God, the express declarations of his prophets, and for the honour of the divine justice, and to *enter into his glory,* the reward of his sufferings and death? So far, therefore, from harbouring doubts because of these, that he could not be the Messiah, nor would ever rise again, what he endured was absolutely a proof of the reality of the character he assumed; and should have encouraged their fullest confidence, that as they had beheld his humiliation on the cross, they should also see his exaltation to his mediatorial throne. Then beginning from the books of Moses, he proceeded through the prophets, expounding to them the types and prophecies which related to himself, and spoke of his sufferings, and the glory which should follow. *Note*, The Old Testament, as well as the New, is full of Christ. We never understand Moses and the prophets aright, unless we see him as the great object which they continually hold forth to us.

6. At last Christ discovers himself to them. Drawing nigh to Emmaus, he made as if he would have parted company, and passed on farther; but they were too much charmed with his discourse to let him go, and therefore as the evening was advanced, they pressed him to stay: and at their importunate request he went in with them. And sitting down at table, with authority, as the master of the house, he took bread, according to his usual manner, and craving the divine benediction, broke, and gave to them. Immediately their eyes were opened; they looked up, and discovered the well known features of their crucified Master; when instantly he became invisible and withdrew, leaving them to reflect on what they had seen and heard. *Note*, (1.) They

who wish for Christ's company must solicit the favour; he loves the importunity of prayer. (2.) If we have tasted the satisfaction of communion with Jesus, like the spouse we shall hold him fast in the arms of faith and love, and desire never to let him go. (3.) Our meals must be sanctified by prayer and thanksgiving, and then they will serve to minister food to our souls as well as our bodies. (4.) In the ways of his ordinances, the Lord opens the eyes of our faith, and enables us to behold his glory; he hath often since this made himself known to his people *in the breaking of bread* at his table. (5.) The visits of Jesus upon earth are transient; in heaven alone we can expect the uninterrupted beatific vision.

7. The disciples could not help hereupon reflecting on the lively impressions the discourse of Jesus had made upon them in the way. On comparing, they found that both their hearts had glowed with holy fervour as he spoke: such irradiation darted on their minds, whilst he opened to them the Scripture; such life and energy accompanied his discourse, that they cannot but marvel at their own stupidity not to have discovered him before; since none could have taught them with such demonstration of the Spirit and power, but he who spoke *like as never man spoke* before. *Note*, Nothing can warm the sinner's frozen heart like the preaching of a crucified Jesus; and his delightful name should be the continual subject of our discourses.

8. They immediately resolved to return, and carry the glad tidings to their brethren at Jerusalem. Not a moment was to be lost; they knew by what themselves had felt how melancholy and distressed their fellow-disciples were, and how they could bring them news that could warm their hearts, as it had fired their own. Accordingly, though it was evening, they hasted back, and found opportunely the apostles assembled with the rest of the faithful; who, before they had power to speak, eagerly prevented them, saying, *The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon;* so that it is not a woman's report merely, but a certain fact. The two disciples then corroborated the evidence with what had passed in the way, and the discovery which Jesus made of himself to them, *in breaking of bread*, when they sat down together to take some refreshment. *Note*, (1.) The gracious experiences which the Saviour gives us of his love, we should delight to communicate for the comfort and encouragement of our brethren. (2.) Nothing serves more to comfirm the faith, and enliven the hopes of real Christians, than comparing the observations, and the dealings of God with their souls. As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth such gracious communications mutually quicken and strengthen the heart.

36. ¶ [k] And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. 37. [l] But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38. And he said unto them, [m] Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39. [n] Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. 40. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet. 41. And while they yet believed not for joy, * and wondered, he said unto them, [o] Have ye here any meat? 42. And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb. 43. And he took *it*, and did eat before them. 44. And he said [p] unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the Psalms, concerning me. 45. Then [q] opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46. And said [r] unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47. [s] And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name [t] among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48. [u] And ye are witnesses of these things. 49. ¶ And, behold, I send [x] the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.

k Mark 16. 14—18. John 20. 19—23. Mat. 13. 12. & 28. 9. ch. 10. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 5, 7.

l Mat. 14. 26. Acts 12. 9.

m Ps. 42. 5, 11. & 43. 5. Is. 41. 10, 14. Rev. 1. 17, 18. John 14. 1.

n John 20. 20, 27. 1 John 1. 1. Ps. 103. 12, 13.

* Yet, if they had not now believed, they doubtless would not have rejoiced; their faith was the cause of their joy, yet the excess of their joy was the hindrance of their faith. So dangerous are the excessive motions of our affections!—*Poole.*

o John 21. 5, 10, 13. Acts 10. 41.

p Mat. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19. Mark 8. 31. & 9. 31. & 10. 33. ver. 6, 7. ch. 9. 12. & 18. 31, 32. Mic. 5. 2. Hag. 2. 7. Zech. 9. 9. & 13. 7. Mal. 3. 1—3. & 4. 2. see on ver. 27. John 16. 1. & 1. 45.

q Acts 16. 14. 1 Cor 2. 13 Mat. 13. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Ps. 119. 105.

r See on ver. 26, 27, 44. Ps. 22. 7—16. & 16. 8—11. Acts 2. 25. & 13. 35. & 17. 3.

s Zech. 12. 10. Mat. 9. 13. Acts 2. 38. & 3. 26. & 13. 38. & 5. 31. 1 John 2. 21. & 1. 7. Rev. 1. 5, 6.

t Ps. 2. 6, 8. & 22. 22, 27. & 110. 2. Is. 2. 2—4. & 11. 10. & 28. 16. & 40. 9. & 49. 1, 6, 22. & 53. 12. & 52. 15. & 59. 19, 20. & 60. 9. & 61. 1, 23. Jer. 31. 33, 34. Dan. 7. 14. & 2. 44. Joel 2. 32. Mal. 1. 11. Mat. 8. 11, 12.

u John 15. 27. Acts 1. 8, 22. & 10. 39, 41. 1 John 1. 2, 3. & 5. 9.

x Joel 2. 28. Is. 44. 3, 4. Prov. 1. 23. Ezek. 36. 27. John 14. 16, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 7—14. Acts 1. 4, 8. & 2. Gal. 3. 14.

Verses 36—49. This is the fifth appearance of Jesus the same day he arose. First he was seen by Mary, John xx. 14. Then by the women, Matt. xxviii. 9. By Peter alone, 1 Cor. xv. 5. By the two disciples; and now by all who were assembled together.

1. He suddenly appeared in the midst of them, whilst they were talking over this glorious event, the resurrection of their Lord; and with most encouraging words of consolation, wishes them all peace and happiness. He mentions not one upbraiding word of their perfidy in forsaking him; of Peter's profaneness and perjury in denying him; they had turned again, and he had sealed their pardon; the past, therefore, is not only forgiven, but forgotten, and he is come to assure them of his unchangeable love.

2. They were terrified and affrighted at his presence, and supposed at first it was an apparition, or a spirit, that had assumed the form of Jesus. So surprised were they, that they forgot the proofs of his resurrection for a moment, on which they had just been discoursing.

3. He soon convinced them of the groundlessness of their fears, and their folly to be startled at his appearance, which should have been their greatest joy, *Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Note*, We often cause ourselves needless disquiet, brooding over melancholy apprehensions, when perhaps the very distress we feel is a symptom for good; as the deep convictions of sin show the Spirit of God is at work with our hearts, and will shortly issue in peace and joy in believing. To remove, therefore, their doubts,

(1.) He bids them examine him, and gain the fullest evidence to their senses. There were his hands and his feet, where still the scars of the nails remained; those glorious scars in his victorious conflict over all the powers of darkness, their enemies, and his: *handle me, and see*, satisfy yourselves fully in the certainty of my resurrection, and the identity of my body: *for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have*, but is incorporeal, though it may appear under the resemblance of a human form. Accordingly he showed them his hands, his feet, his side, that they might have the fullest conviction of his being the same Jesus; for bearing testimony to whose resurrection, they would afterwards be exposed to the most furious persecutions, and

therefore it was needful that their own assurance of the fact should be put beyond a doubt.

(2.) He eats and drinks with them, to prove most fully to them that he had really a living body like their own. The astonishment they were in, and the inexpressible joy they felt, quite overcame them; they were ready to believe, that what they saw and heard, was too great and too good news to be true, and could not yet credit the testimony of their own senses. To give time to recover from this ecstasy, and confirm their faith, he sat down with them, and did eat in their presence some broiled fish, and a piece of a honeycomb, which they gave him; so that they might be assured hereby he was no spectre.

(3.) He not only gave this conviction to their senses, but poured a flood of divine light upon their souls. He refers them to his former discourses with them, concerning the things written in the law, the prophets, and psalms, relative to his sufferings and glory; and by the powerful operations of his Spirit he wonderfully brought all he had spoken to their memory, and opened the intent and meaning of the Scriptures to their hearts with such evidence, clearness, and certainty, that they perceived the full accomplishment of all in him. *Note*, (1.) Our understandings are darkened, till Christ shines upon us as the Sun of Righteousness, and also by his Spirit communicates the faculty of vision. (2.) The most enlightened mind hath daily need to cry, *Open thou mine eyes.* (3.) The way in which Christ teaches is in and by the Scriptures: we must look for no wisdom unto salvation out of the written word:—Though, (4.) The plainest truths of God's revealed will are never to be spiritually discerned, till the Holy Ghost guides us into the sense and meaning of them.

(4.) He gives them instructions for the work in which they were now about to be employed. (1.) They were to be witnesses of his death and resurrection, proving from the Scriptures the predictions concerning both which were now accomplished in him; in consequence whereof, *repentance and remission of sins must be preached by them in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* He being exalted at the right hand of God, in consequence of his sufferings, to bestow those inestimable blessings on as many as believed in his name, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also: and nothing could so powerfully influence and engage the hearts of sinners to return to God, as this free and full salvation preached to them in his name. They must begin at Jerusalem, which had been the chief scene of his life and sufferings; the oracles of God, to which they appealed, were in the hands of the Jews; there the facts were transacted, to the truth of which they might most confidently appeal: and there his murderers dwelt, who most especially needed to be called to repentance; and to many of whom he would signalize the riches of his grace, in pardoning and saving them. The gospel is grace abounding to the chief of sinners. (2.) He bids them wait awhile at Jerusalem, and in a few days he would pour out upon them the Spirit from on high, which he had promised them to qualify them for their arduous undertaking, and strengthen them in the discharge of it. His kingdom was to be established, not by human endeavours, but by divine energy: therefore the instruments were poor, weak, illiterate fishermen, and this the more magnified the effectual working of that mighty power which appeared in them. They were endued with such wisdom as none of their adversaries could resist; with such courage, that no danger could dismay them; with such miraculous powers, as evidently spoke the finger of God; and were blessed with such amazing success, that in spite of all opposition, they were enabled to lay the foundations of that church, against which the gates of hell can never prevail.

50. ¶ And he led them out as far [y] as to Bethany; and he lifted up his hands, and [z] blessed them. 51. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he [a] was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. 52. And they worshipped him,* and returned to Jerusalem with [b] great joy: 53. And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

[y] Mat. 21. 1 Mark 11. 1. Acts 1. 10—12.

[z] Gen. 27. 4. & 48. 9. & 49. 28. Ps. 72. 17. Eph. 1. 3.

[a] Mark 16. 19. Acts 1. 9, 12. Heb. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 20, 21. & 4. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

[b] Ps. 30. 11. & 149. 2. John 14. 31. Mat. 28. 20.

* Or, *having worshipped him.*

Verses 50—53. We have here the account of the ascension of Jesus into heaven, after he had forty days conversed with his disciples after his resurrection.

1. He gives them his parting benediction. He *led them out as far as to Bethany*, from whence he had made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, some few days before his death. And lifting up his hands, as the great high priest, Lev. ix. 22. he pronounced a blessing upon them.

2. He was parted from them just as he had finished his benediction, as Elijah from Elisha, *and carried up into heaven*, either by the ministry of angels, or his own divine power; making his triumphant entry into the glorious courts above, and sitting down on the mediatorial throne prepared for him as the reward of his sufferings. *Note*, Though dearest friends must now part, we follow Jesus to that kingdom where we shall part no more.

3. The disciples bowed down in adoration before him, as the very God who, though in his human nature removed out of sight, yet filled heaven and earth with his presence. *Note*, The incarnate Jesus justly claims the worship and service of all his faithful followers.

4. *They returned to Jerusalem with great joy.* Their sorrows now were banished, bright hope and burning love possessed every bosom, and they waited confidently expecting the fulfilment of the promise their Lord had given them; *and were continually in the temple*, at the stated hours of worship; perhaps, as some suggest, they took up their abode in one of the rooms which adjoined to it, through the favour of some Levite, who might be a disciple, Acts i. 14. *praising and blessing God*, joining the temple songs, and offering their joyful acknowledgments for all the wondrous mercies they had received, and for the promises of greater yet in store for them. *Amen:* May we in our blessing and praises seek to emulate these happy disciples, till we come to join the songs of eternity; and in the better temple, among the blessed, shall day and night for ever celebrate redeeming love.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT UPON THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

ST JOHN.

Introduction.

JOHN, the writer of this Gospel, was the favoured disciple whom Jesus peculiarly loved and who leaned on his bosom. He wrote the last of all the apostles, and some suppose, even after he had lived to see the destruction of Jerusalem; though the year and place when and where this gospel was written are not certainly fixed. He relates much of what the other evangelists had omitted, especially some of the most spiritual discourses of Jesus, and explicitly asserts and proves his divine power and Godhead. He is said to have lived to a great age, and to be the only one of the twelve apostles who died a natural death, the rest having all sealed their testimony with their blood.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 27.

The scope and design of this chapter is to confirm our faith in Christ as the eternal Son of God, and the true Messiah and Saviour of the world, that we may be brought to receive him, and rely upon him as our prophet, priest, and king, and to give up ourselves to be ruled, and taught, and saved by him. In order to this, we have here, 1. *An account given of him by the inspired penman himself,* ver. 2—5. *And again,* ver. 10—14. *And again,* ver. 16, 17, 18. 2. *The testimony of John Baptist concerning him,* ver. 6—9. *And again,* ver. 15. *But most fully and particularly,* ver. 19—37. 3. *His own manifestation of himself to Andrew and Peter,* ver. 38—42. *to Philip and Nathanael,* ver. 43—51.

1. IN [a] the beginning was the [b] Word, and the Word was [c] with God, and the Word [d] was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God. 3. [e] All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4. [f] In him was life, and the life [g] was the light of men. 5. And [h] the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

a Gen. 1. 1. Ps. 2. 7. Prov. 8. 22—30. Col. 1. 17.
b Rev. 19. 13. 1 John 1. 1, 2, & 5. 7. Heb. 1. 3. ch. 3. 34.
c Prov. 8. 30. ch. 17. 5. Zech. 13. 7.
d Ch. 10. 30, 33. Phil. 2. 6. Heb. 1. 3. 1 John 5. 7, 20. Tit. 2. 13. Rom. 9. 5. Is. 9. 6.
e Ps. 33. 6. Ver. 10. Eph. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 8. 6. Col. 1. 16, 17. Heb. 1. 2. ch. 5. 17, 19. Rev. 4. 11.
f Ch. 5. 26. & 6. 63. & 12. 50. 1 John 5. 11. Col. 3. 3, 4. Gal 2. 20.
g Ch. 8. 12. & 9. 5. & 12. 46. Is. 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6.
h Ch. 3. 19. Rom. 1. 19. Heb. 1. 1. Rom. 8. 7. Eph. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Verses 1—5. St John opens his gospel with an account of that divine personage, concerning whom he was about to write. He is called the Word, or Logos; the essential Word of God, to whom he ascribes all the attributes peculiar to the One Jehovah. We have,

1. His eternal self-existence. *In the beginning was the Word.* not only before his incarnation, but ere creation rose, or time began to measure its periods; from everlasting he existed, as the great *I AM.*

2. His co-existence with the Father. *The Word was with God, and the Word was God;* not as one God with another, but as one divine person co-existing with another in the same Godhead, and partaking with the Father in the same divine nature and essential perfections. *The same was in the beginning with God,* before any creature had yet been spoken into being.

3. His agency, in the formation of the world, and all things therein. *All things were made by him,* not as a subordinate instrument, but as the self-sufficient author of them; *and without him was not any thing made that was made,* from the highest to the lowest all are the creatures of his hand, and such power proves him to be very God, Isa. xliv. 24.

4. He is the original of life and light to all the creatures he hath made. *In him was life,* self-existent and independent; and he is the eternal fount from whence all beings, sensitive or rational, receive their life, and are maintained by supplies out of his fulness; *and the life was the light of men;* from him was communicated to us all that reason and understanding of which we are possessed, and from him alone comes all divine light and life since the fall, by which we can be restored to the knowledge and enjoyment of God.

5. *The light shineth in darkness.* By the fall all divine light is utterly banished from the minds of men, and they are by nature sunk in the blackness of spiritual darkness. The glimmering of *tradition,* and the brighter light of *revelation,* shining in the shadows and types of the law, or the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament, were utterly ineffectual to lead men to eternal life and salvation, without divine illumination: *the darkness comprehended it not:* the plainest and most obvious truths the natural man can no more comprehend, than the blind can discern the objects before them: He, therefore, who first gave eyes to our bodies, must, by the same divine power, give sight to our darkened minds, or we must for ever remain under spiritual darkness and ignorance.

6. ¶ [i] There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. 7. [k] The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. 8. [l] He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of

cir. 27.
i Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6. Is. 40. 3—6. Mat. iii, xi, xiv. Mark 1. 1—11. Luke i, iii. ch. 3. 22—36. & 5 33, 35. Acts 13 24, 25. & 19. 3, 4. ver. 33.
k Mal. 3. 1. Is. 40. 3—9. Mat. iii.
l Ver. 30. ch. 3. 28.

Mark i. Luke iii. & 1. 16, 76, 77. see on ver. 6.

that Light. 9. *That* [m] was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10. He was in the world, and [n] the world was made by him, [o] and the world knew him not. 11. [p] He came unto his own, and [q] his own received him not. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he * power [r] to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: 13. [s] Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14. ¶ [t] And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, [u] the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) [x] full of grace and truth.

m Ver. 4, 5, 7, 8. ch. 8. 12. & 9. 5. & 12. 46. Is. 49. 6. & 42. 6, 7. & 28. 26—29. Luke 2. 32. 1 John 2. 8. & 5. 20. Mal. 4. 2.
n Heb. 11. 3. & 1. 2. Eph. 3. 9. Col. 1. 16, 17.
o Is. 53. 1—3. 1 Cor. 1. 21. & 2. 8, 14.
p Rom. 9. 5. Gal. 4. 4. Mat. 10. 6. & 15. 24. Acts 3. 25. & 13. 46. Rom. 15. 8.
q Luke 19. 14. Is. 53. 2, 3. Mat. 21. 38, 39. Heb. 10. 29. ch. 15. 24.
* Or *the right* or *privilege.*
r Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 3. 26. 2 Pet. 1. 4. 1 John 3. 1. Is. 56. 5. 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18.
s Ch. 3. 3, 5. Jam. 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23. 1 Cor. 3. 6. Deut. 30. 6. Ezek. 36. 26.
t Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 1. 3. & 8. 3. & 9. 5. Is. 7. 14. Mat. 1. 16—25. Luke 1. 26—35. & 2. 1—7, 10, 11. Phil. 2. 6—8. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Heb. 2. 14, 16. 1 John 3. 8.
u Is. 9. 6. Heb. 1. 3. Phil. 2. 6. Col. 1. 15. & 2. 9. Mat. 17. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 17. Is. 40. 5.
x Col. 1. 19. & 2. 3, 9. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Verses 6—14. The clearest revelation of gospel light began with the Baptist's ministry. To him, therefore, the Evangelist refers, as bearing the most glorious testimony to the *uncreated Word.*

1. He relates the mission and preaching of John. *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John:* his miraculous birth, his extraordinary gifts, and remarkable sanctity, were plain indications of his mission from above. *The same came for a witness to bear witness of the Light*; to point out to their notice the Sun of Righteousness, that was now about to arise; but to whom through the blindness of their hearts, they were not disposed to pay due attention and regard; and to testify that this was the Messiah of God: *that all men through him might believe*; not every individual, but men of all sorts, who were, without distinction, invited by him to look to Jesus and to be saved. *He was not that Light;* though his energetical discourses, and mighty influence, raised in the minds of many, an apprehension that he was the promised Christ, he assumed no such title; *but* his honour was to be the morning star, the harbinger of day, to usher in the rising Sun; *he was sent to bear witness of that Light,* and prepare the way of the Lord. Whilst we rejoice in the light of ministers, we must remember they are only witnesses to the Light; and as they preach not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, to him must our eyes be alone directed.

2. Before he proceeds farther with John's testimony, the Evangelist enlarges on the glorious character and office of him, to whom the Baptist bore record. *That was the true Light,* in opposition to the false lights of Gentile philosophy, and in contradistinction to the glimmering taper of ceremonial types and figures: he was eminently *the true Light,* the fountain from which all wisdom and knowledge flow, *which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,* either as the author of natural reason to all men, or as sending the light of his gospel to all nations, or rather as the giver of spiritual light to the soul of every sinner who is brought out of the kingdom of darkness, and translated into that new world, the kingdom of God's dear Son. *He was in the world, and the world was made by him:* from the beginning his power and providence were displayed; but such was the blindness and stupidity of mankind, that *the world knew him not,* nor in the expanded volume of nature, opened to their view, discerned his eternal Godhead. Nay, *he came unto his own,* appearing incarnate in the fulness of time, and manifesting himself by his doctrine and miracles to the Jewish people, who were *his own* in a covenant of peculiarity, and his kinsmen according to the flesh; *and his own received him not;* they were in general hardened and obstinate, and rejected their God and Saviour, *But* a remnant according to the election of grace received, and *to as many as received him* in his real character, as the promised Messiah, the Prophet, Priest, and King of his people, *to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* By faith embracing him as their God and Saviour, and placing their whole dependence on his atonement and righteousness, they were advanced to the high dignity and privilege of being accounted the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, entitled to the inheritance of glory as joint heirs with Christ, and endued with all those heavenly graces and filial dispositions which proved their adoption of God. And all who truly believe in, and receive the same Jesus into their heart, trusting on him alone as the atoning Saviour, and are devoted to him as their Lord and Master, shall be made partakers of the same invaluable blessings and honours. We who were by nature *children of wrath,* are now become *the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.* And this is not merely a *relative* change, but a *real* one: where God confers the dignity of a child, he gives the spirit of adoption. Those therefore are his sons, *which were born not of blood,* nor by *natural descent,* for nothing but corruption runs in the blood of all the fallen sons of Adam; nor by *circumcision,* which was only the outward sign of an inward and spiritual grace, without which that bloody rite availed nothing to the soul; *nor of the will of the flesh;* our regeneration springs not from any power or ability in ourselves, for we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; *nor* doth it come *of the will of man:* the wisest reasoners, the most powerful orators, spend their rhetoric in vain, moral suasion is ineffectual, unless enforced by divine operation; and therefore the Evangelist adds, *but of God:* the renovation of the soul is the work of sovereign and almighty grace alone, and we can only be quickened from the death of trespasses and sins to spiritual life by the same divine power and energy which first breathed into the lifeless clay a living soul. *And,* in order to this great design of man's salvation, *the Word was made flesh,* became incarnate, *not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God:* he took our nature, that, in *the likeness of sinful flesh,* he might make reconciliation: *and dwelt among us,* in all the fulness of the Godhead taking up his abode in the body, which was prepared for him, as the Shechinah dwelt in the temple. *And we beheld his glory,* the brightness of which darted through the veil that for a time obscured its lustre, and appeared in all the miracles he wrought, in the transcendent wisdom, goodness, grace, power, and majesty, he displayed on various occasions, and particularly blazed forth at his transfiguration, his resurrection, and ascension; all which divine manifestations of himself, the more they considered, the more were they filled with reverence and godly fear, and could not but regard *the glory* of Jesus *as* the glory *of the only begotten of the Father,* such as it became this Divine Personage to appear in, who was *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;* and who was *full of grace and truth; full of grace,* of all spiritual blessings to bestow on his people; *and truth,* fulfilling in his own person, as *the substance,* all those typical institutions which were *the shadows of good things to come,* together with the prophecies which chiefly centred in him, and accomplishing all the engagements he had undertaken in the behalf of his people. With what entire satisfaction then may we rest our souls on this adored Redeemer, so admirably qualified for the office of Mediator, possessed of all the excellence which the human nature is capable of receiving, and infinitely exalted in the uncreated glory of the divine? The more we consider his humiliation in becoming incarnate, the more deeply should we be affected with the sense of his grace and love: and, whilst we view the man Christ Jesus as *the very God of very God,* the more confidently should we trust upon his complete salvation.

15. ¶ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, [y] This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for [z] he was before me.
16. [a] And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17. [b] For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18. [c] No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

y Acts 13. 24, 25. Mat. 3. 11. ch. 3. 30, 31. & 5. 33. ver. 27, 30.
z Ver. 1. Mic. 5. 2. Prov. 8. 22—30. ch. 17. 5. & 8. 58. Is. 9. 6. Col. 1. 17.
a Col. 1. 19. & 2. 9, 10, 19. ch. 15. 1—5. & 3. 34. ver. 14, 17. Eph. 1. 3, 7.
b Exod. xx. to Deut. xxxi. Col. 2. 17. Heb. i—x.
c 1 Tim. 6. 16. & 1. 17. ch. 5. 37. 1 John 4. 12. Mat. 11. 27. & 3. 17. Luke 10. 22. ch. 6. 46. & 14. 9. Exod. 33. 20. Deut. 4. 12. Is. 48. 17. & 61. 1. Jer. 31. 34.

Verses 15—18. We have here,

1. The Baptist's farther testimony to Christ. *John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This is he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me.* He was the herald sent to prepare the way of the King Messiah, to proclaim aloud the coming of the incarnate God, and at his baptism to point him out to the notice of the world, as infinitely his superior in dignity, though after him, in point of time, entering upon his ministry and mission. And this pre-eminence he justly ascribes to him, both in the view of his eternal existence as a divine Person, and also of his constitution to the office of Mediator before the worlds were; *for he was before me. Note,* (1.) The greatest of ministers and the chief of saints are always most careful to ascribe nothing to themselves, but ever to exalt the name of their adored Lord and Master as alone worthy of all honour and glory. (2.) The younger in office is often seen to be the greater in grace.

2. The Evangelist takes up the word, and expatiates on the unsearchable riches of Christ, in connection with what he had said, ver. 14. *Out of his fulness,* the plenitude of gifts and graces resident in this Son of God's eternal love, *have we all received;* not only they, as apostles, were indebted to their incarnate Lord for all the wondrous abilities with which they were qualified for the discharge of the trust committed to them, but also all Christians, of every degree, in every age, draw from the everflowing, overflowing fountain of a Saviour's grace, the supply of all their spiritual wants; *and grace for grace;* which singular expression is differently interpreted; either as representing the fulness as well as freedom of the gospel blessings, *as grace upon grace,* heaped up unto glory; or as the supply suited to our necessities, and effectual to strengthen us for all the work and duty to which the Saviour calls us; or such grace as exactly corresponds to that which is in him, transforming us into the same image, as the wax bears the impression of the seal; or as descriptive of the more abundant measures of grace dispensed under the gospel than under the law, to which sense the following verse seems to direct us, *For the law came by Moses;* he, as the minister of God, declared his will to the Jewish people; and it was matter of grace and favour that God by him revealed himself and his law unto them: *but* one unspeakably greater than Moses is here, the author of a new dispensation, which in glory, far excelleth, 2 Cor. iii. 10. for *grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* He is the sum and substance of all the types and prophecies, and in him they receive their accomplishment: the gospel, which he declared, contained the brightest discoveries of the divine grace and goodness, and the most reviving promises, confirmed by the veracity of the unchangeable God; and as he reveals the only way of obtaining the divine favour, and how we may walk so as to please God, he ministers also the ability for that which he enjoins, and his gospel is *a law of the Spirit of life,* communicating spiritual life and power to the soul. The greatest prophets who went before him are not to be compared with him; and his word must needs, in the clearness and fulness of it, excel all the other revelations of his will which God hath been pleased to vouchsafe to the sons of men: for *no man hath seen God at any time;* neither men nor angels are capable of that intimate knowledge of the divine counsels, nor were ever admitted into his secrets: *the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father,* and by his participation of the Godhead most perfectly understands all the designs of grace which were in the eternal mind; in nature one with the Father, and infinitely dear to him; *he hath declared him,* being most transcendently qualified to make such discoveries of God and his eternal counsels, particularly of his wisdom and grace in the redemption of lost sinners, as none of the prophets, nor John himself, could be supposed to do, they being but servants over the house of God: He the Son in his own house; and therefore hath more gloriously and distinctly than ever brought life and immortality to light by his gospel. They who went before us saw but through a glass darkly: we with a distinctness of vision, like that of face to face. May the light of gospel *truth,* so clearly revealed to us in and by the Son, be accompanied with the effectual power of gospel *grace* to our hearts.

19. ¶ [d] And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? 20. And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, [e] I am not. Art thou [f] that prophet? And he answered, No. 22. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? 23. [g] He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, * Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. 24. And they which were sent were of the [h] Pharisees. 25. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not [i] that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? 26. John answered them, saying, [k] I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you [l] whom ye know not; 27. He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. 28. These things were done in [m] Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

cir. 29.
d Ch. 5. 33. Luke 3. 15. ch. 3. 28—36. Acts 13. 24, 25. & 13. 25.
e Not 1 Kin. 17. 1. but Mal. 4. 5. Mat. 11. 14. & 17. 10—12.
f Or *a prophet.* Deut. 18. 15—18. with Mat. 11. 9—11.
g Is. 40. 3. Mat. 3. 3. Mark 1. 3. Luke 3. 4. ver. 15. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5.
* Or, *I am he whose voice proclaimeth in the wilderness.*
h Luke 7. 30. Mat. 21. 31, 32. Acts 23. 8. & 26. 5. Phil. 3. 5, 6.
i Dan. 9. 25, 26. 1 Kin. 17. 1. 2 Kin. 2. 11. Deut. 18. 15—18.
k Mat. 3. 11. Mark 1. 7. Luke 3. 16. Acts 1. 5. & 11. 16. & 19. 4. & 13. 24.
l Ver. 10. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Mat. 3. 11. Acts 19. 4. & 13. 25. ver. 15, 18, 30. ch. 3. 28—36. & 5. 33.
m House of passage. Josh. 3. 17. ch. 10. 40.

Verses 19—28. The testimony of John is here re-assumed, which he delivered to those who were sent from Jerusalem to examine into his credentials.

1. The Sanhedrim, whose business it was to take cognizance of all religious matters, sent priests and Levites to inquire who he was; and what character he assumed? the time being at hand when the Messiah, according to the prophets, was now about to appear. And as many took John to be the Christ, or at least an extraordinary personage raised up for some great purposes, they wanted to hear from his own lips what he professed himself to be.

2. John's answers to their questions were direct and faithful. As to his being the Messiah he freely and earnestly disclaims

every such pretension: *he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. Note,* We must never arrogate to ourselves honours which do not belong to us; but should reject every temptation to pride with abhorrence. In reply to their question, *whether he were Elias?* he said, *No.* The Jews looked for the person of Elias; John only came in the spirit and power of that zealous reformer, and therefore was not the Elijah they expected. He declares himself to be neither Jeremias nor *that prophet* of which Moses spoke, nor any of the ancient prophets risen again, one of whom they supposed would precede the coming of Elias. Hereupon they urge him to give them a positive answer who he was, if he was neither of those whom they had mentioned, that they might carry back something determinate to those who sent them. To this he gave a direct answer in the words of Scripture, Isa. xl. 3. *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.* He is the harbinger of the Messiah: his office was to cry aloud and spare not, rebuking the sins and rectifying the errors of the people, and thus calling upon them to prepare to meet their God incarnate. And this is the great work of every true minister of Christ: with zeal which fires his discourses, he labours to call sinners to the Saviour; and, eager in his exhortations, desires to lead them to repentance unto life. Since he disclaimed the character of the Messiah, and those prophets which they had mentioned, they expostulated with him on his assuming authority to baptize; for it seems those Pharisees, who were now delegated in this commission, tenacious of their traditions, and proud in the conceit of their own goodness, fancied they needed no repentance, and unable to brook the freedom and severity of the Baptist's rebukes, would gladly have taken occasion to suppress and silence him. In answer to their question he replied, *I baptize with water,* as the outward sign of an inward and spiritual grace, which I pretend not to confer; *but there standeth one among you,* or *there* lately *stood one among you,* even Jesus who had been baptized by him, *whom ye know not,* he not having yet publicly appeared in his glorious character, as the Messiah; *He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me,* as infinitely my superior, *whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose;* so transcendently glorious and exalted in his dignity, that to be employed in the meanest office about his person, is an honour far beyond all that I can pretend to deserve. This conversation passed at Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing: but we find no inquiries made after him, concerning whom John informed them.

29. ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, [n] Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! 30. This is he of whom I said, [o] After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me. 31. And [p] I knew him not: [q] but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32. [r] And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33. And I knew him not:* but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, [s] the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34. And I saw, and bare record [t] that this is the Son of God. 35. ¶ Again, the next day after, John stood, [u] and two of his disciples: 36. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he said, [x] Behold the Lamb of God!

n Ver. 36. Exod. 12. 3. Is. 53. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 19. & 2. 24. Heb. 9. 12, 14. Acts 8. 32. 1 John 1. 7. & 2. 2. & 3. 5, 8.
o See ver. 15, 18, 27. ch. 3. 28—36. Luke 3. 16.
p Luke 1. 80. & 2. 39, 51.
q Luke 1. 16, 17, 76—79. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6. Is. 40. 3. Mat. iii.
r Mat. 3. 16. Mark 1. 10. Luke 3. 22.
* All that is affirmed here is, that, till this evidence was given him, he did not know him to be the Messiah.—*Campbell.*
s Mat. 3. 11. Luke 3. 16, 22. Acts 1. 5 & 2. 4. Joel 2. 28. John 3. 34. Prov. 1. 22—24.
t Ver. 6—8, 18. Mat. 3. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 17. 1 John 5. 20.
u Mat. 11. 2. Mal. 3. 16.
x Ver. 29. Is. 42. 1. & 65. 1, 2. Heb. 3. 1.

Verses 29—36. Jesus had now finished his glorious conflict with the great enemy of souls, and was returned from the wilderness victorious to the banks of Jordan. There John saw him, and bore repeated testimony to him as the Christ of God.

1. He points out Jesus to the notice of his disciples, as he walked near the river's side, saying, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* He is *the Lamb* without spot and blemish, which the daily sacrifice and paschal lamb prefigured; he is the Lamb *of God,* appointed by him as the great oblation which should once be offered, with whose sacrifice he would be well pleased: *taking away the sin of the world,* of all his people, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; and by the one oblation he hath once offered, hath fully, completely, and everlastingly made the atonement; so that all, in every age or place, under whatever degrees of guilt or power of corruption they lie, who come to him, are sure to find a complete salvation wrought out for them; and therefore we are directed to *behold* him, to look to him with an eye of faith, that we may be made partakers of the eternal redemption that is in him.

2. He declares this is the person to whom he had before borne witness. *This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me: a man,* yet more than man, even God-man. *And I knew him not;* there was no personal acquaintance between them before, nor were they in league together to serve any sinister end or purpose: *but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water;* this was the great end of John's ministry, to point out to Israel the anointed Saviour.

3. He mentions the sign which the Lord had given him to discover that distinguished personage whose forerunner he was, but of whom till then he had no personal knowledge. The sign given was the visible descent of the Spirit as a dove, and on whomsoever of those, who came to him to be baptized, he should see it light, he might be fully assured that this was he *which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* This he saw at Jordan, when Jesus came to be baptized of him; and heard the voice from heaven mentioned, Mat. iii. 17. On these sure grounds therefore he *bore record* then, and ever after continued to repeat the same testimony, *that this is the Son of God* incarnate, the true Messiah promised from the beginning.

4. The next day, again looking earnestly on Jesus as he walked, he pointed him out to two of his disciples, saying, *Behold the Lamb of God,* desirous to engage their attention to the heavenly Saviour, and to lead them to value, regard, and embrace him, as the one great atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, which all those offered under the law prefigured and represented. *Note,* (1.) The doctrine of Christ's sacrifice for our sins is the glorious subject on which ministers must continually insist. (2.) They who have beheld the excellency of Jesus cannot but delight to recommend him to the regard and notice of others.

37. [y] And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, [z] What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) ‡ where dwellest thou? 39. He saith unto them, [a] Come and see. They came

y Rom. 10. 17. Mat. 4. 18. Is. 55. 10, 11.
z Luke 18. 41. Mat. 7. 7.
‡ Or *abidest.*
a Ch. 6. 37. Is. 55. 1, 6. Rev. 22. 17.

and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was || about the tenth hour. 40. One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was [b] Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the [c] Messias, which is, being interpreted, [d] the Christ. 42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, [e] A stone.

|| Two hours before sun-set according to the Jewish reckoning.

b Ch. 6. 8. Mat. 4. 18. & 10. 2.

c Ps. 2. 2. Dan. 9. 25. Is. 61. 1. & 11. 2.

d Or *the anointed.* 1 Sam. 2. 10. Ps. 2. 7. & 89. 20. & 84. 9. Dan. 9. 24—26. ch. 4. 25.

e Or *Peter.* Mat. 10. 2. & 16. 18.

Verses 37—42. The first disciples of Jesus here begin to commence their acquaintance with him.

1. The two, who were with John when he pointed out Jesus to their notice, immediately followed him, desiring to be indulged in a greater intimacy with him. And the gracious Lord, who observes and is delighted with the first steps a soul takes in approaching him, kindly accosted them, and inquired what they sought. With respectful address and humble inquiry they replied, *Rabbi, where dwellest thou?* Rabbi was the title given to the most famed of their wise men; and most deserving of it must he be in whom dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. They desire to be admitted to a longer conversation with him than they could enjoy as they walked, and would gladly, if they might be permitted, wait upon him to receive his divine instructions. *Note*, Abiding communion with Jesus is the thing a soul, who is at all acquainted with him, importunately desires. Christ courteously invites them to his lodgings: *Come and see:* he was ready to give them an immediate welcome; for his arms are ever open to receive those who desire to come to him. With thankfulness and joy they immediately embraced the offer. Where the soul is at stake, every delay is dangerous. *They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour:* so that they spent that day in delightful conversation with him. The name of one of these disciples was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother; the other probably the author of this gospel, who here, as in other places, modestly suppresses his own name, when the mention of it would be to his honour. A noble instance of his unfeigned humility.

2. A third disciple is added. Andrew, eager to communicate the glad tidings to his brother, Simon, findeth him, and with exultation relates the important discovery they had made, *We have found the Messias, (which is, being interpreted* in the Greek language, *the Christ,)* the anointed of the Lord, so often spoken of in the Scriptures; *and he brought him to Jesus*, who took particular notice of him: and calling him by his name, which though a stranger to him probably before, he well knew, he gives him a new name, *Cephas*, which signifies *a stone*, as adopting him into his family, and intimating the steadiness of his heart in the work of the gospel, and his being appointed one of those pillars on which with his brethren the apostles, the church should stand firm, grounded on Jesus the chief corner-stone and sure foundation. *Note*, (1.) They who have tasted the riches of a Saviour's grace themselves, cannot but be active to draw others unto him. There is in Christ enough and to spare. (2.) They who are nearly related to us in blood, claim a peculiar interest in our regard and prayers; and the best token of our love to them will be shown in leading them to Jesus. (3.) The faithful in Christ Jesus stand firm as a rock, unmoved with the storms of tribulation, which for his sake they may be called to endure.

43. ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and [f] findeth Philip, and saith unto him, [g] Follow me. 44. Now Philip was of [h] Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom [i] Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, [k] Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46. And [l] Nathanael said unto him, [m] Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, [n] Come and see. 47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold [o] an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! 48. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. 49. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, [p] thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel. 50. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? [q] thou shalt see greater things than these. 51. And he saith unto him, [r] Verily, verily, I say unto you, [s] Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the [t] Son of man.

f Is. 65. 1. 1 John 4. 19.

g Mat. 4. 19, 21. & 9. 9. & 16. 24.

h Mat. 11. 21. Mark 6. 45. & 8. 22. Luke 9. 10. ch. 12. 21.

i Gen. 3. 15. & 22. 18. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15—18. 2 Sam. 7. 12. Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 42. 1—7. & xlix, lii. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 31. 22. Ezek. 17. 22. & 21. 27. & 34. 23, 29. & 37. 24. Dan. 9. 24—26. Mic. 5. 2. Zech. 6. 12. & 9. 9. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 2. see on Luke 24. 27, 44.

k Mat. 2. 23. Luke 2. 4, 39, 51. & 24. 19.

l Or *Bartholomew.* Ch. 21. 2. Mat. 10. 3.

m John 7. 41, 42, 52. Luke 4. 29.

n Ch. 4. 29. 1 Thes. 5. 21.

o Rom. 9. 6. & 2. 28, 29. Ps. 32. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 5.

p Ch. 1. 14. & 3. 16. Ps. 2. 6, 7. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Rev. 17. 14. Mat. 16. 16. & 21. 5. ch. 6. 69.

q Mat. 13. 12. & 25. 29. & iv—xxviii. Acts i—xii.

r Only Christ who is truth itself, uses this phrase. Ch. 3. 3, 5.

s Gen. 28. 12. Mat. 4. 11. Luke 22. 43. & 24. 4. Acts 1. 10. 1 Tim. 3. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 7. Jude 14.

t Mat. 16. 13. Dan. 7. 13. Ps. 80. 17. Zech. 13. 7. Is. 7. 14. Heb. 2. 11, 14, 16.

Verses 43—51. Our Lord having begun to make choice of his disciples, adds two more to the number, in Galilee, whither he went the day following.

1. Christ himself calls Philip. He *found* him, not by accident, but design, as the great Shepherd, seeking after his lost sheep, and gathering them unto himself; not one of whom shall perish: he knoweth their wanderings, and will bring them to his fold. *He saith unto him, Follow me;* and Christ's word instantly wrought effectually upon him. *He was of Bethsaida,* a town on the lake of Gennesareth, and a place very abandoned, Matt. xi. 21. yet there Andrew and Peter also dwelt; for in the worst of places God hath some chosen vessels, to be to the praise of the glory of his grace.

2. Philip immediately went in quest of some friends, to whom he might carry the glad tidings; and finding Nathanael, he with joy communicates the news, *We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.* Probably our Lord had opened these Scriptures concerning himself to Philip's fullest satisfaction. But Nathanael, on the mention of Nazareth, starts an objection, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* a place vile and despicable to a proverb. Philip, unable to solve the difficulty, yet not shaken in his own faith, saith, *Come and see*, persuaded that Jesus himself could easily silence that and every other objection which might be raised against him. *Note*, (1.) They who have found Christ, cannot but exult in this happy acquisition. (2.) Though we may not be capable of answering every objection that may be started, we are not therefore to conclude our religion is a delusion, but examine farther, and then we shall find enough to satisfy us that we have not believed cunningly devised fables. (3.) When we are in doubt we must come to Jesus, and by

prayer and attention to his word, may be confident he will lead us into all truth.

3. Nathanael yielded to Philip's invitation, and quickly was convinced of the unreasonableness of the prejudices which he had entertained. (1.) Christ highly commends his character as he saw him coming near, saying to those who were in company with him at that time, *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile,* a genuine son of simple hearted Jacob. *Note,* It is a great thing to be *an Israelite indeed,* in spirit and temper such as our profession demands, without allowed guile either towards God or man, but with regard to both, keeping a conscience void of offence. (2.) Nathanael expresses his surprise how Jesus should know him, whom he had never seen before; but the confirmation of it, which Christ gave, yet more amazed him, and silenced all his doubts, as it proved his omniscience: *Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.* Probably Nathanael had retired thither for some religious exercises, where no eye could see him, and there had offered up his fervent supplications to God for the Messiah's coming, or might be employed in meditation, perhaps on that dream of Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 12. to which our Lord refers, ver. 51. and such an instance of his knowing both the place of his retirement, and the very sentiments of his soul, could not but give Nathanael the strongest evidence of his being indeed the Messiah, as Philip had affirmed. *Note,* The eye of Jesus is upon us in our most retired moments, and he is acquainted with every sentiment of our souls. And this cannot but afford as much comfort to a gracious soul, as it speaks confusion to every hypocrite. (3.) Nathanael fully convinced, bows down before him, and makes solemn profession of his faith in him as the Messiah, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* His prejudices instantly vanished, and, assured of the divine mission and character of Jesus, he gladly yields himself up a loyal subject to Israel's King, trusting on him for salvation from all enemies.

4. Christ with approbation of his faith, and admiration of his noble confession, assures Nathanael he shall shortly see greater and more glorious evidences of his infinite wisdom and power, to confirm his confidence. *Verily, verily, I say unto you,* who am the faithful and true witness, *Hereafter you shall see heaven opened,* or *from henceforth,* when, entering upon his public ministry, he should begin to manifest his glory in the miracles he wrought, and the doctrines he taught; *and* ye shall see *the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man,* either literally, in their ministrations to him at his resurrection and ascension, or rather figuratively, such a friendly intercourse between heaven and earth would now appear to be restored, and such wonders wrought by Jesus in confirmation of his mission, that it would be proved with evidence strong and striking as if they saw the heavens themselves opened, and the angels employed in carrying on a correspondence between God the Father and the Son become *man,* for us men and for our salvation. *Note,* Through the Son of man the kingdom of heaven is opened to all believers, the angels of God minister to the heirs of salvation, and we may now enter boldly into the holiest of all, ascending by him, who is unto us, as the ladder of Jacob, the way to God and glory.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 29.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The story of the first miracle which Jesus wrought, turning water into wine, at Cana of Galilee,* ver. 1—11. *and his appearing at Capernaum,* ver. 12. 2. *The story of the first passover he kept at Jerusalem after he began his public ministry. His driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple,* ver. 13—17. *and the sign he gave to those who quarrelled with him for it,* ver. 18—22. *with an account of some that followed him thereupon for some time,* ver. 23, 24, 25. *but he knew them too well to put any confidence in them.*

1. AND the [a] third day there was a marriage in [b] Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2. [c] And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. 3. And when they wanted wine the mother of Jesus saith unto him, [d] They have no wine. 4. Jesus saith unto her, [e] Woman, [f] what have I to do with thee? [g] mine hour is not yet come. 5. His mother saith unto the servants, [h] Whatsoever he saith unto you, do *it.* 6. And there were set there six water pots of stone, [i] after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. 7. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. 8. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it.* 9. When the † ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, 10. And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have [k] well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now. 11. [l] This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

[a] Ch. 1. 43.
[b] Josh. 19. 28. ch. 4. 46.
[c] Mat. 11. 19. Luke 7. 34.
[d] Ch. 7. 3. with Luke 1. 35. Mat. 3. 17.
[e] Ch. 19. 26. Deut. 33. 9. The expression, in the ancient languages, conveys no idea of disrespect.
[f] Josh. 22. 24. Judg. 11. 12. 2 Sam. 16. 10. & 19. 22. 2 Kin. 3. 13. Deut. 33. 9. Our Lord here gently suggests that, in what concerned his office, earthly parents had no authority over him.—*Campbell.*
[g] Ch. 7. 6. Eccl. 3. 1—11.
[h] Exod. 23. 21. Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32.
[i] Mark 7. 2—4. Mat. 15. 2. & 23. 25.
† Perhaps a Levite who was chaplain to them.
[k] Gen. 43. 34. Song 5. 1.
[l] Ch. 1. 14, 50, 51. & 3. 2. & 14. 11. & 1. 14. Ps. 90. 16, 17. & 102. 16.

Verses 1—11. The first miracle of Jesus was wrought at a marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. It was probably a marriage of some near relation of his mother Mary's, who seemed to be there not merely as a guest, but as one of the family. Christ was invited, and refused not the invitation given him, on this occasion, but went with his disciples to grace the bridal feast with his presence and company, and put an honour upon the institution. *Note,* (1.) Our marriages can only then be expected to issue happily, when Jesus with his benediction crowns the indissoluble union. (2.) Religion teaches none to be unsocial or uncivil, but commands us to rejoice with those that rejoice. We are told,

1. The concern expressed by the mother of Jesus to her Son on account of the deficiency of the wine at this entertainment. The number of the guests, perhaps more than were expected, consumed the small quantity which these persons, who were probably in mean circumstances, had provided, and they might not be able to afford more. It seems she expected that he would soon begin to display his glorious power, and intimated that the present necessity afforded an opportunity for his miraculous assistance. *Note,* (1.) In the height of our earthly joys something still is wanting. We must look only for perfect bliss in that kingdom, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage. (2.) A gracious heart interests himself in the distresses of his friends, and, when he can do no more to relieve them, fails not to commend their case to the kind Saviour's notice.

2. He gives her a reprimand for interfering in matters which did not belong to her. Though he was her son after the flesh, yet in the exercise of his miraculous powers he acted as the Son of God, and owed her no obedience: and to intermeddle in the direction of his conduct, respecting the affairs of his kingdom, was a very blameable presumption. What a direct condemnation of the horrid idolatry of that church, which prays to the mother to command her son? Besides he adds, *My hour is not yet come;* either it was not yet time to work this miracle, till all the wine was spent: or rather the time for the public manifestation of his glory, by his openly performing miracles, was not yet come; and, whatever he might do in private, he was not to be directed by her, or any other, when or how to act.

3. Though his mother silently submitted to his pleasure, she entertained apprehensions that he would grant her request, and take the matter into his consideration; and therefore privately bid the servants obey whatever orders he should give them. *Note*, (1.) We must not be discouraged in our faith, if our prayers are not immediately answered. (2.) Christ's commands are implicitly to be obeyed, without reasoning or hesitation.

4. Christ performs the needful miracle; and with circumstances that eminently displayed his glory. Six waterpots of stone were placed there, containing about *two or three firkins* each, which some suppose to be in quantity about nine gallons; it being customary with the Jews to make use of frequent washings, some of which were enjoined by the law of God, and more by the tradition of the elders, and therefore, where such a number of guests were present, much water was necessary. These waterpots Christ bids the servants fill *with water* to the brim, that there might be no suspicion of fraud in the miracle. They obeyed, and instantly the strange conversion was wrought. He orders them hereupon *to draw out and carry* this liquor *to the governor of the feast*, the person who was either the master of the ceremonies, or sat in the most honourable place on that occasion; or was the *chaplain*, the priest or Levite, who blessed the cup before it was sent round to the guests. No sooner had he tasted the wine which had been water, than he was struck with the delicious flavour, and, unacquainted whence it came, he observed with surprise to the bridegroom his unusual method of procedure. Others usually produced their best wine first, and afterwards, when men have well drank, that which is worse, (του ελασσω,) of a weaker body; but he had kept *the good wine* to the last, as the grace-cup, to conclude the entertainment. *Note*, (1.) God's creatures, and wine among the rest, are given us richly to enjoy. It is no sin to be pleased with the delicious flavour of the grape, when we remember with thankfulness who gave it that quality; only we must beware that we do not by intemperance abuse our mercies, and turn our blessings into a curse by excess of drunkenness. (2.) Feasts need a *governor* to restrain the irregularities of those who else perhaps, to their shame, would have no government over themselves. (3.) Whatever consolations believers here enjoy, the greatest are reserved for them at last, when, at the marriage supper of the Lamb, they shall drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.

5. At the conclusion of this miracle the Evangelist observes, that this was the first Jesus performed after his entrance on his ministry. Wherein *he manifested forth his glory* in such displays of his power and grace, wrought by his authoritative word, as exalted his own great name, and proved his own eternal godhead and glory; *and his disciples believed on him*, confirmed in their assurance of the truth of that high character which he assumed. *Note*, The more we become acquainted with Christ in his word, the more shall we be convinced that this is he who should come, and shall be engaged to rest our souls on him for life and salvation.

12. ¶ After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and [n] his mother, and ‡ his brethren and his disciples; and they continued there not many days.

13. ¶ And the Jews' [o] passover was at hand; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

14. And [p] found in the temple those that sold oxen,* and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

15. And [q] when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

16. And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; [r] make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

17. And his disciples remembered that it was written, [s] The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

18. ¶ Then answered the Jews and said unto him, [t] What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19. Jesus answered and said unto them, [u] Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

20. Then said the Jews, ‖ Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21. But he spake of [x] the temple of his body.

22. When therefore [y] he was risen from the dead, his disciples [z] remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed § the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

m Mat. 4. 13. & 11. 23. Luke 4. 14, 31. & 10. 15.

n Mat. 12. 46. & 13. 57. ch. 7. 5.

‡ Cousins.

o Exod. 12. 6—14. & 23. 14—17. & 34. 23. Deut. 16. 1. Num. 28. 16. Luke 2. 41.

p Mat. 21. 12. Mark 11. 15. 16. Luke 19. 45. 46. Deut. 14. 23—26.

* More properly, *cattle.*

q Prov. 26. 3. Zech. 4. 6. Ps. 93. 5. 1 Cor. 5. 7.

r 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. Mat. 21. 13. Mark 11. 17. Luke 19. 46. Is. 56. 7. Jer. 7. 11.

s Ps. 69. 9. & 119. 139. Rev. 2. 2.

t Ch. 6. 30. Mat. 12. 38. & 16. 1. Mark 8. 11. Luke 11. 29. 1 Cor. 1. 22.

u Mat. 26. 61. & 27. 40. Mark 14. 58. & 15. 29. 2 Cor. 5. 1. He meant their putting him to death. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4.

‖ Since Herod began to rebuild it.

x 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Col. 2. 9. Heb. 8. 2.

y Ps. 16. 10. Is. 53. 8. Mat. 12. 40. & 16. 21. & 17. 23. & 20. 19. Acts 2. 25. & 13. 32—34. & 26. 22.

z Luke 24. 8, 25, 26, 44, 45. John 14. 26.

§ Or, *understood.*

Verses 12—22. Capernaum was the place where Christ usually resided, Matt. iv. 13. Hither he came with his mother, brethren, and disciples, who, struck with what they had seen, attended him to observe the further manifestations of his divine power and glory which he should make. His abode at this time at Capernaum was not many days, the Passover being at hand, which called him up to Jerusalem. Where we find him,

1. Purging the temple of those intruders who had defiled that holy place. Under pretence of accommodating those, who came up to worship, with sacrifices and change of money, a market was kept in the temple by the connivance of the priests, who probably made some considerable advantage by permitting such a profanation. But Christ, beholding with indignation such corruptions in the house of God, immediately began to vindicate the honour of that sacred inclosure, and, having made a scourge of cords, he drove out the traders with their beasts, overturned the tables of the money-changers, and bade those who sold doves to take them away; remonstrating with them on the wickedness of their conduct, *Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise;* and, standing in so near a relation to the God of the temple, he could not endure to see him thus dishonoured. *Note*, (1.) The love of filthy lucre is generally at the root of the corruptions which creep into the church of God. (2.) If God is our father, we cannot but be grieved to see him dishonoured, and shall zealously appear in his cause. (3.) They who are bold and faithful for God, will often see that one can chase a thousand, and that, if we dare stand up in his name, the consciences of sinners will cover them with confusion.

2. The disciples *remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.* And this confirmed still the more their faith, as they observed all the Scripture prophecies accomplished in him.

3. Being questioned by the Jews concerning the authority on which he acted, and required to give a sign, in proof of the mission to which he pretended, *He answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* Since they refused to be convinced by other miracles, he refers them to the last sign which should be wrought, even his resurrection from the dead by his own divine power, after they had destroyed the temple of his body: as he had now cleansed his house from their profanations, so would he raise his own body, which they should slay, and never suffer it to see corruption. They understood him as if he meant the material temple where he then was, which had now been forty-six years building and beautifying; since Herod took down that erected by Zerubbabel, and raised the present fabric on the same spot, which, though the body of it was finished in eight years, might probably till that time have continued to be more highly ornamented: though some suppose the words are to be interpreted of the time which Zerubbabel's temple was in building. However, they looked upon it as a most absurd pretension, for a mere man, as they presumed him to be, to assert that he could do that in three days, which had employed thousands of workmen so many years. Thus they ridiculed his assertion, though it appears they understood not his meaning. *Note,* (1.) It is just with God to give those up to their vain imaginations, who have no love of the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. (2.) The grossest mistakes have been entertained by understanding literally what the Scriptures have spoken figuratively, as in the doctrine of *transubstantiation,* drawn from the words of Christ, *This is my body.* (3.) The body of Jesus was the true temple, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwelt; and of him the temple at Jerusalem was but the type and figure. (4.) As the temple was the medium of worship, and they who prayed turned their faces thitherwards, so is it through Christ Jesus alone that we can have access to and acceptance with God.

4. His disciples, though they, no more than the Jews, understood his meaning at that time, yet afterwards, when the events verified the prediction, and the Spirit, poured out from on high, opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, reflected on this prophecy, and, seeing the accomplishment of it in his resurrection, were the more deeply confirmed in their faith of the *Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said. Note,* The truths of Scripture which we learn in younger years, though not understood at that time, yet are of singular use, when in any future time, it pleases God to shine into our hearts, and open the eyes of our minds.

23. ¶ Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day,* many [a] believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. 24. [b] But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because [c] he knew all *men,* 25. And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

a Mat. 13. 5, 6, 20, 21. ch. 6. 14. Acts 8. 13. Jam. 2. 19.
b Prov. 14. 15. Mat. 10. 16, 17.
c Mat. 9. 4. Mark 2. 8. Luke 5. 22. ch. 6. 64. 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chr. 28. 9. Acts 1. 24. Rev. 2. 23. Heb. 4. 13.

Verses 23—25. During the seven days of the feast Christ preached openly the doctrines of his kingdom, and wrought mighty miracles in confirmation of the truths he taught. The effect of which, we are told, was,

1. That *many believed in his name;* at least for the time they were so struck with his miracles as to give their assent to his doctrine, and own him as the Messiah. But,

2. *Jesus did not commit himself unto them,* did not trust himself with them, or repose any confidence upon them, *because he knew all men;* the *wickedness* of some, who would play the hypocrite in order to betray him; and the *weakness* of others, who in a time of danger might through timidity be tempted to desert him, or through mistake and indiscretion raise some disturbance, through their vain imaginations that his kingdom was *temporal,* and his throne to be established by arms. *And,* being thus allwise, *he needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man:* how deceitful above all things and desperately wicked his heart was, and therefore how little to be trusted. *Note,* (1.) We should be cautious in whom we confide, and try before we trust. (2.) Christ knows the secrets of all hearts; he sees the devices of his *subtle enemies,* and the falsehood of his *pretended friends;* and he will bring every sinner to judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 30.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's discourse with Nicodemus,* ver. 1—21. 2. *John Baptist's discourse with his disciples concerning Christ,* ver. 22—36.

1. THERE [a] was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2. The same came to Jesus [b] by night, and said unto him, [c] Rabbi, [d] we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, [e] Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man [f] be born [g] again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man [h] be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he [i] cannot enter [k] into the kingdom of God. 6. [l] That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born [m] again. 8. The [n] wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. 9. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, [o] How can these things be? 10. Jesus answered and said unto him, [p] Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? 11. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, [q] We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and [r] ye receive not our witness. 12. [s] If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I

a Ch. 7. 50. & 19. 39.
b Ch. 7. 13. & 12. 42. 43. & 19. 39. being ashamed to own him by day.
c Master. Ch. 20. 16.
d Ch. 9. 16, 33. Acts 2. 22. & 10. 33. Luke 24. 19. Zech. 4. 6. Gen. 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27.
e Ver. 5, 11. ch. 5. 19, 24, 25. & 6. 26, 32, 47, 53. & 8. 34, 51, 58. & 10. 1, 7. & 12. 24. & 13. 16, 20, 21, 38. & 14. 12. & 16. 20, 25. see ch. 1. 51.
f Ch. 1. 13. Jam. 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 23. Ezek. 36. 26. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Eph. 2. 5, 10. 1 John 3. 9. Tit. 3. 5.
g Or *from above.* Jam. 1. 18. 1 John 3. 9. & 5. 18.
h Ver. 3. Is. 44. 3, 4. Ezek. 36. 25—27. Tit. 3. 5—7. 1 Pet. 1. 2. & 3. 21. Mat. 3. 11. Eph. 5. 26.
i Luke 10. 42. & 13. 3, 5, 24. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 5, 6.
k Luke 17. 20, 21. Rom. 14. 17. ch. 18. 36. Rev. 21. 8, 27. & 22. 14, 15.
l Job 14. 4. Rom. 8. 1—13. Gal. 5. 17—24.
m Or *from above.* Cor. 11. Zech. 8. 6. ver. 3.
n Or *spirit.* Ezek. 37. 9. ch. 20. 22. Acts 2. 2. & 4. 31. Eccl. 11. 5. Mat. 20. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 11. & 12. 11.
o Luke 1. 34. ch. 6. 52, 60. ver. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 14.
p Mat. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 26. with Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26, 27.
q Ver. 32. ch. 1. 18. & 7. 16. & 8. 28. & 12. 49. & 14. 24. Mat. 23. 37. ch. 1. 11. & 5. 45. 2 Cor. 4. 4. ver. 32.
r Is. 53. 1—3. & 49. 7. & 65. 2.
s 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. Heb. 5. 11, 12.

tell you *of* heavenly things? 13. [t] And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven. 14. ¶ [u] And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15. [x] That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16. ¶ [y] For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that [z] whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17. [a] For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18. ¶ [b] He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19. [c] And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20. [d] For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be * reproved. 21. [e] But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that [f] his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

t Deut. 30. 12. Prov. 30. 4. Mat. 11. 27. ch. 1. 18. & 6. 33, 38, 51, 62. & 16. 28. 1 Cor. 15. 47. Eph. 4. 9.

u Num. 21. 9. ch. 8. 28. & 12. 32, 33. Mat. 26. 54. Luke 9. 22. & 17. 25. & 24. 7, 26, 46. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. Gal. 6. 14.

x Is. 45. 22. ver. 36. ch. 1. 12. & 11. 25, 26. & 6. 37, 40, 47. & 20. 31. Acts 8. 37.

y 1 John 4. 9, 10, 19. Rom. 5. 8. & 8. 32. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

z Is. 45. 22. & 55. 1—7. Mark 16. 15. Luke 2. 10, 11. & 19. 10.

a Ch. 12. 47. Luke 9. 56. ch. 5. 45. & 8. 15. & 9. 39. & 14. 6. & 4. 42. ver. 36. 1 John 4. 14. Mat. 18. 11. & 1. 21. & 20. 28. Is. 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6, 8.

b Ver. 36. ch. 5. 24. & 6. 40, 47. & 20. 31. Rom. 8. 1, 33. Mark 16. 16. 1 John 5. 10—13. Heb. 3. 19. & 4. 1—3. & 10. 26—31. & 12. 25—27.

c Ch. 1. 4, 5, 10, 11. & 8. 12, 37. Rom. 1. 32. 2 Pet. 2. 3. Is. 5. 20. & 30. 9—12. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. ch. 15. 22—24.

d Job 24. 13—27. Amos 5. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 3. Acts 13. 45. Eph. 5. 13.

* Or *discovered.*

e Is. 8. 20. ch. 5. 39. Acts 17. 11. & 13. 47, 48.

f Gal. 5. 22—24. Eph. 5. 8. Phil. 1. 6. & 2. 12, 13. Is. 26. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 3—10.

Verses 1—21. Though not many mighty are called, we have here a singular instance of one made a monument of divine grace.

1. *There was a man* of great note and eminence, *of the Pharisees*, the sect which ever expressed the bitterest enmity against our Lord, *named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews*, a member of the Sanhedrim; *the same came to Jesus by night*, solicitous to have some particular discourse with him concerning the things he had heard him preach; and he chose this time, as some suppose, out of shame and cowardice, as not daring to appear publicly with him for fear of the Jews; or because this was the season when Christ would be most at leisure, being engaged all the day in public, and when he might more freely and at large talk over with him the important points concerning which he desired to be resolved. With great respect he addressed him, *and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* These were such credentials of his divine mission, and wrought with such notorious evidence, that the more they were examined, the more forcibly they proved the author of them sent from God. *Note*, (1.) The grace of Jesus can reach those whose condition in life is most dangerous, and their prejudices the strongest against his gospel. (2.) When the profession of the true religion is reproachful and unfashionable, some, who dare not openly avow their sentiments, in secret approve the truths which others despise, and will slip in among the faithful, if they cannot be seen, as Nicodemus by night. (3.) Christ is come to be a teacher of babes, to lead a dark world to the light of life, and guide the erring feet of sinners into the paths of everlasting peace. May we be humble scholars then, and learn of him!

2. In consequence of the application of Nicodemus, Christ addresses him in the following instructive discourse.

(1.) On the nature and necessity of regeneration. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again*, or *from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Nicodemus, as the rest of his countrymen, tinctured with the common prejudices concerning the Messiah's kingdom, supposed the seed of Abraham would be all admitted to an honourable place in it. But Christ strikes at that radical mistake; assuring him, that no man's external privileges, religious profession, or moral attainments, availed any thing, if his heart and life were not effectually wrought upon by the regenerating influences of the Spirit of God. For, as we are born by nature corrupt, and polluted with sin, and spiritually dead in trespasses, we must receive another, a new, a divine nature, the work of God, as much as the life which he first gave to the clay, in order that man might be a living soul. And, unless this supernatural change passes upon us we can neither understand the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, nor receive any of the blessings and benefits which it was designed to convey to us.

Nicodemus, mistaking Christ's meaning, and understanding the words in a literal sense, expresses his surprise at the assertion, not comprehending how it was possible for a man, old as he was, to pass the second time through his mother's womb. In answer to his objection, Christ enforces and explains his declarations, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, a truth that is of most infallible certainty, *Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God:* Christ's word, however strange and unintelligible to the natural man, cannot change. There can be no entrance into glory, without that new birth which gives a meetness for it. The soul, by the powerful agency of the Spirit of God, must be cleansed from its natural pollution, as water purifies the body from any filth that it hath contracted; and by the ordinance of baptism, as the initiatory rite, regenerate souls are to be admitted into the visible communion of the faithful. And the necessity of such a spiritual change is evident, because *that which is born of the flesh is flesh:* could a man a thousand times pass through the womb, he would come forth still the same corrupted creature, unfit for the kingdom of God, man's nature being utterly sensual in his present fallen state, and all his appetites, delights, and pursuits, being after the flesh, and the things which gratify his bestial part: so that the soul is utterly enslaved, and the whole man flesh and not spirit. Whilst, on the contrary, *that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;* when the Holy Ghost works effectually on the heart, it is refined from the dregs of sensuality, the soul is restored to spiritual understanding, and the whole man, now brought under the influence of a new, divine, implanted principle of grace, becomes spiritual in his affections, pursuits, and designs, delivered from the bondage of base lusts and vile corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and restored to a capacity of enjoying him. *Marvel not*, therefore, adds the Lord, *that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again;* nor, though we are ignorant of the manner in which this divine change was wrought, is that any objection to the thing; for, in the world around us, we see effects, the immediate cause of which we are ignorant of. As for instance, *The wind bloweth where it listeth*, without control from any creature, *and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth:* the effects produced by it are sensibly felt; but why it blows at one time stronger than at another, why from one point rather than another, where it begins and where it ends, these are secrets known only to him who bringeth the winds out of his treasures. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit:* with such sovereignty doth the uncreated Spirit work, affecting the con-

sciences of some, and not of others; with power irresistible bearing down every obstruction; quickening, comforting, sanctifying the sinner's soul, and giving him blessed experience of his effectual power and influence; though he works mysteriously, and leaves the manner of his operations still a secret to us.

(2.) When yet Nicodemus appeared ignorant, and questioned how these things could be; for to the natural man the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness: Christ proceeds to reprove his dulness, and to enlarge on the certainty and sublimity of those glorious truths which he advanced: *Art thou a master in Israel* a famed teacher, and professor of divinity, *and knowest not these things? Note,* It is a shame for those who undertake to instruct others to be ignorant themselves, and, whilst they affect to pass for men of deep learning and erudition, to be unacquainted with the most important truths that pertain unto salvation. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know:* the truths Christ taught were of infallible certainty: he spoke as commissioned by his Father, and under the influences of the Spirit, in correspondence with what all the prophets and John had before declared: *and testify that we have seen;* not speaking on hearsay, but on the most undoubted evidence, and with the clearest assurance; *and ye receive not our witness:* such was the blindness, such the prejudices, that had spread over the Jews in general, and the Pharisees and rulers in particular, that they refused to receive and embrace the doctrines of salvation taught by the Son of God, though so infallibly true, so plainly delivered, and attested by such miracles: so that they were without excuse, as all infidels are, who refuse to submit to the evidence of revelation. *If,* therefore, *I have told you earthly things,* illustrating, with the familiar instances of water and the wind, the necessity of a spiritual change in the hearts of sinners here below, *and ye believe not,* comprehend not the meaning, nor give credit to the truths advanced, *how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?* of the more sublime doctrines of the gospel, the amazing union of the divine and human nature, the design of the incarnation of the Son of God; his sufferings, death, exaltation; the nature of his spiritual kingdom, *and* of the beatific vision: how much more must these be mysterious, when delivered in language suitable to the vast subject, if the plainer truths appear so difficult to be understood? For instance, *No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven:* the prophets of God indeed had spoken under a divine inspiration, and what they said came from heaven; but none of them ever spoke of their own knowledge, nor had been with God in glory, acquainted with all the secrets of his will; this was the distinguished privilege of the Son of man, the Messiah, who from eternity lay in the bosom of the Father, and was now come down from heaven, as a teacher eminently sent from God; and who, though upon earth, was *even* then *the Son of man which is in heaven;* though in his human nature he stood and talked with Nicodemus, his divine nature filled heaven and earth, was every where present, and, in virtue of that communication of properties which subsists between the two natures, the Son of man, though on earth, was, as God, in heaven; as *the Lord of life and glory* is said to be *crucified,* 1 Cor. ii. 8. and God, who is incorporeal, is said to purchase the church with *his own blood,* Acts xx. 28. that which was done by him in one nature being ascribed to him in the other. *Note,* (1.) There are mysteries above our comprehension, which are to be received on the evidence of God's word. Where reason fails, faith must be exercised. (2.) In all the humiliations of the Son of man, we must never forget that he is unchangeably the same, *God over all, blessed for ever.*

(3.) As the great prophet he proceeds to describe the end of his incarnation, and the eternal blessedness of those who truly believe in him. He came to seek and to save that which was lost, to heal our mortal wounds, and to recover our perishing souls.

[1.] *He came to heal our mortal wounds,* as the antitype of the brazen serpent which Moses in the wilderness lifted up, that those who were stung by the fiery serpents might look and live. *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.* (1.) We are mortally stung by the old fiery serpent Satan, and the deadly poison of sin is diffused through our nature: the wound is incurable, the torment intolerable and eternal, unless more than human help and healing be vouchsafed to us. (2.) Christ is the only hope of the desperate, the brazen serpent lifted up, for the healing of the nations, on the pole of the everlasting gospel, as crucified on a tree, but now exalted to the throne, bright shining with beams of grace on every miserable soul that turns the eye of faith towards him. (3.) It is looking to him alone which performs the wondrous cure. The soul that seeks to any other physician, or refuses this simple method of cure, *Look to me and be ye saved,* Isa. xlv. 22. perishes without remedy; whilst faith infallibly brings health and healing; for, (4.) However obnoxious we are by sin to the wrath of God, however deep our guilt, or aggravated our iniquities, he is a Saviour to the uttermost: whosoever looks to him shall live, though, like the dying thief, reduced to the last gasp; not only the chief of sinners shall be rescued from the eternal ruin he justly apprehends and fears, but shall have *eternal life,* entitled to all the bliss and blessedness of glory, through the complete and finished salvation which is in Jesus Christ, and can never afterwards perish.

[2.] He came to save our lost souls by the sacrifice of himself. *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

(1.) Christ is the universal Saviour, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; and, as his free salvation is preached to all, whosoever will is invited to come to him. They who reject his call sin against their own mercies. (2.) He is *the only begotten of God,* which bespeaks his infinite dignity and all-sufficiency to save those for whose sake he came into the world. (3.) The love of God in thinking upon us in our ruined state, and sending his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, is the astonishment of angels, and should be matter of our unceasing wonder, praise, and adoration. (4.) Whosoever by faith receives the Lord Jesus, as the Son of God and the Redeemer of lost souls, placing their whole dependence on his blood and righteousness, are sure to obtain the remission of all their sins, and in the world to come life everlasting. *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world,* as the Jews supposed their Messiah would destroy the Gentile nations, and exalt them: *but that the world through him might be saved.* Even the vilest and most guilty, who believe in him, whether Jews or Gentiles, may now through him obtain salvation; whilst, out of him, ruin and despair must seize the whole fallen race. *He that believeth on him is not condemned: there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;* nor will any charge lie against those whom God justifieth, and for whom the Saviour of sinners shed his blood. *But,* (5.) Destruction inevitable and eternal must be the portion of those who neglect or despise so great a salvation; *he that believeth not* the gospel word preached unto them, whether Jew or Gentile, *is condemned already;* lies at present under the curse which is the wages of sin, and is as surely a lost soul, as when the sentence shall be executed in the great day, *because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* Unbelief is the great damning sin: there can be no cure for those who reject the only remedy; and when God hath been so rich in grace, as to give his only begotten Son, the baseness of the ingratitude in rejecting him cannot but bring aggravated guilt and perdition on the sinner's soul. *And this is the* greatest and most fatal cause of their *condemnation, that light is come into the world,* the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, in which he shines as the Sun of

Righteousness arisen to guide our feet into the ways of peace: *and men*, notwithstanding, *loved darkness rather than light.* The Jews hold fast their corrupt traditions; the Gentiles, their idolatrous superstitions; and both shun the light of truth, which makes manifest and condemns their works of darkness, *because their deeds are evil;* therefore they are sealed up under wrath; and such wilful ignorance, and obstinate rejection of the truth, must needs fill up the measure of their iniquities. (6.) This then will be the test between the wilfully impenitent and the sincere inquirer after truth. *For every one that doeth evil;* makes it his practice and his delight, and is wedded to his sins; *hateth the light;* his carnal mind is at enmity with Christ and his gospel; *neither cometh to the light,* but shuns the means of grace, the ministrations of the faithful, and the company and converse of such whose words and works would be a rebuke to his darkness; *lest his deeds should be reproved;* lest his darling corruptions should be held up to him in their own hideous form, his danger faithfully set before him, and his conscience wounded with remorse. *But he that doeth the truth,* in simplicity following the mind of God, as far as it is revealed to him, open to conviction, and willing to be searched, *cometh to the light* of God's word, desirous to know, and disposed to follow it, however contrary to his own natural inclination or worldly interests; *that his deeds may be made manifest,* his heart examined, his principles brought to the test, his mind enlightened, and his conduct regulated; so that it may appear he is now under the influence of a regenerate spirit, designing in all his works the divine glory, and evidencing *that they are wrought in God,* by his gracious influence, according to his holy will, and in a state of union and communion with him. Blessed and happy are the people who are in such a case!

22. ¶ After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the [g] land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and [h] baptized. 23. ¶ And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to [i] Salim, because there was much water there: and [k] they came, and were baptized. 24. [l] For John was not yet cast into prison. 25. ¶ Then there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews about [m] purifying. 26. [n] And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, [o] to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same [p] baptizeth, and all *men* come to him. 27. John answered and said, [q] A man can †receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. 28. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, [r] I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29. [s] He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: [t] this my joy therefore is fulfilled. 30. [u] He must increase, but I *must* decrease. 31. [x] He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. 32. [y] And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; [z] and no man receiveth his testimony. 33. He that hath received his testimony [a] hath set to his seal that God is true. 34. [b] For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: [c] for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him.* 35. [d] The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 36. [e] He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; [f] but the wrath of God abideth on him.

g Country places. Ch. 2. 13.
h Ch. 4. 1, 2.
i Gen. 14. 18. & 33. 18. 1 Sam. 9. 4.
k Mat. 3. 5, 6. Mark 1. 4, 5. Luke 3. 3, 7.
l Mal. 4. 12. & 14. 3. Luke 3. 19, 20. & 9. 7—9.
m Mark 7. 3, 4. Heb. 9. 10. with Mat. 3. 11. *i. e.* Whether John's baptism, or the legal and Pharisaical purifications, most effectually purged away sin?
n Eccl. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. Jam. 4. 5. Num. 11. 28. 1 Cor. 3. 4.
o Mat. 3. 11, 12. ch. 1. 7, 15, 26, 27, 29—36.
p Ver. 22. ch. 4. 1, 2.
q Heb. 5. 4. Jam. 1. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 7. & 15. 10.
† Or *take unto himself.*
r Ch. 1. 20, 30, 15. Mal. 3. 1 & 4. 4. 5. Mat. 3. 11, 12. & 11. 10—12. Mark 1. 2. Luke 1. 17. & 3. 16.
s Song 3. 11. & 5. 1, 2. Mat. 22. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 25, 27. Rev. 19. 7. Hos. 2. 19, 20.
t Luke 2. 10, 11, 28.
u Is. 9. 7. & 52. 13. Dan. 2. 35, 44. Phil. 3. 8, 9.
x Ch. 8. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 47. Mat. 28. 18. Phil. 2. 9—11. with ch. 1. 15, 27, 30.
y Ch. 5. 20. & 8. 26. & 12. 49. & 14. 10. & 15. 15. ver. 11, 34.
z Ch. 1. 11. ver. 11, 12. Is. 53. 1. 1 Cor. 2. 14 2 Cor. 4. 4. Heb 2. 3. Prov. 1. 24, 25. Ps. 81. 11.
a 2 Cor. 1. 22. 1 John 5. 10. Rom. 3. 4.
b Ch. 1. 16, 18. & 7. 16. Eph. 4. 7.
c Ps. 45. 7. Is. 11. 2—5. & 61. 1—3. Col. 1. 19. & 2. 3. 9. ch. 1. 14, 16.
d Is. 9. 6, 7. & 49. 6, 8. & 53. 12. Ps. 2. 8. & 89. 27. Dan. 7. 14. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. ch. 5. 22. & 17. 2. & 13. 3. Heb. 2. 8, 9.
e Heb. 2. 4. 1 John 5. 10, 12. ch. 5. 24. & 6. 47, 54. & 1. 12. see ver. 15, 16, 18. Rom. 1. 17. Mark 16. 16.
f Gal. 3. 10. Ps. 7. 11. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 29.

Verses 22—36. When our Lord had finished his discourse with Nicodemus, we are told,

1. Whither he went, and what he did. He left Jerusalem, and travelled into the country of Judea, where he continued some time, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and by the ordinance of baptism, which his apostles administered, admitted those who professed their faith in him into the number of his avowed disciples.

2. John continued his ministry in another part of the country with success. He did not join with Jesus, lest their enemies should pretend there was a combination between them; nor did he desist from his labours, though he knew his superior was now gone forth to minister, but continued to preach, and to baptize all who came to him, having fixed himself at a place where were many streams of water, that rendered it convenient to administer baptism to the multitudes which resorted to him; for as yet *he was not cast into prison,* as he shortly afterwards was, and a period put to his farther usefulness. *Note,* The work of the ministry is wide; there is room for the exercise of all our several talents, nor must any be discouraged by their own comparative inferiority: they are suited for their place, and may hope to see their labours successful.

3. A contest arose between some of John's disciples and the Jews, concerning *purifying.* It would seem as if the disciples of John exalted their master's baptism above the ceremonial ablutions of Moses, or the purifications enjoined by the traditions of the elders; whilst many of the Jews probably contended for their own more ancient and authorized customs, and looked upon John's baptism as an innovation; suggesting that there would be no end to such novelties, as another person, one Jesus, was as much or more followed than their master, and his disciples would cry up his baptism as better than John's.

4. Puzzled with this difficulty, John's disciples carry the case to their master, and, jealous for his honour and their own, who were connected with him, report with concern what they had lately heard, *and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee, beyond Jordan,* and, among others, received baptism; *to whom thou barest witness,* pointing him out with peculiar distinction; *behold, the same baptizeth,* setting up himself as a rival to thee; *and all men come to him.* They look upon it as a piece of presumption in Jesus to assume the Baptist's office, and ungrateful to make use of the testimony which John had borne, in prejudice to him: nor could they without envy behold their master eclipsed by him whom they regarded as lately but his disciple, and as one of themselves. So ready are good men to be under the temptation of a party spirit, and to feel unbecoming jealousies, and risings of envy against superior excellence, which seems to eclipse their own.

5. John's answer showed what spirit he was of. Far from envying Jesus as his rival, he rejoices in his success; and, confirming the testimony he had before borne to him, cheerfully turns over to him all his interest in Israel.

John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. God gives to every man severally as he wills, gifts, endowments, and success. If he is pleased to bestow more on one than another, there is no room for complaint: whatever our measure is, it is a matter of favour to us, and we have reason to be thankful, nor ought to envy the superior honours or usefulness of others; and this consideration should in every case silence every murmur of discontent or envy. The words also may have another reference, and intimate, that it was evident the plainest truths were insufficient, unless they were favoured with divine illumination; else could not his disciples, after what he had so repeatedly spoken of Christ, have stumbled at the rising fame of Jesus, and the application of the multitudes to him. And this is an universal truth, that unless a man be taught of God, he can never understand and heartily embrace the truths of God, which must be spiritually discerned.

He appeals to what he had uniformly advanced from the beginning. *Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.* All the honour he had ever assumed was that of being his harbinger, and going before the face of the Lord to prepare his way; if therefore he was now arrived, his forerunner, far from being grieved, must rejoice in it. *He that hath the bride is the bridegroom;* Christ hath alone the right over his church, and to him must the gathering of the people be. He is come from heaven to espouse it to himself, the heavenly bridegroom: and having loved his people from eternity, draws their hearts to him in faith and love. There can be no reason therefore for murmurs or jealousy; *but,* far otherwise, *the friend of the bridegroom,* as he was, *which standeth and heareth him,* waiting upon him as his attendant, helping forward his interests, and desiring to advance his honour, *rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice,* when he comes to take his bride, and issue his orders and instructions to those who wait in his train. *This my joy therefore is fulfilled,* to hear that Christ appears publicly, inviting his bride, his redeemed people, to come to him, and that multitudes flock to him, embracing the offers of his grace. And thus doth every faithful minister stand before the great Bridegroom of souls, to receive his commands, and deliver the messages of love to his church; delighted to behold the happy effects produced by them, when his people become a willing people in the day of his power; and rejoicing greatly in every soul converted to Jesus, and brought by faith and love to cleave to him alone.

Far from envying the rising glory of his Lord, John beholds with pleasure the fulfilment of the divine decree. *He must increase, but I must decrease;* his fame must spread, his glory be manifested, his disciples multiply; and to him doth John gladly turn over all his interest, content to fade before his superior brightness, as the morning star disappears before the rising sun, and well pleased to see that kingdom of the Messiah established and increasing, that must spread from pole to pole, and endure to the end of time. And to behold this, cannot but give the most singular delight to every faithful minister.

The glory of his person, and the surpassing excellence of his office, cannot but give him this superiority. *He that cometh from above, is above all:* his nature and original being divine, he must needs have the undisputed precedency, and supreme authority, over all other messengers sent from God, who speak only in his name, and by his commission. *He that is of the earth,* and such are the greatest saints and prophets, *is earthly, and speaketh of the earth:* as he sprung from the dust, and must return to the dust, he is naturally attached to earthly things; his conceptions low and grovelling; and, even when under divine inspiration, unable adequately to express the sublime mysteries of infinite wisdom; whilst *he that cometh from heaven, is above all.* Contrasted with the teaching of Jesus, in whom from eternity dwelt all the treasures of wisdom, as being one of the sacred self-existent Godhead; the wisdom of the wisest is weakness, and their speech not to be compared with his preaching. *And* the reason is evident, because *what he hath seen and heard that he testifieth;* from the most intimate knowledge of the divine nature possessing the Spirit without measure. But such was the blindness and obstinacy of those to whom he spoke, that, though he was greatly attended, *and* John's disciples apprehended all who followed him believed in him, he lets them know the case was far otherwise: *no man receiveth his testimony;* none, comparatively speaking, so few of the multitudes who came to him would be found his real disciples. Many are called by the gospel, but few truly converted by it; blessed and happy however are those who receive it in the light and love of it; for *he that receiveth his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.* He subscribes to the faithfulness and veracity of God, in having fulfilled all the prophecies concerning the Messiah; and embraces, with full confidence of their completion, the gracious promises of his gospel as being all Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. And herein God is glorified, when we trust our everlasting hopes upon the word he hath delivered to us by his Son; *for he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God;* all his language spoke the Divinity resident in him, and no word of human infirmity ever dropped from his lips; *for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.* All the other prophets, who were sent of God, possessed but a measure of the Spirit, and only spoke under his immediate inspiration on some particular occasions, being at other times left to speak *their own words;* but he in whom dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily, ever spoke the *words of God. The Father loveth the Son* with a peculiar and transcendent regard, as being possessed of the same nature and perfections. He delights in his Son's undertaking, as Mediator, *and hath given all things into his hand;* investing him, in his human nature, with all power and authority in heaven and in earth. All the great affairs of the kingdom of providence, grace, and glory, are committed to his management, that his enemies may feel his vengeance; that his faithful ones may experience his blessing, protection, and care; and all at last appear before him as their eternal Judge. *He that believeth,* therefore, *on the Son,* receives him as God manifest in the flesh, and rests his hopes on the rich grace revealed in the gospel alone, *hath everlasting life;* he shall not only hereafter be put in possession of it, but hath actually already in himself the beginnings and foretastes of it, and possesses that title to it, confirmed by the immutable oath and promise of God, which never can be lost; *and,* on the contrary, *he that believeth not the Son,* rejecting his divine authority and mission, incredulous of his word, and disobedient to his will; *shall not see life:* whilst he remains under the power of unbelief, he is dead in trespasses and sins, and nothing *but* misery inconceivable and eternal awaits him, because *the wrath of God,* which is for ever wrath to come, *abideth on him.* How terrible is the end of all who believe not God, and obey not the gospel of his dear Son!

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 30.

In this chapter, we have Christ, 1. *Departing out of Judea,* ver. 1—3. 2. *Passing through Samaria,* (1.) *His coming into Samaria,* ver. 4—6. (2.) *His discourse with the Samaritan woman at the well,* ver. 7—26. (3.) *The notice which the woman gave of him to the city,* ver. 27—30. (4.) *Christ's talk with his disciples in the mean time,* ver. 31—38. (5.) *The good effect of this among the Samaritans,* ver. 39—42. 3. *We find him residing for some time in Galilee,* ver. 43—46. *and his curing of a nobleman's son there that was at death's door,* ver. 47—54.

1. WHEN therefore [a] the Lord knew how the Pharisees [b] had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, 2. (Though Jesus himself [c] baptized not, but his disciples,) 3. [d] He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

Verses 1—3. Judea being now become a dangerous abode, through the malice of the Pharisees, our Lord retires into Galilee, that he might be farther removed from Jerusalem, where his bitter enemies chiefly resided. He had continued about eight months, (see ver. 35.) in Judea; and as his preaching had been very successful, and great multitudes followed him, who were admitted by baptism into the number of his professing disciples, he knew the wicked designs which his Pharisaical enemies had formed, on the information they received concerning his growing fame and interest among the people, as if he far exceeded John in his popularity and the number of converts, and therefore was to be apprehended as a more dangerous rival than the Baptist. Though in some particulars the information given to the Pharisees seems to be false; for it is not probable, that they who were baptized by the disciples of Jesus were more than those whom John had baptized: so it is certain, that Jesus baptized not, but his disciples, maintaining the dignity of his character, as sent to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and far superior to John, or any other. Or it may be also to remove all emulation among his disciples, which might arise, if he baptized some, and his servants others: or to show, that the validity of the ordinance depended not on the worthiness of the ministry, but on his blessing and institution. *Note*, (1.) The enemies of the gospel are ever envious and exasperated at its success. (2.) When danger threatens, it is prudent to avoid the storm by flight, where duty does not require us to stand and suffer.

4. [e] And he must needs go through Samaria. 5. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near [f] to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being [g] wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about [h] the sixth hour. 7. There cometh * a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. 8. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) 9. Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? [i] for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. 10. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest [k] the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee [l] living water. 11. The woman saith unto him, Sir, [m] thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? 12. [n] Art thou greater than [o] our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? 13. Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water [p] shall thirst again: 14. [q] But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. 15. The woman saith unto him, [r] Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. 16. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. 17. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: 18. For thou hast had † five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. 19. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art [s] a prophet. 20. [t] Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; ‡ and ye say, that in [u] Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. 21. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, [x] when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22. [y] Ye worship ye know not what: we [z] know what we worship: ‖ for salvation is of the Jews. 23. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the [a] true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24. [b] God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth. 25. The woman saith unto him, I know that [c] Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. 26. Jesus saith unto her, [d] I that speak unto thee am *he*.

Verses 4—26. As Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee, he must necessarily pass through it in his way thither, unless he took a large compass about. That country was inhabited by the posterity of the colonies which the king of Assyria had planted there after the captivity; and being mingled with many apostate Jews, became a mongrel race, who, though retaining many heathen idolatries and superstitions, professed themselves worshippers of Israel's God, and received the books of Moses; were circumcised, and erected a temple on mount Gerizim, in opposition to that at Jerusalem, pretending that this was the spot where God ought to be worshipped. Hence arose the bitterest animosity between the Samaritans and the Jews, who regarded them as the most abominable of mankind. In this journey we are told,

1. The place where our Lord stayed to rest himself a while,

a Ch. 1. 1, 14, 18. & 3. 35. & 13. 13, 14. Acts 10. 36.
b Ch. 3. 1, 2, 22, 26.
c 1 Cor. 1. 17. Acts 10. 48.
d Ch. 3. 22. Mark 1. 14, 15. Mat. 4. 12. Luke 4. 14. Mat. 10. 23.
e Luke 17. 11. & 9. 51—53. Mat. 10. 5. Rom. 15. 8.
f More literally, *near to the heritage*. Gen. 33. 19. & 48. 22. Josh. 24. 32.
g Heb. 4. 15. Rom. 8. 3.
h Mid-day. Mat. 27. 45. Mark 15. 33. Luke 13. 44. ch. 19. 14. & 11. 9.
* An inhabitant of Shechem, called *Sychar*, i. e. *drunkenness*.
i 2 Kin. 17. 24—41. Ezra iv, v. Neh. iv, vi. ch. 8. 48. Luke 9. 51—53. Acts 10. 28.
k Or, *the bounty*. Is. 9. 6. & 42. 6. & 49. 6, 8. & 35. 3, 4. Ps. 84. 11. Is. 44. 3, 4. Ezek. 36. 27. ch. 3. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Rom. 8. 32.
l Jer. 2. 13. Is. 12. 3. & 44. 3, 4. ver. 14. ch. 6. 35. & 7. 38, 39. Zech. 13. 1. & 14. 8. Rev. 22. 1, 17.
m Ch. 3. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 14.
n Ch. 8. 53. Is. 49. 7. & 52. 2, 3.
o False. 2 Kin. 17 24.
p Ch. 6. 27, 58.
q Is. 49. 10. & 58. 11. ch. 7. 38, 39. & 6. 27, 35, 68. & 12. 50. & 17. 2, 3. & 20, 31. & 10. 10. Rom. 5. 21. & 6. 23. 1 John 5. 20. with Gal. 6. 14. Ps. 4. 6, 7. & 27. 4. & 73. 25, 26. & 142. 4, 5.
r Ch. 6. 26, 34. Jam. 4. 3. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Ps. 4. 6.
† Who, it seems, had divorced her for whoredom, and now she lived with another whoremonger.
s Luke 7. 16. & 24. 19. ch. 6. 14. & 7. 40.
t Gen. 12. 6. & 33. 18—20.
‡ To wit, Gerizim, at the foot of which Sychar was built.
u Deut. 12. 5, 11. 1 Kin. 9. 3. 2 Chr. 6. 6. & 7. 12, 16. Ps. 48. 1, 2. & 78. 68, 69. & 87. 1, 2. & 132. 13, 14.
x Mal. 1. 11. 1 Tim. 2. 8.
y 2 Kin. 17. 29, 41. Acts 14. 16. & 17. 23, 30.
z Ps. 147. 19. Rom. 3. 2. & 9. 4, 5. Heb. 7. 14. Is. 2. 3. Luke 24. 47.
‖ Rather, *Ye worship what ye know not; we worship what we know.*
a Phil. 3. 3. Rom. 1. 9. Is. 26. 8, 9. Ps. 62. 8. Heb. 10. 22.
b 2 Cor. 3. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Rom. 1. 19. Phil. 3. 3.
c Ch. 1. 41, 49. Dan. 9. 24—26. Is. 42. 1. & 11. 2, 3. & 61. 1—3. Prov. 1. 20—23. Deut. 18. 15—18 ver. 29, 39.
d Ch. 6. 69. & 9. 37. & 10. 30, 36.

being wearied with his journey. It was by a well-side belonging to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, (or Shechem, as it is supposed,) which city bordered on a piece of land which Jacob, having purchased of the sons of Hamor, had given to his son Joseph, see Gen. xlviii. 22. Josh. xxiv. 32. The well was called *Jacob's* either because he dug it, or used it for himself and family. Our Lord here appears truly man, subject to our sinless infirmities, weariness, thirst, and hunger; for it became him in all things to become like unto his brethren, sin only excepted. *It was about the sixth hour*, or mid-day, according to the Jewish computation of time; or six in the evening, if we follow the Roman method of reckoning.

2. The discourse which passed between Jesus and a woman of Samaria. She happened just at this time to come to draw water: so divine providence ordered it, leading her to Christ in a way she knew not, (see Gen. xix. 2. xxiv. 11. Exod. ii. 15.) The disciples being gone into the city to buy meat, he was alone, and is pleased graciously to improve that moment's leisure for the benefit of this poor stranger's soul, she being one of those lost sheep he came to seek and save.

He addressed her first, begging a little water to drink; for though he was rich, for our sakes he became thus poor, and condescends to ask a cup of cold water. Yet he had a farther end in view, even to engage her in conversation, and thereby to effect the purposes of his grace towards her. Occasional discourse with strangers hath been often found to have a blessed and abiding influence, and should encourage us, when travelling, to open our mouths, and speak a word for God, and immortal souls.

The woman expressed her surprise, that he who appeared to be a Jew, should deign to receive any act of kindness at the hands of a Samaritan; or that he should expect the least favour would be granted from one to the other, where the enmity between the two nations was so bitter and irreconcileable, as to cut off all manner of friendly intercourse between them. Religious quarrels are thus usually seen to be the most implacable; but where the spirit of bigotry and uncharitableness dwells, whichever side is right in the point disputed, the spirit of both is wrong, and utterly opposite to pure religion and undefiled.

Waving the subject of the controversy between the Jews and Samaritans, Christ designed to lead her to the knowledge of himself, and therefore replied, *If thou knewest the gift of God*, what an amazing instance of his love he hath given in sending his own Son into the world; *and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink;* even that divine person now become incarnate; *thou wouldest* have laid aside these national prejudices, and *have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water;* those gifts of grace, and comforts of his Spirit, which to the sinner's soul are more desirable than the coolest and most refreshing stream to the parched throat and weary traveller. *Note*, (1.) Christ is the fountain of gardens, and well of living waters, open for every poor sinner, and freely given, that whosoever will may come unto him, and drink of the riches of his grace. (2.) Many carelessly disregard the invaluable blessings of the gospel, because they perceive not their excellence, nor their own want of them. (3.) They who would obtain the blessings of grace from Jesus and his holy Spirit, must seek them in importunate prayer; and he who is faithful and true, hath promised, that none such shall ask in vain.

The woman, mistaking Christ's meaning, and taking his discourse literally, with some sort of disdain answered, *Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast thou that living water?* and therefore concludes his boasts were absurd, and his offers a mere jest. They who are wholly taken up with the objects of sense, have no understanding of spiritual things; they are foolishness to them: the hidden springs of grace in Christ being unseen, are disbelieved. Besides, she regards it as a great piece of presumption in him, to prefer any other waters before those of a well so highly distinguished. *Art thou greater than our father Jacob*, from whom we Samaritans, as well as you Jews, claim our descent, *which gave us this well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?* Vain boasts these! when they had so poor a title to claim kindred with the patriarch, and were no better than usurpers of that country, which they pretended came to them by gift from Jacob to Joseph, and so in a right line of descent to them. The bitterest enemies of the church thus often usurp, and would monopolize its privileges.

Though she had spoken foolishly and perversely, Christ kindly bore with her, and continued his discourse, saying, *Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again;* this was but common water, and could only slake the present thirst, which must soon return; *but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.* All the comforts of the world are insufficient to give any abiding satisfaction; Christ alone can bestow the substantial portion on the soul. They who pant after the earth, and its enjoyments, drink and thirst again; *but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well springing up into everlasting life.* Such is Christ, when formed in the believer's heart. [1.] He delivers the soul from the dominion of all the former insatiable appetites and inclinations after sensual objects. [2.] He furnishes us with continual supplies of grace and consolation from himself, the everflowing, overflowing fountain of mercies: so that in our heavenly journey we can never faint nor be weary, drinking of these living streams, as of the water from the rock, which followed Israel's camp through the desert. [3.] Wherever his grace is thus implanted in the soul, it bears the affections heavenward, and never fails till it is consummated in glory everlasting.

The woman, either seriously desiring what, could it be possessed, would save her so much trouble, or ridiculing pretensions she had no apprehension he could make good, replied, *Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.*

To impress deeper seriousness upon her soul, or to convince her of the dignity of his character, of which she was not at all apprized, Jesus turned the discourse to another topic, which he knew must nearly and deeply affect her, and bringing her sin home to her conscience, would engage her to embrace him as her Saviour. Therefore he saith unto her, *Go, call thy husband, and come hither.* Conscious of the guilty state in which she at present lived, she wanted to conceal her shame, and said, *I have no husband*, conceiving it impossible for him to detect the lie. But, to her amazement, she finds him intimately acquainted with all the most secret transactions of her life, which he lays before her. *Thou hast well said, I have no husband;* so far is true; *for thou hast had five husbands*, from whom, probably for her adulterous conduct, she had been successively divorced; *and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly;* the person with whom she now cohabited, not being married to her, or her former husbands being yet living. He doth not reproach her either with her evasion or lewdness, but rather leaves it to her conscience to make the application. Gentle reproofs, by insinuation, are often more effectual than more immediate and rough rebuke.

Struck with what she heard, and convicted in her own conscience, she would willingly have turned off the discourse from so painful a subject; and persuaded, by what he had told her, of his more than human knowledge, she proposes to him the grand point in debate between the Jews and Samaritans: *Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain;* there Abraham built an altar, (Gen. xii. 6, 7.) and the tribe of Joseph stood, when the blessings and curses were pronounced by the tribes on mount Ebal and Gerizim; and therefore on this mountain Gerizim, the Samaritans insisted sacrifices and offering should alone be offered to God, in the

temple which they built there: *and ye*, that are Jews, *say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship*, at the temple on mount Zion, where alone the oblations on God's altar are accepted; and therefore she wished, that he, who appeared so able, would resolve her in this important point. That God should be worshipped, there was no doubt: they who live in the neglect of his worship, are worse than Jews or Samaritans. The question was, Where was the place of Divine appointment? and herein she did well to improve the present opportunity in converse about divine things, when she had with her so able an adviser.

Jesus kindly leads her even farther than her inquiry reached. *He saith unto her, Woman, believe me*, and, since you esteem me a prophet, weigh well what I am now about to declare, *the hour cometh*, when a final period shall be put to all ceremonial distinctions, and the peculiar holiness of places set apart for the worship of the Divine Being: *when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father;* that is to say, exclusively; since under the gospel dispensation every place was alike acceptable to God, where holy hands were lifted up without wrath or doubting; and shortly both the temple at Gerizim and on mount Zion would be made desolate, and no sacrifices be any longer offered there. Indeed at present the Samaritans were wholly wrong, *Ye worship ye know not what*, ignorant of the true God, (2 Kings xvii. 26.) regarding him as a local deity, and debasing the worship which they pretended to pay him with idolatrous superstitions. *We know what we worship*, for God is known in Israel; and he, as one of that nation after the flesh, reckoned himself among the true worshippers, who paid their adorations according to the divine prescription, and were possessed of that revelation which he had been graciously pleased to make of himself in his sacred oracles. *For salvation is of the Jews;* the promises of salvation were peculiarly made to them; the means of grace confined for the most part to them, and he who came to be the salvation of the ends of the earth, sprang from them. *But*, though in this respect the Samaritans were utterly wrong, and not to be compared with Abraham's true descendants, yet these distinctions of nations and places were now about to cease; *the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.* The place of worship is now become indifferent; the spirit and temper of the worshipper alone makes the acceptable service. All carnal ordinances are abolished, and a spiritual worship is introduced, wherein the heart, under the powerful influences of the Holy Ghost, must be lifted up in faith and love to God; and *in truth*, with simplicity and godly sincerity, according to the divine institution, and through Christ alone, who is *the way, the truth*, and *the life: for the Father seeketh such to worship him:* he will graciously accept their services, and can be pleased with no other; and such worshippers by his grace he fashions and finds, though few, compared with the formal, lifeless, hypocritical, or ignorant worshippers, who are utter strangers to such spirituality. *For God is a Spirit*, of infinite perfections, incorporeal, invisible, eternal, omniscient, requiring not the adoration of the lip or the knee, but of the heart; *and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth;* without which, the place, the form, the manner of our religious worship, avails nothing, and are in his view of no account. And what Christ saith to her is an eternal truth, and merits our most serious notice and regard, that so we may not mock God, and deceive ourselves, when we approach him in the ordinances of his worship.

The woman, though unable to object to the truths here advanced, yet professes to suspend her judgment till he should come, who would set all things right. *She saith unto him, I now that Messiah cometh, (which is called* in the Greek, *Christ*, or the anointed,) this expectation being generally entertained by the Samaritans, as well as Jews. *When he is come*, whom we expect as ready to appear, *he will tell us all things*, will put an end to our controversies, clear up our doubts, and give us a distinct knowledge of all the will of God. Hereupon Jesus, in answer to her expectations of the Messiah's coming, plainly declares to her his character; *I that speak unto thee, am he:* so much nearer to us is the dear Saviour often than we are aware. Speak, Lord, to my heart, and make me to know that thou art with me, and in me!

27. ¶ [e] And upon this came his disciples, and [f] marvelled that he talked with the woman: * yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her? 28. [g] The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, 29. [h] Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? 30. [i] Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. 31. ¶ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. 32. But he said unto them, [k] I have meat to eat that ye know not of. 33. [l] Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat? 34. Jesus saith unto them, [m] My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. 35. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; [n] for they are white already to harvest. 36. [o] And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: [p] that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. 37. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. 38. [q] I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: [r] other men laboured, and [s] ye are entered into their labours. 39. ¶ [t] And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. 40. So, [u] when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. 41. [x] And many more believed because of his own word; 42. And said unto the woman, [y] Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that [z] this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

e Gen. 35. 13. Luke 24. 31.
f Luke 7. 39. ver. 9.
* Rather, *with a woman.*
g Phil. 3. 7—9. Mat. 19. 27, 29. ver. 7. Song 5. 10. Acts 20. 24. & 21. 13.
h Ch. 1. 42. Ps. 34. 8. & 66. 16. Rev. 22. 17. Song 3. 11. & 5. 10—16. ver. 18—25.
i Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 43. 6. & 60. 8. & 45. 22, 24. Ps. 22. 27. & 68. 22.
k Job 23. 12. Ps. 19. 10. & 40. 8. ver. 34. ch. 6. 38.
l Mat. 16. 6—9. Luke 9. 45. ch. 12. 16. & 3. 12.
m Ps. 40. 8. ch. 1. 4. & 6. 38. with Is. 61. 1—3. Luke 19. 10. It delights my soul to convert these Samaritans.
n Mat. 9. 37. Luke 10. 2. ver. 30. Mat. 11. 12. Luke 7. 29. & 16. 16.
o Mat. 10. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20 Rom. 1. 13.
p Heb. 11. 40. Rev. 18. 20.
q Acts 2. 41. & 4. 4, 32. & 5. 14. & 6. 7.
r 2 Chr. 36. 15. Jer. 44. 4. Acts 10. 43. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 12. Rom. 15. 4.
s Acts ii, xiii. & 26. 22, 23. & 28. 23.
t Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 35. 1. & 60. 3. with ver. 29, 42.
u Gen. 32. 26. Mat. 15. 24—28. 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2. Luke 19. 9, 10. Mat. 7. 7. John 16. 24.
x Is. 42. 1, 6. & 60. 3. Rom. 15. 8—12, 16.
y Gen. 49. 10. ch. 17. 8.
z 1 John 4. 14. & 2. 2. Mat. 18. 11. & 20. 28. & 28. 18, 19. Luke 2. 10, 11, 32. & 19. 10. Mark 16. 15, 16. ch. 3. 14—16. & 6. 37. 1 John 4. 14.

Verses 27—42. Just as the Lord had so far advanced in his discourse, and manifested his glorious character to this poor Samaritan, we are told,

1. The interruption given to the conversation by the arrival of the disciples who had been sent to procure provisions: and, influenced by the common Jewish prejudices, they marvelled to see him thus engaged with a Samaritan woman. Yet, submitting to his will and wisdom, and with deepest reverence silent before him, none dared presume to ask him, what he sought of the woman, or what he said to her. *Note*, We may not question the Lord concerning any of the dispensations of his providence or grace, but rest assured that he doth all things well.

2. Deeply convinced, by what Jesus had spoken, of his being indeed the Messiah, with eagerness and joy the woman ran back to the city, leaving her water-pot behind her, careless about that, when the great concern engaged her soul; *and said to the men*, the inhabitants of the place, *Come*, opportunity is precious, and not a moment to be lost: *come see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?* He told me such secret passages of my life, which none but God could know, and hath impressed such a sense of them on my conscience, as fully convinces me he is the promised Messiah; haste therefore to him, and judge for yourselves, that you may be convinced also. *Note*, (1.) They who run on Christ's errands, gladly disencumber themselves of every thing which would retard their speed, and sit loose to all they leave behind them. (2.) When we have ourselves tasted that the Lord is gracious, we cannot but delight to invite others to come and see how good he is, and to partake with us in his rich mercies. (3.) We never know Christ truly, till experimentally feeling the convictions of his word and Spirit, and brought to a deep and humbling discovery of our sins, we feel the necessity of that salvation which he brings.

3. Multitudes on this strange report, bad as the woman's character had been, resolved to go and see for themselves; no doubt invisibly drawn also by the Saviour's grace to come to him, who had such signal mercies in store for them.

4. Christ in the meantime improved the interval in profitable discourse with his disciples. So set was his mind on the blessed work before him, that, though hungry, he forgot for a while to eat his bread. The disciples pressed him, as weary, and fasting too long, to eat of the provision they had brought; *but he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.* The gracious work begun on the heart of this poor Samaritan woman, and the prospect of multitudes flocking towards him, were more delightful and refreshing to his soul, than the richest entertainment to his body. The disciples, who understood him literally, with surprise *said one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?* so dull were they of understanding. But their Master soon corrected their mistake, saying unto them, *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;* this is my greatest satisfaction, to be engaged in the blessed work of seeking and saving that which was lost, for which great end I came into the world, and from which I shall never desist till it is completed; and what was his delight should be theirs, as the husbandman labours with satisfaction in the view of the approaching harvest. *Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?* Doth this joyous season please you in the prospect? Behold an infinitely better is in view; *I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields*, (where probably multitudes of the Samaritans now appeared in view,) *for they are white already to harvest;* immortal souls are ready to be gathered in to the gospel church, and therefore this is no time to eat and drink, but to rise and labour. *And*, for an inducement hereunto, he suggests the glorious recompense of reward, which would be the wages of their fidelity: *He that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life;* the wages of present comfort and increasing strength and success in his labours, and in the world to come life everlasting; and this not only for himself, but for many of those among whom he ministers; for he shall not only save his own soul, but those that hear him, 1 Tim. iv. 16. the blessed effects of which will be, *that he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.* The ministers who begin, and they who carry on the good work, will alike partake of the comfort of it. *And herein is that* proverbial *saying true, One soweth and another reapeth:* the apostles reaped what the prophets sowed; and, after their Master's resurrection, gathered a plenteous harvest of souls, among whom he had sown the seed of eternal life. *I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours:* the writings of the prophets, and the preaching of John, greatly facilitated their ministry, and contributed to its success; and going forth with such advantages, they had peculiar encouragement, and double cause for their diligence. *Note*, (1.) Gospel ministers, like harvest men, must labour diligently and cheerfully in the service of God, and of immortal souls. (2.) When the people appear eager and attentive to hear, it is a most powerful excitement to the minister, to preach with liveliness and zeal. (3.) Nothing will turn to so glorious an account in the day of God, as immortal souls gained to his kingdom through our ministry. (4.) The preachers of the gospel have different talents; some more adapted to break up the fallow ground, and sow the seed; others to nourish up, and rear to maturity, the trees of righteousness; each are useful in their place, and will rejoice together at the last in the fruit of their joint labours.

5. Great was the effect of the woman's testimony concerning Christ. *Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.* She was indeed a weak instrument, but God can work by the most unlikely means. Persuaded of his prophetical character, and receiving him as the Messiah, they humbly besought him to favour them with his company for a while, that they might enjoy his holy instructions. Nor did he disdain their requests, but abode with them two days, teaching them concerning the things that made for their everlasting peace. And so powerful was his ministry among them, that *many more believed because of his word:* not only those who believed in him on the woman's report, were confirmed in the faith; but those who had paid less regard to her, now felt the divine conviction of the Saviour's discourses, *and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying*, merely, but on the most unshaken authority of the word of Jesus himself; *for we have heard him ourselves, and know*, by the powerful energy of his word upon our consciences, *that this is indeed the Christ, the* so long promised and expected *Saviour of the world;* not of the Jews only, but of the Samaritans also, and of all the nations of the earth to whom his gospel should come, and who should receive this word of salvation. *Note*, (1.) The greatest fruit is often reaped where it was least expected. The Samaritans readily embraced that Saviour whom the Jews rejected. (2.) Christ is indeed the Saviour of the world; but we must believe in him before we ourselves can be experimentally acquainted with his salvation.

43. ¶ [a] Now after two days he departed thence, [b] and went into Galilee. 44. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. 45. [c] Then, when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen [d] all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. 46. So Jesus came again into [e] Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain [f] nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into

[a] Mat. 15. 24. Rom. 15. 8.
[b] Mat. 4. 13. & 13. 57. Luke 4. 24, 31, 38. Mark 6. 4. ch. 7. 1.
[c] Mat. 4. 43, 24. Mark 1. 14. Luke 4. 31, 32.
[d] Ch. 2. 13—23. Luke 13. 1. Exod. 23. 14—17. & 34. 23. Deut. 16. 1.
[e] Josh. 19. 28. ch. 2. 1—11.
[f] Or *officer of the court*, or *ruler*. Mat. 9. 18.

Galilee, he went unto him, and [g] besought him that he would come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. 48. Then said Jesus unto him, [h] Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. 49. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, [i] come down ere my child die. 50. Jesus saith unto him, [k] Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man [l] believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. 51. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, [m] Thy son liveth. 52. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. 53. So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in the which Jesus [n] said unto him, Thy son liveth: [o] and himself believed, and his whole house. 54. This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, [p] when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.*

g Ps. 78. 34. Hos. 5. 15. Mat. 9. 18. & 15. 22. & 17. 14, 15. Ps. 50. 15. Mat. 7. 7.

h 1 Cor. 1. 1, 22. Acts 2. 22. ch. 2. 18.

i Ch. 11. 21, 32, 37. Mark 5. 35, 36.

k Mark 2. 9. & 3. 5.

l Ch. 11. 25. Acts 14. 9. Mat. 8. 13. & 9. 22. & 15. 28.

m Ps. 71. 20. Mark 9. 23. Mat. 8. 13. & 15. 28.

n Ps. 107. 20. & 33. 9.

o Acts 16. 15, 34. & 18. 8. Gen. 18. 19. Josh. 24. 15.

p In Cana. ch. 2. 1—12.

* The words do not necessarily imply more than that this, the second of our Lord's miracles in that country, was performed after returning from Judea to Galilee.

Verses 43—54. Jesus made but a short visit to Sychar; he had other work to do, and therefore *after two days he departed thence.* Yet perhaps two more successful days passed not during his ministry; a gracious earnest of the success which his gospel should meet in the heathen world, when, instead of being confined almost wholly, as at present, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, it should be preached to every creature.

1. Christ pursued his journey to Galilee, but went not to Nazareth, well knowing, as he had before observed and experienced, *that a prophet had no honour in his own country.* Those with whom we have been brought up from infancy, usually pay little respect to the person as their teacher, with whom they have been familiar, as their junior, their schoolfellow, or their companion.

2. The Galileans gladly received him, having seen his miracles at the feast of the passover, to celebrate which, distant as they were, they went up with the other Jews to Jerusalem. *Note,* They who love God's ordinances, will not grudge to go far to enjoy them, and will never have reason to regret their pains.

3. He visited, among other places, Cana, where his first miracle was wrought of turning the water into wine; and there another notable miracle is wrought by him, which is not recorded by any of the other evangelists.

[1.] The person who made application to him was a nobleman; probably one of Herod's courtiers, perhaps Chuza, Luke viii. 3. or Manaen, Acts xiii. 1. and the patient was his own son. *Note,* (1.) Greatness is no protection from disease, nor from any of the common calamities incident to humanity. (2.) Afflictions often drive those to Christ, who otherwise, probably had never applied to him, and then indeed they are blessings in disguise.

[2.] His address was earnest, and bespoke his confidence in the power of Jesus. He came himself from Capernaum to Cana, about fifteen miles, to beg his help. The case was desperate, and past all other aid but his; for his child was *at the point of death;* and therefore he entreats him to hasten down without delay. He thought the presence of Jesus was needful to the cure, herein dishonourably limiting the Holy One of Israel. *Note,* Our sins have reduced us all to the point of eternal death: unless Jesus save, we must inevitably perish.

[3.] Christ rebukes his confined notions of his almighty power, and the backwardness of the Jews in general to believe. The Samaritans believed as soon as he had preached among them: but they required repeated signs and wonders, not satisfied with those which they had already seen him work at Jerusalem, during the feast.

[4.] The nobleman renews his importunate request. Every moment of delay was, in his apprehension, imminently dangerous; for though he had faith in Christ, that he could cure his son if he was present with him; yet he seems to have no apprehension that he could heal at a distance; or, if the child was dead, restore him to life again.

[5.] Christ relieves him of his pain, saying, *Go thy way; thy son liveth.* Nothing more was needful to the cure: his word wrought as effectually at a distance, as if he had gone in person. He speaks, and it is done. O that we had but faith to trust him at all times!

[6.] The power which wrought the cure of the son, as effectually influenced the heart of the father; so that in full assurance of faith he departed, perfectly satisfied, that the word which Jesus had spoken was sure, and that he should find his son alive and well. He appeared thus a true son of Abraham, and none like him ever trusted the Lord, and was confounded.

[7.] His servants met him, as he returned, with the joyful news of his son's recovery; and on inquiring when the happy change took place, they told him, *at the seventh hour the fever left him;* not gradually, but in a moment he recovered; and the father immediately remembered that was precisely the hour when Jesus had spoken to him.

[8.] The effect of this miracle was the conversion of himself and his family. *Himself believed, and his whole house.* He had begun to believe before; now his faith was more confirmed in Jesus as the Messiah, and he became a professed disciple; whilst his household, who were eye-witnesses of the miracle, followed his example. *Note,* (1.) One word of Jesus spoken to the heart, works effectually to our salvation. (2.) When the Master of the family sets the gracious example, it is often greatly influential to all his house.

Lastly, The evangelist remarks this, as the second miracle Jesus had wrought in Cana of Galilee. By two and three witnesses thus he established the authority of his mission, and probably the quality of the patient made the cure to be the more observed. When persons of superior rank are singled out by the grace of the Redeemer, the change wrought on them engages more particular attention.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 31.

We have in this chapter a miracle and a sermon. 1. *The miracle was the cure of an impotent man, that had been diseased thirty-eight years,* ver. 1—16. 2. *The sermon was, Christ's vindication of himself before the Sanhedrim, when he was prosecuted as a criminal for healing the man on the sabbath-day; in which,* (1.) *He asserts his authority as Messiah, and Mediator between God and man,* ver. 17—29. (2.) *He proves it by the testimony of his Father, of John the Baptist, of his miracles, and of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and condemns the Jews for their unbelief,* ver. 30—47.

cir. 31.

1. AFTER [a] this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep [b] *market* a [c] pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue * Bethesda,

a Lev. 23. 2. Deut. 16. 1. Num. 28. 16. Exod. 23. 14—17. & 34. 23. Heb. 10. 25.

b Or *gate.* Neh. 3. 1. & 12. 39.

c Is. 8. 6. & 22. 9.

* House of mercy.

having five porches. 3. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, [d] withered, waiting for the moving of the water. 4. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: [e] whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. 5. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity [f] thirty and eight years. 6. When Jesus saw him lie, and [g] knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, [h] Wilt thou be made whole? 7. The impotent man answered him, Sir, [i] I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down [k] before me. 8. Jesus saith unto him, [l] Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. 9. And [m] immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. 10. ¶ The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day; [n] it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed. 11. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. 12. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? 13. And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus [o] had conveyed himself away, † a multitude being in *that* place. 14. Afterward Jesus findeth him in [p] the temple, and said unto him, [q] Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. 15. The man departed, and [r] told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole. 16. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, [s] and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

d 1 Kin 13. 4. Mark 3. 1, 4.

e Zech. 13. 1. & 14. 8. Rev. 22. 1, 2, 17. This healing pool was one of the last types of Christ, and his gospel, as healing diseased sinners.

f Acts 3. 2. Luke 13. 16. ch. 9. 1, 23.

g Ch. 21. 17. Heb. 4. 13.

h Is. 65. 1. Jer. 13. 27. Luke 19. 41.

i Deut. 32. 36. Ps. 72. 12—14. & 142. 4. & 102. 17.

k And so he got no good. ver. 4.

l Mark 2. 11. Luke 5. 24. Mat. 9. 6. Is. 65. 24.

m Ps. 33. 9. & 107. 20. ch. 9. 7. Mark 1. 31, 42. & 2. 12. & 3. 5. & 5. 13, 29, 42. & 7. 30, 35. & 8. 25. & 9. 27. & 10. 52. Is. 35. 6. ch. 9. 14.

n Jer. 17. 21, 22. Neh. 13. 19. Mark 2. 24. Luke 6. 2, 7, 9. & 13. 14, 15. & 14. 1, 3. Exod. 20. 10. & 31. 12. & 35. 3. Num. 15. 32, 36. Mat. 12. 2.

o Luke 4. 30. ch. 8. 59.

† Or *from the multitude that was.*

p Is. 38. 22. Ps. 84. 1, 2, 10. & 66. 13—15.

q Ch. 8. 11. Ezra 9. 13, 14. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Lev. 26. 21. Mat. 12. 45.

r Mark 1. 45. & 7. 36. ch. 4. 29.

s Ch. 7. 23. & 9. 16. Luke 6. 2, 6—11. & 13. 10—17. & 14. 1—6. ver. 9.

Verses 1—16. The feast here spoken of was probably the passover; the second, which our Lord kept at Jerusalem, after his public entrance on the ministry: and there he works the following notable miracle.

1. The place where the miracle was wrought is very remarkable. It was a pool of water near the *sheep-gate*, Neh. iii. 1. called *Bethesda*, or the House of Mercy, surrounded with cloisters, or covered walks, where the impotent lay sheltered, who came with their several complaints, blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water in hopes of a cure. For this pool was impregnated with a strange virtue at certain seasons, owing to the descent of an angel who troubled the waters, and the first person who immediately stepped in, was cured of whatever disease he had.

When this healing power began to be communicated to the waters, or when it ceased, the Jewish historians are entirely silent; it served however to show God had not left his people without witness, and represented that fountain which should be opened in the Saviour's side, in which whosoever washed should be made clean. This fountain hath not at seasons merely, but at all times, the power of healing; and therefore whosoever continues under his spiritual maladies, has only his own negligence to blame, that he will not come to Christ that he may be cured.

2. The person on whom the cure was wrought had been thirty-eight years under his infirmity, probably paralytic, and unable to move; and therefore, when Jesus, passing by, compassionately observed his pitiable case, and graciously addressed him, *Wilt thou be made whole?* he relates his unhappy condition, and his continual disappointment, whilst some other stepped in before he could find a friend to assist him to reach the troubled waters, so that he began now to despair of ever obtaining his cure. *Note*, (1.) What thankfulness do we owe to our preserving God, if we enjoy perfect health and strength, whilst others totter with weakness and disease, and wearisome days and nights are appointed to them? (2.) The compassionate eye of Jesus is on the afflicted: and though he suffers them to be long exercised, he will pass by them in due season, and deliver them. (3.) They who would receive a cure from him of their spiritual maladies, ought at least to be waiting at the pool of ordinances, where Jesus usually manifests his power and grace.

3. Christ with a word heals his disease, bidding him arise, take up his bed, and walk; and such power accompanied his command, that the impotent man instantly felt his strength return; arose perfectly cured; and taking up his bed, walked away in the sight, and to the amazement of the beholders; and *the same day was the sabbath*. *Note*. (1.) When Christ speaks to the impotent soul, he gives ability for that which he commands. (2.) They who are healed by his grace, will instantly be obedient to his will.

4. As, according to the tradition of the elders, it was accounted unlawful to carry a bed on the sabbath-day; the Jews jealous, therefore, for the honour of the sacred day of rest, rebuked him for being guilty of such a profanation. The man thought he had sufficient authority, when he who healed him gave him his orders, and pleads the command of the person who had wrought the cure upon him. They suspected who had done the miracle, and wanted the man to accuse his kind benefactor, against whom they wished to proceed as a sabbath-breaker. *What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk?* With such contempt and indignation do they speak of Christ, as if he was a mere man, and a wicked man too, notoriously guilty of a breach of God's law. The man, who knew not Jesus, could give them no information: for he had disappeared immediately, mixing among the crowd, probably to avoid the admiration of some, and the malignity of others, who he knew would be offended at him for this glorious act of mercy, because it was the sabbath-day. *Note*, (1.) The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; therefore works of mercy and charity are always commendable. (2.) They who are eminent for well-doing, may expect to pass through evil report as well as good report.

5. Soon after the poor man going up to the temple, probably to return thanks for his late mercies, met Jesus there, who gave him a solemn caution with regard to his future conduct; *sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee*. Should he provoke the wrath of God by his sins, it would yet be worse than his past long affliction. The man in the simplicity of his heart went and *told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole:* probably he hoped this notable miracle might engage them to ac-

knowledge him as the Messiah; but so far were they from being led to admire his character, that, filled with envy and enmity, they sought to slay Jesus; and for a pretext pleaded that this work of mercy was a profanation of the sabbath. *Note,* (1.) They who have received signal mercies from God, are peculiarly bound to be found in the temple, offering up their thanksgivings. (2.) In the Lord's house we may expect to be favoured with his presence. (3.) Sin is at the root of all our sufferings in time and eternity. (4.) They who are by grace delivered from the power and punishment of sin, should be doubly watchful not to return again unto folly. (5.) Many cover, with pretended zeal for religion, their enmity against the most faithful servants of Christ.

17. ¶ But Jesus answered them, [t] My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. 18. Therefore the Jews [u] sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, [x] making himself equal with God. 19. ¶ Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, [y] Verily, verily, I say unto you, [z] The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. 20. [a] For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. 21. For as the Father [b] raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them;* even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. 22. For the Father judgeth no man, [c] but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23. [d] That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. 24. [e] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, [f] The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. 26. [g] For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; 27. [h] And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 28. Marvel not at [i] this: [k] for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 30. [l] I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because [m] I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

t Ver. 21. ch. 9. 4. & 14. 10.
u Ch. 7. 19. & 8. 7. & 10. 32, 33. & 19. 7.
x Phil. 2. 6. ch. 10. 30. & 14. 9. Zech. 13. 7.
y See ch. 3. 3, 5. & 1. 51.
z Ver. 21, 30. ch. 8. 28. & 9. 4. & 12. 49. & 14. 10. & 1. 3. Heb. 1. 2, 3. Eph. 3. 9. Prov. 8. 22—31. Is. 9. 6.
a Mat. 3. 17. & 12. 18. & 17. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 17. ch. 1. 18. & 3. 35. & 8. 28. & 14. 12. & 17. 2. & 10. 18. ver. 21—29.
b Rom. 4. 19. Deut. 32. 39. Luke 7. 14. & 8. 54. ch. 11. 25, 43. Mat. 27. 52, 53.
c Ver. 27. ch. 3. 35. & 17. 2. & 13. 3. Mat. 11. 27. & 25. 31—46. & 28. 18. 1 Pet. 4. 5. Rom. 2. 16. & 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 1. Acts 10. 42. & 17. 31.
d Ps. 2. 12. & 54. 11. ch. 4. 1. Mat. 28. 19. Rev. 5. 8—13. 1 John 2. 23. & 5. 10.
e Mat. 7. 24, 25. ch. 3. 15, 16, 18, 36. & 6. 40, 47. & 8. 51. & 20. 31. Rom. 8. 1,, 2. Eph. 2. 5, 6. 1 John 3. 14.
f See ver. 21. Eph. 2. 1, 5. & 5. 14. Luke 9. 60. & 15. 24, 32. Rom. 6. 4, 13. Gal. 2. 20. Col. 2. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 45. Rev. 3. 1.
g Jer. 10. 10. ch. 17. 2. 1 John 5. 20. 1 Tim. 6. 15. ch. 1. 4. & 11. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 45. ver. 21.
h Dan. 7. 13, 14. ch. 28. 18. Eph. 1. 20—23. Phil. 2. 9—11. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Acts 17. 31. see ver. 22. Acts 10. 42.
i Ver. 21, 25. Luke 7. 14. & 9. 54. ch. 11. 43. Eph. 2. 1, 5. Gal. 2. 20.
k Job 19. 25, 26. Is. 26. 19. Dan. 12. 2, 3. Mat. 25. 31—46. 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 20. 11—15.
l Ver. 19. ch. 6. 38. & 8. 28. Is. 11. 2—5. Heb. 3. 6.
m Ps. 40. 8. Mat. 26. 30. ch. 4. 34. & 18. 11. & 6. 38.

Verses 17—30. We have here our Lord's vindication of himself from the charge laid against him as a sabbath-breaker.

1. He argues from his Father's works to his own. *My Father worketh hitherto;* by his continual operation, every day he administers the affairs of the kingdom of providence; *and I work* as one with him, in nature and operation; and therefore my works of power and grace can be no more the subject of blame, than his. Most absurd, therefore, was the charge laid against him as a sabbath-breaker, who was Lord of the sabbath, and one with the eternal Father, the Maker and preserver of all things.

2. This defence exasperated them but the more. Such a claim to God as *his own Father,* (πατερα ιδιον) in that peculiar sense, as implied a co-equality with him in power, authority, and operation, they regarded as the highest blasphemy, and more deserving of death than even the breach of the sabbath.

3. Far from blaming his enemies as perverting his words, he vindicates what he had said; asserting and proving in the most exalted sense the eternal union and co-equality between the Father and the Son, and his title to the dignity of the undivided Godhead, *Verily, verily, I say unto you,* what I speak is certain, and my words truth itself; *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do;* such is the unity of their nature, that they are alike intimately acquainted with each other's counsels and designs, having one eternal mind. The Son, therefore, never acts separate from the Father, but with his consent and co-operation: *for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise;* whatever the Father doth in the continual agency of his providence, the Son, as one with him, is a co-worker, and acts with the same divine power and authority as the Father himself. *For the Father loveth the Son,* an infinite mutual complacence subsists between the divine persons, *and showeth him all things that himself doeth,* communicating with him all his counsels and designs, and doing nothing in the kingdom of grace or providence, but in conjunction with him; *and he will show him greater things than these,* performing by him and with him, greater miracles of power and goodness than this wrought on the impotent man, *that ye may marvel:* either led to admire my works, and believe in my divine mission, or to wonder and perish in obstinate infidelity.

In confirmation of what he had said, he instances his own divine power in two most remarkable particulars, each of which are interwoven in his discourse, and nearly connected.

[1.] He hath power equally with the Father to quicken the dead. He is *the prince of life,* and by his own sovereign will and pleasure raises up whom he will: self-existent as the Father, he hath life in himself, ver. 26. or *as the Father hath life in himself;* intending in his eternal mind to bestow it on his chosen people, *so hath he given the Son to have life in himself;* in the economy of man's redemption this life eternal is lodged in the hands of the Son, resides in him, and is to be derived from him; and he bestows it sovereignly, according to the good pleasure of his will. By him,

(1.) The souls of sinners are raised from the death of trespasses in which they lay; by the effectual word of gospel grace they are called from the grave of corruption, and awake to newness of life: *and the hour is coming, yea, now is,* when this great work shall be performed: *now* by his own ministry, hereafter more abundantly by his apostles' preaching. *Note,* (1.) Our souls, by the fall, are become utterly incapable of all spiritual

good, insensible to our real state of misery, and altogether dead before God, as much as the corpse which is laid in the coffin is insensible to what passes around it, and utterly disqualified for every action of life. (2.) Our hearts must experience a spiritual resurrection to newness of life here, or we can never hope for eternal life hereafter. (3.) The voice of Jesus in his word, made effectual by his Spirit, is the powerful agent which accomplishes this glorious work.

(2.) By him the dead bodies of men shall be raised up at the last day. Nor need any *marvel*, that he who first created man upon earth, should be able to repair the ruined tabernacle, and restore it from dust: *all*, from the first man whom God formed, to the last whom death shall seize, *shall hear the voice of the Son of God*, and instantly at his word, *shall come forth*, leaving the prison of the grave, restored to life that never more shall end. Though according to their several characters, very different will their doom be; *they that have done good*, whose hearts were renewed by divine grace, and whose works and ways evidenced faith unfeigned, and love without dissimulation, they, and only they, will rise *unto the resurrection of life*, to that state of immortal bliss and glory, which shall be the reward of their fidelity: *and they that have done evil*, have continued under the power and dominion of their native corruption, have lived without experiencing a divine change upon their hearts, and died under the guilt of unrepented sin, they shall be raised *unto the resurrection of damnation*, condemned to those eternal torments which are the wages of sin, without measure and without end; lying down in hell under that wrath of God, which is for ever wrath to come. How awful! how alarming the admonition! O that we might feel the weighty import of it, and prepare to meet our God!

[2.] He hath the power of finally determining the everlasting state of men and angels. Not only as God the Son is the Judge of all, in common with the Father, administering all the affairs of the kingdom of providence and grace, and without him *the Father judgeth no man*; but as Mediator also, he hath a peculiar authority delegated to him, to execute the judgment as the Son of man; to pronounce sentence from his throne at the last day, to take vengeance on all who have been rebellious against his government, and despised or rejected his salvation; and to fix, by an irrevocable decree, the eternal blessedness of his redeemed people; and the rule of his judgment at that day will be his own word, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life*; where we may observe, (1.) The sinner's title to glory, *faith in the Redeemer*. (2.) The effect of it; deliverance from all condemnation in time and eternity: for who can lay ought to the charge of those whom God justifieth? (3.) They who have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life, have therein the earnest and foretaste of eternal life. (4.) *The judgment* of Jesus is *just*, ver. 30. for all he doth is according to the eternal counsels of wisdom between the Father and the Son, ver. 29. in correspondence with the will of the Father, and according to the commission he hath received from him. Such, then, being his infinite dignity, the Son, who is in glory equal, in majesty co-eternal, must be *honoured*, worshipped, and adored, even *as the Father*; and so far from its being blasphemous, and derogatory from the Father's glory, that he should thus claim equality with him, in nature, perfections, and uncreated excellence; so inseparably connected are they, and their honour and interest so entirely the same, that the Father regards every instance of disrespect shown to his Son, as dishonour done to himself; both as he is one with him in the same undivided Godhead, and also as he is the Son of man sent from him, commissioned by him, and, as his ambassador, representing himself.

31. ¶ If I [n] bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. 32. [o] There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. 33. [p] Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. 34. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, [q] that ye might be saved. 35. [r] He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. 36. ¶ But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the [s] works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. 37. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, [t] hath borne witness of me. [u] Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. 38. And ye have not his word [x] abiding in you: [y] for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. 39. ¶ [z] Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: [a] and they are they which testify of me. 40. [b] And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. 41. ¶ [c] I receive not honour from men. 42. But [d] I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. 43. [e] I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: [f] if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. 44. [g] How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that *cometh* from God only? 45. ¶ Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: [h] there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, [i] in whom ye trust. 46. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; [k] for he wrote of me. 47. But [l] if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

n i. e. I alone. Ch. 8. 14. ver. 32, 33, 36. ch. 14. 12. Num. 35. 30. Deut. 17. 6.

o Ch. 1. 6—8, 15, 26, 27, 29—36. & 3. 28—36. Mat. 3. 11, 12. Mark 1. 7. Luke 3. 16. Acts 13. 25. or Is. 42. 1. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5.

p Ch. 1. 19—27. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6. Is. 40. 3—9.

q ch. 1. 15, 29, 36. Luke 19. 10. ch. 20. 31. Rom. 15. 4. 1 Tim. 4. 16.

r Mat. iii. & 11. 7—14. & 21. 26. & 17. 12, 13. Mark 1. 2—11. & 6. 14, 20. Luke 1. 15—17, 76, 77. & iii. ch. 1. 6—36. & 3. 28—36. Gal. 4. 15. Mat. 13. 20, 21. 2 Pet. 1. 19.

s Ch. 10. 25, 38. & 14. 12. Mat. 11. 4, 5.

t Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Is. 42. 1—7. 2 Pet. 1. 17. ch. 8. 18. & 12. 28. & 14. 10.

u Exod. 20. 19. & 33. 20. Deut. 4. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 16. 1 John 4. 12. ch. 1. 18.

x Ps. 119. 11. 1 John 2. 14. Prov. 2. 1, 2. & 6. 21. & 7. 1, 2. Deut. 6. 6—9.

y Is. 49. 7. & 53. 1—3. ch. 1. 11. Luke 7. 30.

z Deut. 6. 6—9. Is. 8. 20. & 34. 16. Acts 17. 11. Luke 16. 29, 31.

a See Luke 16. 29. & 24. 27, 44. ch. 1. 45. ver. 46.

b Rom. 8. 7. ch. 5. 11. & 3. 19. Is. 49. 7. & 53. 1—3. Ps. 31. 11. Hos. 11. 2, 7. Heb. 10. 29.

c Ch. 6. 15. ver. 34. 2 Cor. 8. 9. 1 Thes. 2. 6. Mat. 20. 28.

d Jer. 17. 9, 10. Rev. 2. 23. Luke 16. 15. Mat. 23. 13—28.

e Ch. 3. 16. Exod. 23. 31. Heb. 5. 4, 5. with Is. 53. 2, 3. ch. 1. 11.

f Mat. 24. 6, 24. Acts 5. 36, 37. & 21. 38.

g Ch. 12. 43. Rom. 2. 29.

h Rom. 3. 19, 20. & 7. 9—14. Gal. 3. 10. ver. 46.

i Ch. 8. 6. Mat. 19. 7. Acts 6. 11, 14. & 12. 3. & 17. 18. & 22. 18. & 49. 10. Deut. 13. 15—18. Exod. xii, xxv—xxx. Lev. i—xvi. Num. iii, iv, viii, xv, xxviii, xxix. Rom. 10. 4. Gal. 4. 24. Col. 2. 17. Heb. viii—x.

k Gen. 3. 15. l Luke 16. 29. Rom. 10. 7.

Verses 31—47. In confirmation of the glorious character he assumed, and his mission from the Father, he proceeds to produce other evidence than his own; admitting, that if what he asserted was utterly unsupported, they might reject his testimony of himself as untrue.

1. John the Baptist bore witness of him, and to his evidence Christ appeals, fully assured it was true: and they themselves, who applied to him as a prophet, were bound to embrace his testimony, which in the most solemn manner he delivered to those deputies of the Sanhedrim who were sent to inquire who he was, and under what authority he acted. He plainly asserted Christ's divine character, chap. i. 19—30. and his evidence they could not but allow to be most respectable. For though he was not *that light*, the Messiah, *he was a burning and a shining light*;

his exemplary conduct and zealous preaching bespoke the simplicity of his soul, *and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.* They gloried in him at first, and raised their expectations high, but when he would neither himself assume the character of the Messiah, nor declare himself that Elias whom they expected, they could not bear the sharpness of his rebukes, and the plainness of his testimony to that Messiah whom they rejected; and therefore they soon fell off and neglected him: not that Christ indeed needed human testimony, he had far greater; but for their conviction he mentions this, if any thing might be the means of rescuing them from ruin. *Note*, (1.) Every minister of Jesus, like John, should burn with zeal for his glory, and shine in all holy conversation, that he may adorn and give weight to the doctrine he preaches. (2.) Many at first seem to rejoice in the light of the gospel, who soon grow cold and careless, and neglect so great a salvation. (3.) They who trifle with their mercies, are justly deprived of them.

2. He appeals to a greater witness than that of John, even to his own works, which bore witness of him. His whole life and ministry bespoke his glorious character, and especially his miracles, wrought by his own divine power, evidenced his mission from God. And greater works than he had yet done remained for him to finish; to leave them at last without excuse, if they obstinately persisted in their infidelity.

3. God the Father himself had expressly borne witness to him by a voice from heaven at his baptism, Mat. iii. 16, 17. which was solemnly repeated, Mat. xvii. 5. at his transfiguration, and this was a singular attestation, such as has never before on any occasion been vouchsafed. *Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape;* all the voices that were heard, and the appearances that were seen, under the Old Testament, were either those of the Son in a human form, or of the angels employed by him in his ministry; then first when the Father in person spoke from heaven at the baptism of his Son, was his voice audibly heard, and a visible manifestation made of his glory. *And ye have not his word abiding in you;* neither this immediate testimony from heaven, nor his former word by his prophets had ever made any abiding impression; *for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not;* after all this evidence they, notwithstanding, rejected the testimony of God, and refused to believe in his Messiah. *Note*, (1.) When God sends, he will bear witness to his own servants, and attest with his Spirit the commission he hath given them. (2.) Many have the word of God in their hands, and sounding in their ears, and yet have it not abiding in their hearts.

4. He refers them to their own Scriptures for the proof of his divine character and mission. *Search the Scriptures*, or *ye do search* them. The Scriptures were by many of them much studied, and they boasted of their wisdom in these sacred oracles, but they were really great strangers to the meaning of them; they had need therefore look farther and deeper than ever yet they had done, and he ventures to rest his cause upon an appeal to these authentic records which they themselves so highly and justly valued: *for in them ye think ye have eternal life;* they placed the chief stress of their religion upon the knowledge of the law; and flattered themselves, by constantly reading these sacred writings and getting them by rote, they were sure of heaven. Now, *these*, saith he, *are they that testify of me*, all the types, promises, prophecies, centre in him, and refer to him; and yet *ye will not come to me, that ye may have life;* such were their prejudices and wilful blindness, that though the Scriptures were so express in pointing him out to their notice, they would not submit to apply to him, that they might obtain the pardon, life, and salvation, which he alone could give. Not that he affected to exalt himself, to gather a party, or obtain temporal dominion. *I receive not honour from men;* he neither courted nor needed human applause, his only aim was to advance his Father's glory. *But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you;* he tried their hearts, and notwithstanding all their high pretences of zeal for God's honour, the love of the world predominated in their affections, and they had really no heartfelt and sincere regard to God or godliness, and rejected him because he did not correspond with their earthly expectations. Hence, though *I am come in my Father's name*, with evidences of a divine mission so strong *and* striking, *ye receive me not*, because the salvation he brought was spiritual, from sin, and death, and hell: and he so sharply rebuked their vices, and undeceived them in their vain expectation of a temporal Messiah, who should come with outward pomp and grandeur, therefore they rejected him: but *if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive*, eager to embrace every impostor who pretended to deliver them from the Roman yoke, and aggrandize their nation, though vouching no authority but his own vain boastings. And being under the influence of such a carnal mind *how can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh from God only?* Their spirit and temper, and proud affection of pre-eminence, were the reverse of the kingdom which Christ came to erect; where humility and self-denial stood in the first and most distinguished place; and must for ever exclude them from the spiritual, substantial, and eternal honours which God alone bestows on the children of his grace, and the heirs of his glory. Learn hence, (1.) The necessity of deep and serious examination of the Scriptures, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and diligently seeking for Christ in them, who is the sum and substance of them; for without the practical knowledge of him, all other attainments in the letter, language, and phrases of the Scripture, are really no better than splendid ignorance. (2.) In the Scriptures eternal life is to be obtained, because they reveal to us that Redeemer, who is the author of it to all who obey him. The Old Testament, as well as the New, is full of him; the moral law drives us for refuge to him, the types of the ceremonial law all prefigure him, the prophecies all centre in him. He is indeed all, and in all. (3.) All who come by faith to Christ, embracing the salvation which is in him, will assuredly find pardon, grace, and glory; the reason why any sinners perish is this, that blinded by ignorance, or perverted by pride and self-righteousness, they *will* not come to Christ, that they might have life. Their eternal ruin, therefore, lies at their own door. (4.) Christ searcheth the heart and trieth the reins; he knoweth what is in man, and under the guise of the warmest profession of religion, can discover the enmity which reigns within, against himself and his gospel. (5.) Where inordinate love of this world prevails, and ambition, covetousness, and desire of human applause, possess the soul, it is impossible the love of God should dwell there. No man can serve two masters. (6.) When men choose those false prophets, who flatter them in their iniquities, and run without being sent, and pleased with their smooth prophecies turn a deaf ear to the warning voice of truth, justly doth God give up such to the delusions they have chosen. (7.) True honour comes from God alone; his estimation of us, not that of all the world beside, stamps our character with excellence or infamy. His approbation, therefore, a gracious soul desires in the first place. (8.) Whilst our hearts chiefly affect earthly honours, it is impossible we should believe in, embrace, and submit to him, whose kingdom is not of this world, and whose first demand from us is to take up our cross and follow him, as men wondered at.

Lastly, Christ turns them over to Moses, in whose writings they so much gloried, for a proof of his mission, and as their accuser, if they persisted in their infidelity. *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father*, as if I came to spy out your faults, with a view to your condemnation; No: *there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.* That law on which they trusted for salvation must needs condemn them as transgressors; and Moses in person at the last day must, to their confusion, testify against their impenitence and unbelief. *For had ye be-*

lieved Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me, as the great Prophet who should arise; as the great End of the Law, moral and ceremonial, to whom both pointed; *but if ye believe not his writings,* for whom you pretend such high veneration, and are not convinced by them of my divine mission, *how shall ye believe my words?* against whom you entertain such inveterate prejudices, and whom you treat with such insolent contempt? *Note,* (1.) Many make their boast in those privileges which will at last prove their most aggravated condemnation, because they have abused them. (2.) They who refuse to fly by faith for refuge to the gospel of Christ, must inevitably perish under the accusations of the law of Moses.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The miracles of the loaves,* ver. 1—14. 2. *Christ's walking upon the water,* ver. 15—21. 3. *The people's flocking after him to Capernaum,* ver. 22—25. 4. *His conference with them, occasioned by the miracle of the loaves, in which he reproves them for seeking carnal food, and directs them to spiritual food,* ver. 26, 27. *showing them how they must labour for spiritual food,* ver. 28, 29. *and what that spiritual food is,* ver. 30—59. 5. *Their discontent at what he said, and the reproof he gave them for it,* ver. 60—65. 6. *The apostasy of many from him, and his discourse with his disciples, that adhered to him upon that occasion,* ver. 66—71.

cir. 32.

1. AFTER these things [a] Jesus went over the [b] sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias. 2. [c] And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. 3. And [d] Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. 4. [e] And the passover, a feast of the Jews was nigh. 5. [f] When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? 6. And this he said to [g] prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. 7. Philip answered him, [h] Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. 8. One of his disciples, [i] Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, 9. There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: [k] but what are they among so many? 10. And Jesus said, [l] Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had [m] given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would. 12. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, [n] Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. 13. Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. 14. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, [o] This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

[a] Mat. 14. 13—21. Mark 6. 31—44. Luke 9. 10—17.

[b] Mat. 4. 18, & 15. 29. & 14. 34. Luke 5. 1. Num. 34. 12. Josh. 2. 3.

[c] Mat. 4. 23—25. & 8. 1. & 11. 7. & 12. 15. & 15. 1. & 14. 13, 14.

[d] Ver. 15. Mat. 5. 1. & 14. 23. & 15. 29. Luke 6. 12. & 9. 28.

[e] Lev. 23. 5. Exod. 12. 6. Deut. 16. 1. Num. 28. 6.

[f] Mat. 14. 15. Mark 6. 35. Luke 9. 12. ch. 4. 35.

[g] Gen. 22. 1. Deut. 8. 2, 16. & 33. 8. 2 Chr. 32. 31.

[h] *i. e.* £6: 9*s.* Num. 11. 21, 22. Mark 6. 37.

[i] Ch. 1. 40—44. Mat. 4. 18.

[k] Num. 11. 21, 22. 2 Kin. 4. 43. Mat. 14. 17. Mark 6. 38. Luke 9. 13. ver. 6.

[l] Mat. 14. 19. Mark 6. 41—43. Luke 9. 16, 17. Ps. 37. 16. Prov. 13. 25. & 15. 16, 17.

[m] Neh. 9. 25. 1 Sam. 9. 13. Mat. 15. 36. & 26. 27. & 24. 45. Exod. 23. 25. Rom. 14. 6. 1 Tim. 4. 5.

[n] 1 Kin. 17. 15, 16. Prov. 3. 9, 10. & 11. 24, 25. Phil. 4. 19. The disciples had much more left than at the beginning.

[o] Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15—18. Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 35. 4. Luke 7. 16. & 24. 19. ch. 1. 21. & 4. 19, 25, 42. & 7. 40.

Verses 1—14. The miracle here recorded is the only one which all the four evangelists have mentioned. We have,

1. The time and place, when and where it was wrought. Christ had crossed the lake of Gennesaret, called the sea of Tiberias, from a city Herod had built on the border of it, in honour of the emperor Tiberius. Multitudes followed him; not so much, it seems, affected by his doctrine, as drawn by his miracles. However, the Lord was ready to receive them; and going up into a mountain, for the convenience of being heard, sat there with his disciples, and taught the listening crowd: *and the passover,* the third since his entrance on the ministry, now approached.

2. The miracle itself. Beholding with compassion the multitudes who were assembled on this occasion, our Lord addressed himself to Philip, and asked him, in order to try his faith, being himself resolved what to do, Where they could get bread to feed that multitude? Philip, dull of apprehension, looked only to human aid, and suggests, that two hundred pennyworth of bread (about six pounds five shillings, which probably was all their common stock) would not be sufficient to give each a morsel. Andrew, hearing the discourse, suggests, there was a lad in the company that had five barley loaves and two small fishes: but these indeed would be as nothing among such a multitude. But where human means fail, the divine power is not straitened. Commanding his disciples, therefore, to seat the multitude in order, where the grass was their carpet, and the earth their table, with his divine benediction he consecrated the scanty provision, and breaking the bread and fishes, gave them to his disciples, who distributed them to the multitude: and marvellous to behold! under their hands the meat continued to grow as it descended down the ranks; and not only afforded enough for a plentiful meal to all that vast multitude, but such a quantity of fragments as filled twelve baskets full. *Note,* (1.) When the Lord is pleased at times to leave us in perplexity, he hath designs of his own to answer, and knows what he intends to do. (2.) Christ's disciples must not disdain coarse and scanty fare, but be content, when his providence so ordains, to put up with barley cakes, and be thankful for them; and then this poor provision, with the benediction of Jesus, shall yield a richer entertainment than all the delicacies of the luxurious. (3.) They who call a fish-meal fasting, seem to cast a reproach on the rich feast with which Jesus entertained his followers. (4.) Bread must never be wasted, even the fragments of barley cakes are carefully gathered up. If we are full, others are fasting, who will be glad of our leavings; good economy is the means to enable us for more extensive charity.

3. Great was the effect, for the time at least, produced by this miracle on the minds of the people. They concluded this must be *that* great *prophet* spoken of by Moses, Deut. xviii. 15. who should come into the world.

15. ¶ [q] When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. 16. [r] And when even was *now*

[q] Ch. 5. 41. & 18. 36. & 19. 14, 15. Mat. 21. 9. Acts 14. 13. Mark 6. 46. Mat. 14. 23. ch. 2. 24.

[r] Mat. 14. 22—33. Mark 6. 45—54.

come, his disciples went down unto the sea, 17. And entered into a ship, and * went over the sea toward [s] Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. 18. And [t] the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. 19. So, when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty [u] furlongs, they see Jesus [x] walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: [y] and they were afraid. 20. But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. 21. Then [z] they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at land whither they went.

* Westward.

s Ch. 2. 12. & 4. 46. Mat. 4. 13. & 11. 23.

t Ps. 107. 27. & 135. 7.

u A furlong is the eighth part of a mile. Luke 24. 13.

x Job 9. 8. Ps. 29. 10. & 93. 4. & 89. 9.

y Mat. 14. 25—33. Mark 6. 48—51. Is. 40. 27, 28. & 41. 10, 14. & 43. 1, 2. & 46. 3, 4. Rev. 1. 17, 18. Is. 51. 12, 13.

z Song 3. 4. Ps. 24. 7. 10. Luke 2. 28—30. Rev. 3. 20.

Verses 15—21. We have here,

1. The retirement of the Lord Jesus. They whom he had in so astonishing a manner fed, were immediately for proclaiming him king of the Jews, and erecting his standard; expecting, according to their mistaken prejudices, that he would set up a temporal dominion, rescue them from the Roman yoke, and place them at the head of the nations. But far different was the kingdom he came to establish; therefore, fearing lest their irregular zeal should hurry them into some seditious behaviour, and that against his will they might attempt to force the royalty upon him, he left them and went up again into the mountain alone. *Note*, (1.) Christ's kingdom is not of this world, his true disciples will never seek their portion here below. (2.) His ministers must avoid every thing that may give the shadow of offence to the secular powers, never intermeddling with civil affairs, but teaching all dutiful submission to the powers that are.

2. Whilst the Master was in the mountain, the disciples were tossing on the tempestuous waves. By the command of their Lord they had gone on shipboard, in order to cross the lake; but now the storm arose, the night was dark, the wind contrary, and their Master not come to them, which heightened their distress. *Note*, (1.) After the sweetest seasons of refreshment, sometimes the darkest days of temptation succeed. (2.) It is one of the heaviest afflictions to the soul under trials, when the presence of Jesus is withdrawn, and we are left under darkness and desertion. (3.) They who embark in Christ's cause must prepare for a storm. The way to glory lies through much tribulation.

3. In their extremity help approaches. In the way of duty we need never despair; Christ will deliver us in the needful time of trouble. He came to them miraculously walking on the waters; but they, affrighted, thought it had been an apparition, till his well-known voice quieted their fears: when he was so nigh, no evil could hurt them. *Note*, (1.) We often terrify ourselves with unnecessary apprehensions of danger, and when our minds are dejected, are ready to fear that the very means that are working for our good, portend an increase of our misery. (2.) Jesus alone, by his all-powerful word, can speak peace to the sinner's troubled mind.

4. With joy they welcomed their Master's arrival; and in a moment the ship, by a miracle, was at the place of their destination. *Note*, (1.) Christ is doubly precious to the soul; when mourning after him, and walking in darkness, he returns, and lifts up the light of his countenance, and dissipates every cloud of sorrow. (2.) The church, and every faithful soul embarked on this tempestuous world, experience many a storm; but their everlasting safety is secured, they shall never finally be cast away. (3.) It will be a pleasing surprise to many a trembling believer, when he shall find himself at death safely landed on the shores of eternal rest.

22. ¶ The day following, when the people, which stood on the other side of the sea, saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone; 23. (Howbeit there came other boats from [a] Tiberias, nigh unto the place [b] where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:) 24. When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not [c] there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to [d] Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. 25. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? 26. Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [e] Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. 27. † Labour not for [f] the meat which perisheth, but for [g] that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which [h] the Son of man shall give unto you: [i] for him hath God the Father sealed.‡

a Or *Cinneroth.* Josh. 11. 2. Num. 34. 11. ver. 1.

b Ver. 10, 11.

c Ver. 15.

d A city on the west of the sea of Galilee. Ver. 17.

e Ps. 78. 34, 37. Is. 58. 2. Rom. 16. 18. Phil. 2. 21. Jam. 4. 3, 4.

† Or *work not.*

f Ch. 4. 13. Eccl. 1. 2. & 5. 11. Mat. 6. 19, 20. Col. 3. 2. & 2. 22. 1 Cor. 6. 13.

g Ver. 40, 54. ch. 4. 14. Luke 10. 42.

h Is. 55. 1—3. ch. 17. 2. Rom. 6. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 10.

i Acts 2. 22. & 10. 38. Is. 11. 2—4. & 61. 1. ch. 3. 34. 2 Pet. 1. 17. Mat. 3. 16, 17. & 17. 5.

‡ Or, *For to Him, the Father, that is God, hath given his attestation.*

Verses 22—27. All night the multitude seemed to have waited for the return of Jesus from the mountain in the morning: for as they saw the disciples embark, and leave their Master behind them, and there was no other boat in which he could follow them, they concluded he must still be on that side of the water; but not finding him there as they expected, we are told,

1. How carefully they followed him. Some boats arriving in the morning from Tiberias, near that place where they had been miraculously fed through the benediction of Jesus, they crossed the lake to Capernaum, hoping to find him there, where he usually made his abode. *Note*, (1.) They who love Christ truly; will stick at no pains in following him. (2.) When we are found in God's way, his providence is often seen, most graciously to second our good designs and desires.

2. They found him on the other side of the sea, and could not but express their astonishment how he could come thither, having no convenience for crossing the lake. *Note*, Many eagerly run after Christ and his gospel, pretending great zeal for hearing, who never truly come to him by faith, nor receive the ingrafted word to the saving of their souls.

3. Christ, who knew the spirit and temper with which they followed him, replies to their question in such a manner, as he saw their state required.

[1.] He rebukes them for the corrupt principle on which they acted. They followed him, not because they were convinced by his doctrine and miracles, and believed in him to the saving of their souls, but merely because they had been fed at his cost, and expected yet greater temporal advantages from him when he should set up his kingdom. *Note*, Many follow Christ for the loaves, who have no love for his gospel.

[2.] He exhorts them to seek a better portion. *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto*

everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. The world and all the things of it perish in the using, and we are dying daily, and cannot long possess any thing here below. It is therefore the most egregious folly to lay out all our labour on so transitory a portion, and most criminal to make our profession of religion subservient to the base purposes of earthly advantages. Christ proposes to us a nobler good, even that spiritual food of his grace, by which our immortal souls may be fed, and we may grow up to the participation of that eternal life, which the Son of man hath to bestow on every truly faithful soul: *for him hath God the Father sealed,* fully commissioned and authorized him to give this eternal life to his redeemed people, and to feed them with that living bread, of which, if a man eat, he shall never die. *Note,* (1.) All our blessings, in time and eternity, come from the free gift of our Redeemer. (2.) None who come to Jesus, seeking the living bread, will be denied, for *he feedeth the hungry.*

28. Then said they unto him, [k] What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29. Jesus answered and said unto them, [l] This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. 30. ¶ They said therefore unto him, [m] What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what doest thou work? 31. [n] Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. * 32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you [o] the true bread from heaven. 33. [p] For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. 34. Then said they unto him, Lord, [q] evermore give us this bread. 35. And Jesus said unto them, [r] I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. 36. But I said unto you, That [s] ye also have seen me, and believe not. 37. [t] All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38. For [u] I came down from heaven, [x] not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me [y] I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40. And this is the will of him that sent me, [z] that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. 41. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42. And they said, [b] Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? 43. Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. 44. [c] No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45. [d] It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. [e] Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46. [f] Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. 47. [g] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48. [h] I am that bread of life. 49. [i] Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50. [k] This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51. [l] I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is [m] my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. 52. [n] The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, [o] How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat? 53. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [p] Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54. [q] Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day. 55. For [r] my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56. [s] He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, [t] dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57. [u] As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; [x] so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58. [y] This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. 59. These things said he in [z] the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

k Deut. 5. 26. Mic. 6. 7, 8. Mat. 19. 16.

l Exod. 23. 21. 1 John 3. 23. & 5. 10—12. ch. 3. 15—18, 36. & 14. 1. Ps. 2. 12. & 45. 10, 11.

m Mat. 12. 38. & 16. 1. ch. 2. 18. 1 Cor. 1. 22.

n Exod. 16. 4, 14. Num. 11. 7. Neh. 9. 15, 20 Ps. 78. 24, 25. 1 Cor. 10. 3. ver. 49.

* Or, *he gave them bread of heaven to eat.*

o Ver. 33, 35, 48, 50, 51, 53—58. ch. 3. 16. 1 John 4. 9, 10, 14. Gal. 1. 20.

p Ch. 10. 9. & 3. 14, 16, 17. & 14. 6. & 1. 4. 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16.

q Ch. 4. 15. Ps. 4. 6. ver. 26.

r Ver. 47—58, 41. ch. 7. 37. & 4. 14. Is. 55. 1, 2. Prov. 9. 5. Col. 2. 10, 19. Gal. 2. 20.

s Ver. 14, 26, 34, 64. ch. 1. 11. & 5. 40. & 12. 37. Is. 53. 2, 3.

t 2 Tim. 2. 19. Rom. 11. 5, 7. ch. 17. 6. & 10. 26—29. 1 John 2. 19. Mat. 11. 28. Is. 45. 17, 22. & 55. 1. Mat. 24. 24. ver. 39.

u Eph. 4. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

x Ps. 40. 8. Is. 42. 1. & 49. 3. Mat. 20. 28. & 26. 39. ch. 4. 34. & 5. 30. Phil. 2. 7, 8. Heb. 5. 8.

y Ch. 10. 28. & 17. 12. & 18. 9. & 5. 28, 29. 1 John 2. 19. Jude 1. Col. 3. 3.

z Ch. 3. 15—18. & 14. 19. 1 a. 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6, 8. ver. 37.

a Ver. 52, 60, 61, 66. Luke 5. 30. & 15. 2. & 19. 7.

b Mat. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3. Luke 4. 23. with Mat. 23. 42—45. Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 9. 5. & 8. 7. & 1. 3.

c 1 Cor. 4. 7. ver. 65. Phil. 1. 29. Song 1. 4. Jer. 17. 9. Rom. 8. 7, 8. Tit. 3. 3, 5.

d Is. 54. 13. Jer. 31. 33, 34. Heb. 8. 10—12. & 10. 16.

e Gal. 1. 15, 16. Eph. 1. 17—20. Acts 26. 17, 18 Phil. 1. 29. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

f Mat. 11. 27. ch. 1. 18. & 5. 37. & 14. 9, 10. Luke 10. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 16. 1 John 4. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 6. None but Christ hath any immediate knowledge of, or from, the Father.

g Ch. 3. 15, 16, 36. ver. 27, 33, 35, 40, 54, 57, 58. ch. 10. 28, 29. Is. 45. 17.

h Ver. 35, 40, 47, 51, 54, 57, &c. ch. 10. 10. Gal. 2. 20. Col. 3. 3, 4.

i Exod. 16. 4, 15. Neh. 9. 15, 20. Ps. 78. 24. ver. 31. Num. 26. 65. Judg. 2. 10.

k Ver. 32, 33, 38, 41, 47, 48.

l Ver. 33, 35, 47, 48. ch. 3. 13. Eph. 4. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 45, 47. 1 John 5. 12.

m Ver. 52—57. Is. 53. 4, 5. Heb. 10. 5, 10. Mat. 20. 28. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. Prov. 9. 2.

n Ch. 7. 43. & 9. 16. & 10. 19.

o Ch. 3. 4, 9. & 4. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

p Mark 16. 16. ch. 3. 18, 36. Gal. 2. 20. Phil. 3. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

q Ch. 1. 14. & 3. 15, 16, 18, 36. & 4. 14, 27, 40. Gal. 2. 20. Rom. 8. 1—4, 28—39. & 5. 21.

r Gal. 2. 16, 20, 21. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 17, 21. Col. 2. 3, 9, 10. & 3. 11. Phil. 3. 7—10.

s Ps. 34. 8. Prov. 9. 5. Is. 25. 6. & 55. 1—3. ch. 1. 11. & 3. 15. 1 John 3. 24.

t Ch. 14. 20. & 17. 23. & 15. 3, 4. 1 John 4. 12—16. Eph. 5. 30. 1 Cor. 1. 30. & 6. 17. Gal. 2. 20. 1 John 3. 24. & 5. 10, 12.

u Jer. 10. 10. & 2. 13. Deut. 5. 26. ch. 5. 26. & 3. 34.

x Ch. 14. 6, 19. Col. 3. 3, 4. & 2. 19. Gal. 2. 20.

y Ver. 31—40, 47—57. ch. 3. 13. & 10. 10. Rom. 5. 21.

z Ch. 18. 20. Ps. 22. 22. & 40. 9, 10. Rom. 15. 8.

Verses 28—59. In consequence of what he had spoken, the persons who heard him entered into conference with him, how they might attain that everlasting life he mentioned.

1. *They said unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?* He had commanded them to labour for the enduring meat, and they wanted to know what they must do; whether any thing more was necessary than obedience to the

law of Moses: for they founded all their expectations on their own doings and duties, and thought of no other way to righteousness and life eternal than by the works of the law.

2. Christ replied, *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* It is not by doing, but by believing, that righteousness and salvation are attainable; faith in Jesus, in his divine character as the Messiah, and in the all-sufficiency of his blood and righteousness to justify the ungodly, is the principal thing, without which it is impossible to please God. And this faith is his own work in the soul, which we can no more give ourselves, than we can create a world.

3. They answered again, *What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what doest thou work?* They overlooked the miracles he had already performed and demanded greater. For since he seemed to assume higher authority than that of Moses, they thought he should produce greater evidences of a divine commission: it is true he had by miracle yesterday fed five thousand, but they suggest Moses did much more. *Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.* The number there was much greater, the miracle daily continued, and the fare far more delicious than barley loaves.

4. Christ rectifies their mistake. They ascribed to Moses what was not his, but God's gift. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven;* it doth not appear he had the least concern in procuring it; neither did it come from heaven as they imagined, but merely from the clouds, and served only to support a mortal life: *but my Father,* who gave you the manna, *giveth you the true bread from heaven,* of which that was the type and figure. *For the bread of God, is he* (or that) *which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world,* a provision as much superior to the manna in the wilderness, as the throne of God is beyond the clouds, and life eternal exceeds the present moment of mortality.

5. Ignorantly mistaking his meaning, as if he spoke of material bread, *they said unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.* They eagerly desire that heavenly provision, whose properties were so excellent, and so far surpassed the manna which their fathers did eat in the wilderness. They indeed understood not what they asked; but if we have tasted of the heavenly manna, have fed upon the word of Jesus, and feasted on the sweet and precious promises which are in him, we shall not cease with deep sensibility to cry, *Lord, evermore give us this bread!*

6. Christ plainly informs them of his meaning. *I am the bread of life;* he spoke not of bread literally, or of a merely temporal happiness, but of himself; a divine person become incarnate to give spiritual life to immortal souls. He is the *bread of life;* our bodies could better live without daily food, than our spirits without the constant supplies of his grace. He is both the quickening principle of our spiritual life, and the constant support of it. Therefore saith Christ, *he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth in me shall never thirst;* whosoever by faith applies to Jesus shall never want the richest provision to satisfy the most enlarged desires of his soul. *But I said unto you, that ye also have seen me, and believe not;* they had seen his miracles, yet through their earthly mindedness, and attachment to worldly interest, they received him not as a spiritual Redeemer, nor trusted upon him for eternal life. Some, indeed, there were who would embrace his gospel, and be saved by it. *All that the Father giveth me,* according to the everlasting covenant of grace, as a peculiar people, *shall come unto me;* drawn by almighty cords of grace irresistible, and enabled to exercise faith in me: *and him that cometh to me,* under whatever load of guilt or corruption he groans, *I will in no wise cast out.* The Saviour's arms of mercy are open to receive the miserable and the desperate: no sinner who flies to him need fear a repulse, however great or aggravated his iniquities may be, pardon, peace, grace, and glory, are assured to him by the promises of the God who cannot lie. *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;* not on an errand of uncertainty, or to carry on any design separately from his Father; but as his ambassador, qualified and commissioned to execute that glorious work of man's redemption to which he was appointed; and ready to do and suffer whatever the determinate counsel of God hath ordained. *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose none, but raise it up again at the last day.* From whence we learn, (1.) That according to the covenant of redemption, a certain number of sinners are given to Jesus Christ, in whom he shall see the travail of his soul: and herein he acts as the eternal King, sovereignly exercising mercy to some, when he might, in justice, have condemned all to suffer the wages of sin. (2.) Christ will infallibly take care of those whose interests are lodged in his hands; his grace shall find them out, his power preserve them; and neither the wiles of Satan, nor the temptations of the world, nor the perverseness of the fallen heart, shall be able to defeat his purposes of love towards them: not one shall be lost, of those whose sins he bore. (3.) As the Saviour undertakes to deliver his people from sin and all its consequences, death, which is the wages of sin, shall not have dominion over them; as by his grace their souls are rescued from the power of corruption, their bodies shall also be redeemed from the grave, and raised up in glory at the great day of his appearing. (4.) All those have a part in this salvation who hear, *and* by faith, embrace the gospel which Christ declares. For *this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day;* the gospel proposes a free salvation, through Jesus, to every miserable sinner, and whoever receives the record of God concerning his Son, sees his own deep need of the Saviour, and the all-sufficiency of Jesus, becomes a partaker of that present life of grace, which is the earnest of the eternal life of glory. They who perish owe it to their infidelity; they reject the counsel of God against their own souls, and will not come to Christ that they may have life; either through ignorance, insensible to their own misery and want of a Saviour; or through pride, going about to establish their own righteousness instead of submitting to the righteousness of God.

7. Perceiving now that Christ plainly pointed at himself, as the living bread endued with such wonderful properties, the Jews murmured and cavilled at him, as if he assumed to himself extravagant honours, in pretending to come down from heaven, and being the bread of life, and they objected his known descent from Joseph and Mary. *Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?* when his earthly original is so evident.

8. Christ confutes their cavils, and answers their murmurings. *He said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves;* he knew their thoughts, and the prejudices they entertained against him arising from that native corruption of their hearts, which nothing but almighty grace could subdue. *For no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him;* such is the present state of fallen man, that he is under an utter impotence to turn unto God, unless drawn by the Spirit of God, and enabled to believe in his dear Son. And to as many as are thus drawn to him, Christ saith, *I will raise him up at the last day;* and the way in which the sinner is thus wrought upon, is according *as it is written in the prophets,* Isa. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 34. *They shall be all taught of God,* by his revealed word, and the illuminations of his Spirit. *Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father,* speaking in his word, and by his Spirit to the soul, *cometh unto me,* trusting on Jesus alone for pardon, righteousness, and salvation; and without such divine teaching and spiritual illumination, the natural man cannot receive the truths of revelation, nor believe in the Son of God. *Not that*

any man hath seen the Father, visibly or personally instructing him, *save he which is of God*, his incarnate Son, *he hath seen the Father;* is privy to all his counsels and designs; by him all divine discoveries are made, and through his agency the effectual power is communicated to our souls, to hear and receive the gospel word. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, as a most undoubted truth, *He that believeth on me, hath everlasting life;* the true believer is already possessed of it by right and title, through Jesus, his glorious covenant-head and representative; embraces it in faith and hope, hath the earnest and foretastes of it in present grace, and must necessarily be brought to the actual enjoyment of eternal glory hereafter. *I am the bread of life;* it is from Christ our spiritual life is derived, through him it is supported, and by him it shall be perfected. *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead;* miraculous as their provision was, it only maintained for a while a temporal life, and did not prevent the ravages of death, or render them immortal. But *this is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die;* for whoever by faith truly feeds upon Christ, shall never die eternally. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven*, to be the author of spiritual and eternal life; *if any man eat of this bread*, hungering after the pardon, righteousness, and salvation which Jesus brings, *he shall live for ever;* though not immortal upon earth, yet sure of an eternity of glory in heaven: *and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* His human body, offered up as the great sacrifice for sinners, would be the grand procuring cause of all those inestimable blessings he had mentioned; of which not only the Jews, but the Gentile world would be made partakers.

9. The gross and carnal ideas of the Jews still prevented them from comprehending his meaning. And *they strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* Concluding the assertion absurd and improbable, because they understood him, as if speaking of his human flesh, which should be eaten like bread; an opinion as monstrous as that which the Romish church hath since adopted concerning the flesh of Jesus as corporally eaten in the eucharist.

Lastly, Christ confirms and explains what he had said concerning his flesh. It was of absolute necessity, that in a spiritual sense, that should be done which was figuratively represented by eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; even that they should be vitally united to him by faith, and become one with him, as the food which is eaten incorporates with our bodies. For *verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you;* without this union of our souls to him, we can neither have spiritual life here, nor eternal life hereafter. But *whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood*, not merely partaking of the elements which represent these; depending on which, many deceive themselves, and think, if they can but receive the sacrament before they die, they shall infallibly be saved; when neither living nor dying will those outward signs at all profit those who are strangers to the inward and spiritual grace; I say, it is not partaking of the outward elements, but the spiritual feeding upon Christ and his saving benefits by faith which is here meant; and whoever doeth that, *hath eternal life*, is now entitled to it, and will shortly be put in possession of it; *and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed;* affording the most delightful nourishment and feast for the soul infinitely exceeding any corporal refreshment. *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood*, with spiritual appetite and discernment, *dwelleth in me, and I in him.* He is incorporated with Christ as a member of his body mystical, is entitled to the remission of sins and acceptance with God, which, by the blood-shedding of Jesus, is obtained for all who believe in him, and hath Christ as the quickening Spirit formed in his heart, the principle of spiritual life, which shall reach its utmost perfection in eternal glory; the union between him and us once formed being ever after indissoluble. *For as the living Father*, who is the fountain of life to every creature, *hath sent me, and I*, as a man and mediator, commissioned by him, *live by the Father*, supported and enabled to finish the work he hath given me to do; *so he that eateth me*, united to me by faith, *shall live by me;* receiving out of my fulness, as the branches are fed by the living root, and their life as eternal as my own. Because I live, ye shall live also. *This* then *is* the conclusion of the whole; I am *that bread which came down from heaven*, concerning which I spoke before, and the properties of which are so transcendently excellent: *not as your fathers did eat manna*, far different is this bread; *that* was from the clouds, *this* from the highest heavens; that was but the type, this the antitype and substance; that only supported a momentary life; they who fed thereupon, were subject to all the diseases and decays incident to mortality, *and are dead;* but *he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.*

This discourse Jesus held in the synagogue at Capernaum, publicly and openly, that all who desired it might hear and receive his heavenly doctrines. *Note*, Truth seeks no covert. The gospel of Jesus must be declared openly, and will bear the severest inquiry. His word is truth.

60. ¶ [a] Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? 61. When Jesus [b] knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? 62. [c] *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? 63. [d] It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are [e] spirit and *they* are life. 64. [f] But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 65. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, [g] that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. 66. ¶ [h] From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68. Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, [i] to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69. [k] And we believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. 70. Jesus answered them, [l] Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is [m] a devil? 71. He spake of Judas Iscariot *the son* of Simon; for [n] he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

[a] Ver. 41, 42, 52, 66. Rom. 8. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Deut. 29. 4.
[b] Jer. 17. 10. ch. 2. 24, 25. & 21. 17. Acts 1. 24. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23.
[c] Ch. 3. 13. & 1. 18. Mark 16. 19. Luke 24 51. Acts 1. 9, 11. Eph. 4. 8. ch. 16. 5, 15, 17. 28. & 17. 11. Ps. 110. 1.
[d] 2 Cor. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 3. 18. 1 Cor. 15. 45. Heb. 9. 14.
[e] 1 Cor. 2. 10—14. Eph. 1. 17—20. 1 Thes. 2. 13. & 1. 5. Ps. 19. 7—10. Heb. 4. 12. Ps. 119. 50, 93, 130.
[f] Ver. 61. ch. 2. 24, 25. & 13. 11. ver. 61, 70, 71. Heb. 4. 13. Acts 15. 18. Is. 46. 9, 10.
[g] Ver. 44. ch. 10. 26. & 12. 37—40. Phil. 1. 29. Eph. 2. 8, 9.
[h] Ver. 67. Gal. 3. 1, 3. 1 John 2. 19. Phil. 2. 21. 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 21, 22. Heb. 10. 38. Luke 9. 62.
[i] Ps. 73. 25. Acts 4. 12. & 5. 20. ver. 63. Mat. 7. 29.
[k] Mat. 16. 16. Luke 9. 20. ch. 11. 27. & 1. 45, 46, 49. Acts 8. 37. & 16. 31.
[l] Mat. 10. 2—4. Mark 3. 14—19. Luke 6. 13—16.
[m] Ch. 8. 48. & 13. 2, 21, 27.
[n] Mat. 26. 14—16, 21—35, 47—56. & 27. 3—5. Mark xiv. Luke xxii. ch. xiii, xviii. Acts 1. 16—20. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 13, 14.

Verses 60—71. We have here an account of the different effects produced by this discourse on the minds of the hearers.

1. Many who had followed him till then, as his nominal disciples, were highly shocked at what they heard, taking it in a gross and carnal sense, and not entering into the spirit of his

words; or they were offended at the divine original and the operation which he claimed as co-equal with God the Father, or, because it was mysterious, they disbelieved his doctrine as absurd; as the infidels and scoffers of our day, who, because the mysteries of grace appear not agreeable to their fallen reason, suppose it a mark of superior understanding to reject them.

2. Christ was apprized of their murmurings: for he sees the hard thoughts which sinners entertain of him, as well as hears their hard speeches. He searcheth the heart, and therefore replies, *Doth this offend you?* If the coming down of the Son of man from heaven appears so incredible, *What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?* This would perhaps yet more astonish them, considering the meanness of his present appearance, and might seem still more improbable to happen. As to what he had observed about eating his flesh, this must be understood not corporally, but spiritually: *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing:* the bare participation of the outward ordinances avails nothing to procure eternal life. The sinner's soul must first be quickened by the power of the Spirit of Jesus, and brought to the discernment of spiritual things, otherwise the most nourishing words of his gospel convey no more to the inward man, than meat doth to the dead corpse. *The words that I speak unto you,* saith he, *they are spirit, and they are life;* to be understood not in a literal but spiritual sense, and, accompanied by the power of the Holy Ghost, become the means of quickening the dead sinner's soul, and maintaining the life which Christ bestows, till it is perfected in eternity. *But there are some of you that believe not;* professing to be disciples, but in truth not at all experimentally acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel; *for Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father,* being powerfully drawn by his effectual grace. *Note,* (1.) Christ knoweth the heart, and sees the infidelity which reigns within, though covered with the most plausible cloak of profession. (2.) Apostates prove they were always hypocrites. (3.) Unless the Lord draw us by his grace, we have neither inclination nor ability to follow him.

3. Many who had murmured before, now utterly withdrew, and returned to their former occupations, to their own sinful ways, and Pharisaical teachers, and never made any farther profession, nor attended any more on his ministry. We are not to wonder if we see apostates: nay *many,* of whom we had formed the most sanguine hopes, go back: it was so from the beginning.

4. Christ hereupon addressed his twelve chosen ones, that he might draw from them a profession of their faith in him; *Will ye also go away?* Not that he doubted their sincerity, but it bespeaks his affection towards them, and his confidence in them, that, whatever others did, they would never follow so bad examples: but in general, at least, cleave to him with unshaken fidelity.

5. Peter's zealous heart cannot bear the suspicion which the question seemed to intimate, and therefore, in the name of his brethren, he nobly replies, *Lord, to whom shall we go?* Out of thee we can hope for neither pardon, peace, grace, nor glory. Turn where we will, misery and destruction meet us. *Thou,* and thou alone, *hast the words of eternal life; and we believe* all that thou hast lately spoken, *and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Note,* (1.) Peter's reply must be the answer of every faithful soul, when tempted to quit his profession: *To whom shall we go* for life and peace? To our sins? they will destroy us. To our own works and endeavours? they cannot justify or save us. To the world? it will deceive our expectations. Christ, and Christ alone, is the only foundation of hope and fountain of happiness to a fallen sinner: out of him, nothing but wrath and ruin remain for us. (2.) The more steadily and assuredly we trust in the Son of God, the more we honour him. And that faith which gives him glory, will bring us the most reviving consolations.

6. *Jesus answered them,* to check too great self-confidence, and prepare them for the issue, *Have not I chosen you twelve* to the distinguished honour of apostleship, *and one of you is a devil?* possessed by that wicked spirit, in his heart a traitor and a murderer. *He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon; for he it was that should betray him* as Christ full well knew, though he was one of the twelve, which aggravated his guilt. *Note,* (1.) A man, like Judas, may have been the means of casting out devils from others, and yet be a devil himself. Among the most flaming professors there will be found hypocrites and apostates. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. (2.) The purest societies on earth cannot answer for all their members. It is in heaven alone that the wheat will be free from the chaff.

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's declining for some time to appear publicly in Judea,* ver. 1. 2. *His design to go up to Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles, and his discourse with his kindred in Galilee concerning his going up to the feast,* ver. 3—13. 3. *His preaching publicly in the temple at that feast.* (1.) *In the midst of the feast,* ver. 14, 15. *we have his discourse with the Jews,* [1.] *Concerning his doctrine,* ver. 16—18. [2.] *Concerning the crime of sabbath-breaking laid to his charge,* ver. 19—24. [3.] *Concerning himself, both whence he came, and whither he was going,* ver. 25—36. (2.) *On the last day of the feast,* [1.] *His gracious invitation to poor souls to come to him,* ver. 37—39. [2.] *The reception that it met with.* 1. *Many of the people disputed about it,* ver. 40—44. 2. *The chief priests would have brought him into trouble for it, but were first balked by their officers,* ver. 45—49. *and then silenced by one of their own court,* ver. 50—53.

1. AFTER these things Jesus [a] walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, [b] because the Jews sought to kill him. 2. [c] Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. 3. His [d] brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples * also may see the works that thou doest. 4. [e] For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. 5. [f] For neither did his brethren believe in him. 6. Then Jesus said unto them, [g] My time is not yet come; but your time is alway ready. 7. [h] The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8. Go ye up unto this feast: [i] I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. 9. When he had said these words unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee. 10. But when his brethren were gone up, [k] then went he alone up unto the feast, [l] not openly, but as it were in secret. 11. ¶ [m] Then the Jews

[a] Acts 10. 38. Luke 4. 44.
[b] Ch. 5. 16, 18. ver. 19. 23. Mat. 21. 38. Mark 12. 7. 1 Thes. 2. 15.
[c] Lev. 23. 34—36. Deut. 16. 13. Num. 29. 13—38. Neh. 8. 14—18.
[d] Kinsmen. Mat. 12. 46. Mark 3. 31. Acts 1. 14.
* There.
[e] Ver. 10. ch. 18. 20. & 12. 19, 46. & 5. 44. Acts 2. 5. Mat. 6. 1, 2, 5, 16.
[f] Ch. 1. 11. Mark 3. 21. Luke 4. 24. Jer. 20. 10.
[g] Ch. 2. 4. & 8. 20. ver. 7. 8, 30.
[h] Ch. 3. 19. & 14. 17. & 5. 18, 19 Jam 4. 4.
[i] Ch. 2. 4. & 8. 20. ver. 6, 30.
[k] Ps. 40. 8. & 26. 8. Mat. 13. 15. Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 10. 4.
[l] Amos 5. 13. Mat. 10. 16, 17. Eph. 5. 15, 17. Amos 5. 13. ch. 8. 59.
[m] Ch. 11. 56.

sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? 12. [n] And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. 13. [o] Howbeit, no man spake openly of him, for fear of the Jews.

n Ch. 9. 16. & 10. 19. & 6. 14. ver. 40. Luke 7. 16. Mat. 16. 14. & 21. 46. & 10. 25. Ps. 22. 6. & 69. 20.

o Ch. 9. 22. & 12. 42, 43. & 19. 38. & 3. 2. Prov. 29. 25.

Verses 1—13. As the inveterate malignity of the chief priests and Pharisees led them to determine the death of Jesus, by popular fury or by form of law, to avoid their devices he continued in Galilee. They who had refused the light of truth, have it justly withdrawn from them; and where our enemies rage, and our safety is in danger, it is prudent to depart, and carry that gospel of God to others, which sinners against their own souls reject and persecute. We have here,

1. The conversation which passed in Galilee between Jesus and some of his relations. The feast of tabernacles being at hand, when a great concourse of people would be assembled in Jerusalem;

(1.) They urge him to make his public appearance there, and not stay in that obscure part of the country, but go up to the metropolis and *show himself*, and his wondrous works, if really they would bear the test of examination: since this could not fail of getting him disciples among the great men at Jerusalem, and of confirming those he had already made, who would be assembled there on this solemnity. And they suggest this would be the way most effectually to advance his own reputation and honour, which they sinfully imagined he, like the men of the world, designed. *For neither did his brethren believe in him.* As he did not answer their expectations in erecting a temporal kingdom, they began to suspect he was not *the Messiah*, which they at first hoped; and therefore wanted him to declare himself, and produce his credentials, or go up to Jerusalem, where his pretensions, if false, might be detected. *Note*, (1.) Many appear at public ordinances to *show themselves*, not to ascribe glory to God, but to secure reputation to themselves. (2.) They who want a temporal kingdom evidently prove that they are faithless followers of Christ.

(2.) Christ mildly replies to their perverse suggestions, *My time is not yet come* for going up to the feast, *but your time is always ready*, you may appear there at any time without any danger; they seek not your lives as they do mine. *The world cannot hate you*, because your spirit, temper, and conduct, are but too conformed thereunto; *but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil*, which cannot but exasperate those who determine not to part with their beloved sins. *Go ye*, therefore, *up unto the feast* without delay: *I go not up yet unto this feast, for my time is not yet full come. Note*, (1.) Christ hath fixed the time for all his purposes, and we may be assured that is the best time, and therefore are bound cheerfully and confidently to wait his leisure. (2.) Sinners hate the light of truth, and cannot but be exasperated with those reproofs, to which they obstinately refuse to submit. (3.) Whatever pretences men make for their enmity against the gospel and preachers of it, the true cause is this, they cannot endure the testimony borne against their evil deeds. (4.) They who go to ordinances with a hypocritical spirit may never expect the comfort of Christ's presence in them.

2. The journey of Jesus to Jerusalem. He staid a while longer in Galilee, till his brethren were gone up to the feast; and then, when his time was come, he went himself, *not openly, but as it were in secret*, that he might give no offence to the ruling powers, who, if he came with a multitude, might interpret it into a seditious design. *Note*, Though the cause of Christ cannot be carried on without notice, it will be prudent to do it with as little *noise* as possible. We need not provoke needless opposition: it will come fast enough upon us, if we are faithful.

3. The expectation which was raised of him. *The Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?* Some wished to see him out of curiosity; some out of malice, hoping to destroy him; and some out of better motives, expecting to receive some gracious instructions from him. *And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him*, their sentiments being greatly divided: *some said he is a good man*, convinced by his miracles, struck with his exemplary life, and influenced by his holy doctrine; *others*, hardened in infidelity, though they had not one single charge of evil to produce against him, *said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people*, as if there were some latent imposture under these specious appearances. *Howbeit, no man spoke openly of him, for fear of the Jews.* Whatever good opinion any formed of him, they were very cautious how they spoke their sentiments, it being highly dangerous to appear among his approvers, when those who were in power were known to be the avowed enemies and bitter persecutors of him and his disciples. *Note*, (1.) Christ's ministers, like himself, must expect to pass *through evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true.* (2.) They who are obstinate in rejecting the truth, will find something to quarrel with in the most spotless characters, and suppose those who act with greatest simplicity for God's glory, are carrying on some design of their own.

14. ¶ Now, about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up [p] into the temple, and taught. 15. And the Jews marvelled, saying, [q] How knoweth this man † letters, having never learned? 16. Jesus answered them, and said, [r] My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17. [s] If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself. 18. [t] He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. 19. [u] Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? [x] Why go ye about to kill me? 20. The people answered and said, [y] Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? 21. Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. 22. [z] Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. 23. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, ‡ that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man [a] every whit whole on the sabbath day? 24. [b] Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. 25. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? 26. But, [c] lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing

p Mal. 3. 1. Hag. 2. 7, 8. ch. 5. 14. & 8. 2. & 18. 20.

q Mat. 13. 54. Mark 6. 8. Luke 4. 16—22.

† Or, *whence cometh this man's learning?*

r Ch. 8. 28. & 12. 49. & 14. 10, 24. Exod. 23. 21.

s Or, *whosoever is minded to do his will.* Mat. 6. 22. & 13. 11. & 11. 25. Hos. 6. 2, 3. ch. 8. 31, 32, 47. & 10. 4, 27. & 18. 37.

t Ch. 5. 41. 1 Thes. 2. 6. Gal. 1. 10, 16. 1 Pet. 4. 11.

u Exod. 24. 3. ch. 1. 17. Acts 7. 38, 53. Mat. 15. 6.

x Ch. 5. 16, 18. & 10. 32, 36, 39. & 11. 53. Mat. 12. 14. ver. 25.

y Ch. 8. 48, 52. & 10. 20. Acts 26. 24. Mat. 10. 25. & 12. 24.

z Lev. 12 3. Gen. 17. 10—14. Gal. 3. 17.

‡ Or, *without breaking the law of Moses.*

a In soul and body, Ch. 5. 8, 9.

b Deut. 1. 16, 17. & 16. 19. Prov. 24. 23. ch. 8. 15. Jam. 2. 1. Mat. 7. 2. Gal. 2. 6.

c Ps. 40. 9, 10. & 22. 22. Prov. 28. 1. Is. 50. 7, 8. Eph. 6. 20. Acts 4. 13.

unto him. [d] Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? 27. Howbeit, [e] we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, [f] no man knoweth whence he is. 28. Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, [g] Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: [h] and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. 29. But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath sent me. 30. [i] Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, [k] because his hour was not yet come. 31. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done? 32. ¶ The Pharisees heard [l] that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. 33. Then said Jesus * unto them, [m] Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me. 34. [n] Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come. 35. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the [o] dispersed among the † Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? 36. [p] What *manner of* saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me?* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

d Ver. 48. Luke 7. 30. ch. 9. 22. & 11. 47—53. & 12. 42.

e Ch. 6. 42. Mat. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3. Luke 4. 22. ver. 15.

f False. Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. & 30. 21. Mic. 5. 2. ver. 42.

g Mat. 2. 1, 23. Luke 1. 26. & 2. 4, 39, 51. & 4. 16, 22. & 19. 37

h Ch. 8. 14. & 1. 18. & 3. 2. & 5. 32, 43. & 8. 16, 18, 26, 42, 54, 55. & 10. 15, 36. & 12. 49. & 14. 10, 31. & 16. 3, 28. Mat. 11. 27.

i Mark 11. 18. Luke 19. 47. & 20. 19. ver. 19. ch. 10. 39.

k Ch. 8. 20. & 9. 4, 5. Luke 13. 32, 33.

l Ver. 7—31. ch. 11. 46—53, 57. & 12. 19. ver. 19.

* Or, *Jesus therefore said.*

m Ch. 13. 33. & 16. 16. Mark 16. 19. Heb. 1. 3.

n Ch. 13. 33. & 8. 21, 24. Mat. 22. 39. Luke 13. 35. Prov. 1. 24—28. Hos. 5. 6.

o Is. 11. 12. & 27. 12, 13. Jam. 1. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 1. Acts 22. 21.

† Or *Greeks.*

p Is. 27. 11. & 29. 10. & 44. 18. & 6. 9, 10. Hos. 4. 1, 6. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

Verses 14—36. When Christ was come up to Jerusalem, *about the midst of the feast,* we find him, where indeed we might expect to meet him, in the temple, teaching the people. He would show, he was neither ashamed of the doctrine he preached, nor afraid of the enemies who threatened him. We are told,

1. The admiration which the hearers expressed at his preaching, saying, *How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?* Though he had been brought up in none of their schools, he appeared so wise in the Scriptures, opened them with such evidence, and reasoned upon them with such force of argument, as could not but astonish them; and probably led some to conclude, that such extraordinary gifts were not attained without diabolical assistance.

2. The reply of Jesus. *My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* As Mediator, he received his mission, and ability to discharge his office, from his Father; and needed no human assistance, nor advanced ought of his own invention. What he taught was divine in its original, and designed ultimately to advance the glory of God, from whom it came. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself:* he that, laying aside his prejudices, as an humble inquirer, comes, desiring to be taught, shall find such evidence in the gospel, as to demonstrate the divine authority of its author, and shall experience such powerful and blessed effects produced thereby, as shall most indubitably prove it to be the word (not of man, but) of God. *He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory;* an impostor would seek to advance his own reputation and interest, as the false teachers did: *but he that seeketh his glory that sent him,* as Christ did, and all his faithful ministers will do, *the same is true,* he evidences hereby the simplicity of his heart: *and no unrighteousness is in him,* no fraud nor falsehood in his preaching or designs. They pretended indeed great zeal for the law of Moses, and founded the suggestions of his being an impostor on the supposition that he violated the sabbath, and taught men to disregard the Mosaical institutions; when, in fact, they themselves were living in the grossest violation of the plainest precepts of it: *Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?* purposing to murder him, because of the miracle he had wrought on the impotent man on the sabbath-day. *Note,* (1.) They who speak *of themselves,* without a divine call, and *for themselves,* with a view to their own honour and advantage, evidently show the falsehood of their religious pretensions: these God hath never sent. (2.) Many pretend a great zeal for the interests of morality, and a jealousy lest the grace of the gospel should entrench upon them, who live themselves in the open violation of the divine law.

3. The people who were really ignorant of the designs of the enemies of Jesus, or at least affected to be so, express their surprise at the accusation he brought against them. *They answered and said, Thou hast a devil;* thou talkest as one possessed: *Who goeth about to kill thee?* They would insinuate that his fears were groundless, the charge unjust, and himself a liar. Let us not wonder if we suffer the most vile aspersions, are counted madmen, liars, devils. The Son of God was thus reproached before us.

4. Overlooking their perverseness and abuse, our Lord proceeds to vindicate that action which they had so much condemned, and for which they went about to kill him. *I have done one work,* in healing the impotent man: *and ye all marvel,* because it was done on the sabbath-day: as if this was inconsistent with the character he professed as a teacher sent from God. And yet they themselves commonly practised what might much more justly be regarded as a breach of the sabbath, than his healing a cripple by a word speaking. *Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision,* as an ordinance to be observed among you, (*not because it is of Moses,* instituted by him; *but of the fathers,* being commanded of God to Abraham long before the days of Moses,) *and ye on the sabbath circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken,* which enjoins it to be performed on the eighth day, whenever that happened, *are ye angry with me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day?* when they allowed themselves to circumcise and dress a wound on that day, how could they with any show of reason, censure him, who, without the least trouble, merely by a word, had cured an object so miserable? Partial judges were they indeed, and justly therefore doth he rebuke them, *judge not according to the appearance,* with respect of persons, condemning that in him which they allowed in their own countrymen; or because of the meanness of his outward circumstances, paying a higher respect to the decisions of their own more specious and pompous rabbins than to his: *but judge righteous judgment,* weighing the real merits of the case, without prejudice, and then they would be convinced, that their own practice would be a full vindication of his conduct. *Note,* (1.) Unreasonable and wicked men are they indeed, who censure and condemn others for what they allow, nay, approve in themselves. (2.) Such is the force of prejudice, that it often blinds the eyes against the most glaring conviction. (3.) All is not gold which glitters: we must look farther than appearances, if we would learn the true characters of men. (4.) Christ's words and works demand nothing but an impartial examination to prove their excellence.

5. Some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to whom the designs

of the chief priests and rulers, were no secret, were exceedingly astonished at the boldness of Christ's discourse, and wondered they did not immediately attempt to seize him, suggesting as if their withholding their hands from him gave suspicion that they had changed their sentiments concerning him, and began themselves to think him the Messiah. As for themselves, they could entertain no such imagination, because they knew *whence he was: but, when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is:* the Scripture having spoken of him as like Melchizedek, whose descent is unknown, as one whose goings forth have been from everlasting, and whose generation none can declare. Their reasoning however was fallacious; for, though these Scriptures were true with regard to his divine nature and designation to his mediatorial office, of whom he should spring, and where he should be born in his human nature, had been expressly determined. *Note,* (1.) God hath restraints upon the hands and hearts of wicked men, and marvellously withholds them from the evil which they design and have an opportunity to perform. (2.) They who mistake the Scriptures err most dangerously, as they support themselves in their own imagination with the conceit of divine authority.

6. Christ replies to these cavils. It was true they knew his earthly descent; their grand mistake lay in not looking higher, to his original from above, and his mission from God. *I am not come of myself,* assuming this honour; *but he that sent me is true* to all his promises made of and to the Messiah; *whom ye know not;* for though they believed in one eternal Jehovah, they did not truly know the *Scripture God,* as subsisting in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; *but I know him,* his perfections and purposes; *for I am from him,* by essential emanation, as the beams from the sun; *and he hath sent me,* in the character of Mediator, to accomplish the salvation of his people.

7. Very different were the effects produced upon the hearers. Some were highly incensed by his declarations, and would have instantly seized him; but they were under a divine restraint; the determinate hour fixed in the divine counsels not being yet come. Others, especially of the common people, struck with what they heard and saw, could not withhold from expressing their persuasion that this must be the Christ; for it could not be conceived, whenever he came, that he should do greater miracles than Jesus wrought. *Note,* (1.) Though the enmity of wicked men be ever so great against us, it is a comfortable consideration that they can do nothing without a divine permission; and all their power or policy must prove abortive to oppress the faithful ministers of Christ, who bear testimony to his truth, till the hour appointed in God's eternal counsels come. (2.) They who receive the gospel of Jesus are usually such as man despiseth, as being of the poor and unlearned multitude. What therefore the world accounts their reproach, that they are chiefly followed by such, the ministers of the gospel should esteem their honour.

8. The Pharisees and rulers, jealous lest his credit and influence with the people should increase, could not hear these murmurs without indignation, and therefore immediately despatched officers to arrest him, and to bring him before the Sanhedrim. *Note,* Wicked instruments will not be wanting where power is in the hands of persecutors.

9. Christ, who knew what was plotting against him, addressed the officers and people, saying, *Yet a little while I am with you,* and till that time was expired all their malicious attempts were impotent; *and then I go unto him that sent me,* to my Father from whom I came. *Ye shall seek me;* when your calamity comes, you will wish for the Messiah; *and shall not find me,* nor obtain the least relief or respite, looking for help from heaven in vain: *and where I am, thither ye cannot come,* banished for ever from that glory where *I am.* Though Christ's human nature was on earth, in his divine nature he was still enthroned in the light which no man can approach unto. *Note,* (1.) It is too late to cry for mercy when it is the time of judgment. They who reject the Saviour upon earth, and die faithless and impenitent, must never hope to be with him where he is, in heaven. (2.) A little while will deliver the faithful out of all their troubles. Let us therefore patiently endure. The time is short.

Lastly, Mistaking his meaning, they bewildered themselves in idle and vain reasonings whither he would go, that they should not find him, whether among the dispersed Jews, or among the Gentiles: as if he could find no disciples among those who were judges of his pretensions; or as defying him to go where they could not follow him.

37. [q] In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, [r] If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38. [s] He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39. (For [t] this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: [u] for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given,* because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) 40. ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, [x] Of a truth this is the prophet. 41. Others said, [y] This is the Christ. But some said, [z] Shall Christ come out of Galilee? 42. [a] Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? 43. [b] So there was a division among the people because of him. 44. And some of them would have taken him: but [c] no man laid hands on him.

q Lev. 22. 36. Num. 29. 35—38.
r Is. 55. 1. & 45. 22. Mat. 11. 28. Rev. 3. 20. & 22. 17. ch. 4. 10.
s Deut. 18. 15. Prov. 18. 4. & 10. 11. Is. 12. 3. & 35. 6. & 44. 3. & 58. 11. Joel 2. 28. Zech. 14. 8.
t Is. 44. 3. Joel 2. 28. ch. 4. 14. Luke 24. 49. Acts 1. 4, 5, 8. & 19. 2. Eph. 1. 13. Prov. 1. 23.
u Ch. 16. 7. Zech. 13. 1. Acts 2. 3, 17, 33. & 4. 31. & 8. 17. & 10. 44. Eph. 4. 8—10. ch. 12. 16. Ps. 68. 18.
x Deut. 18. 15—18. Mat. 21. 16. Luke 7. 6. & 24. 19. ch. 1. 21. & xix. & 6. 14. ver. 31. Luke 24. 19.
y Ch. 1. 41, 45, 49. & 4. 29, 42. & 6. 69.
z Ch. 1. 46. ver. 52.
a Ps. 132. 11. Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. Ezek. 34. 23. Mic. 5. 2. Mat. 2. 1, 5. Luke 2. 4.
b Ch. 9. 16. & 10. 19. ver. 12, 25, 31, 40, 41. Acts 23. 7.
c Ver. 30, 46. ch. 8. 20.

Verses 37—44. The officers returned without executing their commission, and Jesus went on in the public exercise of his ministry. We have,

I. His discourse in the last day of the feast, when a vast concourse attended at the temple, and they used with great solemnity to draw water from the pool of Siloam, and pour it out with great rejoicings. On which he took occasion to speak of himself as the living water. *He cried, if any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink:* Earnest to invite poor sinners to partake of his rich grace, he lifted up his voice aloud, and urged them to come to him and be happy. The invitation is general, to *any man that thirsts:* and none can truly come to Christ but they who feel the want of him, and therefore hunger and thirst after him and his righteousness; to such Christ is a fountain of living waters, refreshing and satisfying the longing desires of the soul. *He that believeth on me,* as the only Saviour, and reposes his entire confidence on my all-sufficiency to supply his every want, *as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow fountains of living water;* such an abundance of spiritual gifts, graces, and consolations shall be bestowed upon him, that, like a perpetual and copious fountain, they shall flow forth in streams of righteousness, and diffuse blessings on every side, Isa. xli. 18. xliii. 20. xliv. 3. lviii. 11. Joel ii. 28.

2. The evangelist explains the meaning of Christ's words. *This spoke he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive,* in a more abundant and glorious manner than had been ever vouchsafed before: *for the Holy Ghost was not yet given,* in that most plentiful effusion of his divine influences which was

promised, Joel ii. 28. *because that Jesus was not yet glorified:* and it was needful he should first pass through his state of humiliation, and enter into his glory: when, on the day of Pentecost, the most astonishing outpouring of the Spirit should attest the Saviour's exaltation, and not only the miraculous powers communicated by him should evidence the divine authority under which the apostles acted, but the strongest demonstrations of his effectual power should accompany their preaching, and under the gospel dispensation the souls of those who were converted should be filled with the largest measures of light, holiness, and joy.

3. The people were divided greatly in their sentiments concerning Christ. Many, struck with his divine teaching, could not help expressing their persuasion of his mission from God, as that *prophet* promised, Deut. xviii. 15. which they understood as the forerunner of the Messiah. Others went farther, thinking him not the harbinger, but the King Messiah himself. But others, prejudiced by their national pride, and false notions of the Messiah, objected that he came out of Galilee, whereas Christ was to descend from the lineage of David, and to come from Bethlehem, the residence of David's ancestors, as he did, though they knew it not. Thus, whilst the sentiments of the people were divided, the officers and his enemies, though they would fain have arrested him, were restrained by a divine power and offered him no violence. *Note,* (1.) The gospel of Christ often creates great divisions; for, though it breathes nothing but peace, they who refuse to receive the truth cannot but oppose it. (2.) Many flatter themselves they have right on their side, for want of examining into facts and evidences, when their conclusions would often be found utterly unsupported.

45. ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? 46. The officers answered, [d] Never man spake like this man. 47. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? 48. [e] Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? 49. But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. 50. Nicodemus saith unto them, ([f] he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) 51. [g] Doth our law judge *any* man before it hear him, and know what he doeth? 52. They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look, [h] for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. 53. [i] And every man went unto his own house.

d Mat. 7. 28, 29. Luke 4. 22. ver. 26.
e Ver. 26. ch. 12. 42. & 9. 22. 1 Cor. 1. 20—24, 26, 27. & 2. 8. Acts 6. 7. Mat. 11. 25.
f Ch. 3. 2. & 19. 39.
g Exod. 23. 2—8. Deut. 17. 8. & 1. 17. & 19. 15 2 Chr. 19. 6, 7. 1 Kin. 3. 16—28.
h Is. 9. 1, 2. Mat. 4. 15. ch. 1. 46. ver. 41. 2 Kin. 14. 25. 1 Kin. 17. 1.
i Job 5. 12, 13. Ps. 33. 10. & 76. 5. & 35. 4. & 40. 14. & 59. 11, 12. & 56. 9.

Verses 45—53. Whilst the chief priests and Pharisees, as in duty bound, should have been in the temple, leading the devotions of the people, we find them maliciously consulting how to destroy the Lord of that sacred place, for which they professed so high a veneration.

1. The officers returned without the prisoner, and are sharply questioned why they have not executed their orders. They honestly acknowledge they could not; they were so overawed with the majesty of Jesus, with the power and evidence of his discourse, that their hearts failed them. *Never man spake like this man. Note,* There is a power accompanying the preaching of the gospel, which hath often disarmed the rage of bitterest enemies, and made those bow down before the word of truth who came to disturb the preacher.

2. The Pharisees with indignation, upbraided them with their weakness: *Are ye also deceived?* Can men of your sense and rank be imposed upon by such a delusion? *Have any of the rulers, or the Pharisees believed on him?* Men of the greatest abilities, fashion, and reputation; the wisest and most devout: *but this people who know not the law,* the vulgar herd, *are cursed;* abandoned of God to every impostor, and through their ignorance of the law, unable to judge of his pretensions. *Note,* (1.) Few of the rulers and Pharisees, the great men, and pious devotees, who valued themselves on their own goodness, are found among the disciples of Jesus in any age. (2.) Many are prejudiced against the gospel, because they see the profession of it is unfashionable, and not the way to the world's preferment. (3.) It is common with this world's wise men to treat the poor disciples of Jesus as an ignorant, contemptible, deluded set of creatures; yet to the babes hath God revealed, what they, who boast of their superior wisdom, never knew. (4.) The curse causeless will not fall, but upon the head of him that utters it.

3. Nicodemus, who had visited Jesus by night, chap. iii. 2. and was secretly a disciple, could not hear those infamous and unjust reflections, unmoved; and therefore assuming courage, he remonstrated against their unreasonable and illegal manner of proceeding. They condemned unheard, contrary to all rules of justice and equity; whereas, at least, they should have given Christ an impartial hearing, and examined thoroughly into facts, before they decided on the merits of the case. Nothing could be more sensible and just than the maxim, but it doth not appear that any seconded or supported the motion. *Note,* (1.) Christ hath some that dare own his cause, even among the great and noble. (2.) It is highly wicked and unjust to condemn any man till he hath had a fair hearing, and liberty to speak in his own defence.

4. Instead of refuting the force of his argument they fell to reviling: *Art thou also of Galilee?* A disciple of this despicable Galilean? *Search, and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.* They concluded Jesus had been born in Galilee, because he had made it his chief abode; and as false was their assertion concerning the Scriptures; for Jonah was of Galilee, and probably Nahum and Elijah also. *Note,* (1.) It is a sure sign of a bad cause, when men have recourse to abuse in the stead of argument. (2.) Many confidently appeal to the Scriptures, as if it was the same thing to assert and prove: but we must examine for ourselves, and not take the Scriptures upon trust.

5. Hereupon the council separated, and each retired to his own house, unable to answer Nicodemus, and ashamed to proceed farther, where the injustice was so glaring. *Note,* One faithful man, who dares make a stand for Christ, will often silence and confound a whole company of gainsayers.

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 30.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's evading the snare which the Jews laid for him, in bringing to him a woman taken in adultery,* ver. 1—11. 2. *Divers discourses or conferences of his with the Jews that cavilled at him, and sought occasion against him, and made every thing he said a matter of controversy.* (1.) *Concerning his being* the light of the world, ver. 12—20. (2.) *Concerning the ruin of the unbelieving Jews,* ver. 21—30. (3.) *Concerning liberty and bondage,* ver. 31—37. (4.) *Concerning his Father and their Father,* ver. 38—47. (5.) *Here is his discourse in answer to their blasphemous reproaches,* ver. 48—50. (6.) *Concerning the immortality of believers,* ver. 51—59. *And in all this he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself.*

1. JESUS [a] went unto the mount of Olives. 2. And [b] early in the morning

a Luke 21. 37. & 19. 37. Mark 13. 3. & 11. 1. ch. 11. 1, 18.
Eccl. 9. 10. Ps. 40. 8. ch. 4. 34. Prov. 8 17.

he came again into the temple, and [c] all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. 3. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4. They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5. [d] Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? 6. This they said, [e] tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But [f] Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground,* *as though he heard them not.* 7. So, when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, [g] He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9. [h] And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?† 11. She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, [i] Neither do I condemn thee:‡ go, and sin no more.

c Luke 21. 38. Ps. 22. 22. & 40. 9, 10. Deut. 18. 15—18. Is. 40. 11. Mic. 4. 4.

d Lev. 20. 10. Deut. 22. 21, 22. Ezek. 16. 38, 40.

e Mat. 16. 1. & 19. 3. & 22. 15, 18. Luke 11. 53, 54. Ps. 95. 9.

f Amos 5. 13. Mat. 10. 16, 17. Joh 5. 12, 13. Eph. 5. 15.

* Rather, *was writing with his finger upon the ground.*

g Deut. 17. 7. Rom. 2. 1, 3, 22, 23.

h Joh 5. 13. Ps. 9. 16. Rom. 2. 15.

† Or, *Hath nobody passed sentence on thee?*

i Luke 9. 56. ch. 3. 17.

‡ Or, *Neither do I pass sentence on thee.*

Verses 1—11. According to the usual custom, our Lord at evening went unto the mount of Olives: perhaps to the house of his friend Lazarus; or to retire for communion with God; or to avoid the danger of some popular tumult, which his implacable enemies might attempt to raise against him in the night. In the morning early he returned to the temple, and sat down, as one having authority to preach the gospel to the multitudes which crowded around him. *Note*, Early rising to wait upon God will be a gracious presage of a happy day.

Whilst Christ was engaged in this blessed employment we are told the interruption he met with from his envenomed enemies.

1. They proposed a case to him, the decision of which they flattered themselves would bring him into disgrace with the people, to embroil him with the government. They bring a woman *taken in adultery, in the very act;* for, though such deeds of darkness usually are concealed with deepest cunning, God is sometimes pleased strangely to bring to light such deadly works, and to expose those to the infamy of the world, who are emboldened to transgress in the foolish confidence that *no eye seeth me.* The proof was evident, the law express: but, as he assumed authority to make alterations therein, they desire to know what was his judgment on the case, hoping to get some matter of accusation against him. On the one hand, if he should command the law to be put in force, they would accuse him to the Roman government as pronouncing sentence of death, and assuming judicial authority; and to the people, as acting inconsistent with himself, who invited publicans and sinners to come to him, and willingly conversed and ate and drank with them. On the other, if he should acquit her, or refuse to confirm the sentence the law had pronounced, they would brand him as an enemy to the divine institutions, a violator of the law, and a patron of the most scandalous enormities.

2. Christ, who knew their wickedness, seemed to pay no regard to the case they proposed; stooping down and writing on the ground as though he heard them not. But, as they now thought he was in a dilemma from which he could not disentangle himself, they urged him vehemently to answer their question. When raising himself with majesty and wisdom which confounded his enemies, he bids *him that was without sin, cast the first stone at her.* Since the hands of the witnesses should be first upon the criminals, Deut. xvii. 7. it became them, who appeared so zealous in punishing the sins of others, to see that they were themselves free from the like or more infamous crimes: else it would be strangely absurd in them to execute the sentence, however just. Thus he testified his approbation of the law, without encouraging their prosecution: and effectually saved his own reputation, without any express condemnation of the poor criminal. *Note*, (1.) When we have to deal with crafty foes, a cautious answer is but needful prudence. (2.) Before we condemn others, we should first take care that we are not chargeable with the same or greater evils than we censure in them.

3. Whilst he stooped again to the ground, to give them a moment's time to pause, reflect, and retire; they, convicted by their consciences, slunk away, fearing lest their own sins should be brought to light to their confusion. The eldest led the way, and the younger followed: so that, all these malignant accusers being fled, the woman was left alone with Jesus, and those who before had been attending his ministry. *Note*, (1.) Many are more afraid of being *ashamed* for their sins than of being *damned.* (2.) They, who, under convictions, fly from Christ, to get rid of them, instead of coming to him with humble confession to obtain pardon, wilfully destroy themselves.

4. The trembling criminal still stood at his bar, when, lifting up himself, the merciful judge questions her, *Where are those thine accusers? hath none condemned thee?* nor offered to cast a stone at thee? *She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.* As he came not on earth to be a temporal judge, he left the sword of magistracy to the powers that ruled; and dismissed her, with a solemn warning to beware of returning again unto wickedness, lest a more dreadful punishment than the civil magistrate could inflict should be her portion in the last great day. *Note*, (1.) Jesus is now a merciful Saviour: he will shortly be an inexorable Judge. Wise and happy are they who improve the moment of opportunity, and seek to him for mercy whilst mercy may be found. (2.) The greatest crimes, even adultery, may be forgiven to those who come by faith to a dying Redeemer, and wash their polluted souls in the fountain of his blood. (3.) Those whom Jesus pardons he saves not *in* their sins, but *from* them: they go to lead a new life, whose sentence of death he reverses. There is an inseparable union between justifying and sanctifying grace.

12. ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, [k] I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. 13. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. 14. Jesus answered and said unto them, [l] Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my record is true: [m] for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence

k Ch. 1. 4, 5, 9. & 9. 5. & 12. 35, 46. Is. 49. 6. & 42. 6, 7. Luke 2. 32.

l Ch. 5. 31. & 14. 6. Rev. 1. 5. & 3. 14.

m Ch. 7. 28, 29. & 1. 18. & 3. 2. & 5. 32, 43. & 8 18, 19, 26, 42, 54, 55. & 10. 15, 36. & 12. 49. & 14. 10, 31. & 16. 3, 28.

I come, and whither I go. 15. [n] Ye judge after the flesh: [o] I judge no man. 16. [p] And yet, if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. 17. [q] It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18. [r] I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. 19. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, [s] Ye neither know me, nor my Father: [t] if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. 20. These words spake Jesus [u] in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and [x] no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

n 1 Sam. 16. 7. ch. 7. 24.
o Ch. 3. 17. & 12. 47. & 5. 45. Luke 9. 56. & 12. 14.
p Ch. 2. 24, 25. & 5. 22, 32, 42, 43. ver. 29. ch. 16. 32.
q Deut. 17. 6. & 19. 15. Mat. 18. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 1. Heb. 10. 28.
r Rev. 1. 5. & 3. 14. ch. 5. 36, 37. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Heb. 2. 4.
s Hos. 4. 1, 6. Is. 27. 11. ch. 16. 3. & 5. 18. Is. 29. 10. & 44. 18.
t Ch. 1. 18. & 5. 17. & 10. 30. & 14. 6, 9, 10. & 17. 3. Heb. 1. 3. Col. 1. 15. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Zech. 13. 7. Phil. 2. 6.
u Mark 12. 41. 1 Chr. 9. 26.
x Ch. 7. 30. Luke 20. 43, 47. & 20. 19. & 22. 53.

Verses 12—20. Though the Pharisaical accusers of this adulteress had been confounded, some of their brethren remained to cavil at the gracious words which proceeded out of the Saviour's lips.

1. Christ, re-assuming his discourse to the people, took occasion to speak of himself under the glorious character of the Sun of Righteousness, *saying, I am the light of the world.* What the sun is to the world, that Christ must be to the soul. Without him, universal spiritual darkness spreads over us its dreadful, baleful influence. But *he that followeth me,* receives my gospel, and treads in my steps, *shall not walk in darkness;* the eyes of his mind shall be enlightened to know the truth, and his soul enabled for, and directed in, the practice of it; so that the darkness of error and sin shall not deceive and mislead him, *but* he *shall have the light of life,* the saving light of gospel grace here, and the eternal life of glory hereafter. Blessed and happy are they who walk in this light of the Lord.

2. He vindicates himself from the objections which the Pharisees made, who said, *Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true;* as if, in his own cause these assertions were the mere boasts of self-commendation: overlooking the testimony which John bore to his character, and the evidence which all the miracles Christ did brought along with them. He *answered, and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true.* If, in ordinary cases, a man's own testimony concerning himself may be well called in question, yet in the case of messengers sent from God, the matter is otherwise. The message he brought was itself a proof of his mission, considering the circumstances in which he appeared. *For I know whence I came, and whither I go.* He knew his own divine mission, and that, as he came from the Father, he must shortly return to him again; of which he had given them striking evidence in the miracles he had wrought. *But ye cannot tell whence I come, nor whither I go,* wilfully blind to the truths he brought, and rejecting the credentials which he produced. *Ye judge after the flesh,* and from the meanness of his outward appearance, concluded it was impossible that this should be he who should deliver Israel: and they who judge thus after the flesh in spiritual matters, are sure to be in the wrong. *I judge no man,* not at all intermeddling in acts of judicial power, nor assuming any authority; nor was it his office at present to condemn any, but to seek and save that which was lost. *And yet, if I judge, my judgment is true,* as being the searcher of all hearts, and beholding all things naked and open before him; *for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me;* such an inseparable union subsisting between us, as that my judgment is according to his, and all I speak is in express conformity with his will, who gave me my mission. *It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men,* credible witnesses, *is true,* and sufficient for the proof of any matter of the greatest consequence. *I am one that bear witness of myself,* as the Messiah, which my doctrine and works declare me to be; *and the Father that sent me beareth witness with me,* not only in all the prophecies of old, but in repeated voices heard from heaven. Here therefore are two witnesses of divine authority to prove the truth.

3. The Pharisees, with contempt of his pretensions, replied, *Where is thy Father?* what, Joseph the carpenter? is he the witness? *Jesus answered, Ye neither know me nor my Father:* are not acquainted with my divine original: *if ye had known me,* as the Son of God, *ye should have known my Father also,* as we are one in nature, counsel, and operation: the knowledge of me includes the knowledge of my Father, as I am the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Thus freely and fully doth Jesus assert his eternal power, Godhead, and unity with the Father. *These words spoke Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.* And, till God's decreed and appointed moment comes, the malice of persecutors and the rage of devils are alike impotent and vain.

21. Then said Jesus again unto them, [y] I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall [z] die in your sins: [a] whither I go, ye cannot come. 22. Then said the Jews, [b] Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. 23. And he said unto them, [c] Ye are from beneath; [d] I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 24. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye [e] believe not that I am *he,* ye shall die in your sins. 25. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, [f] Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning. 26. [g] I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and [h] I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. 27. [i] They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. 28. Then said Jesus unto them, [k] When ye have lifted up the Son of man, [l] then shall ye know that I am *he,* and *that* [m] I do nothing of myself; but, as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. 29. [n] And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for [o] I do always those things that please him. 30. As he spake these words, [p] many believed on him.

y Luke 19. 12. Mat. 25. 24. ch. 7. 34.
z Job 20. 11. Ezek. 3. 18, 19. Prov. 14. 32. Ps. 9. 17.
a See ch. 7. 34. & 13. 33. Prov. 1. 24—28. Mat. 7. 23. & 25. 41.
b Ps. 22. 6. & 69. 19, 20.
c Ch. 3. 3, 6. Ps. 17. 14. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 7, 8. Rev. 1. 7. Jam. 3. 15. & 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15, 16. Phil. 3. 19.
d Ch. 1. 14, 18. & 3. 16, 35. 1 Cor. 15. 47. Rom. 9. 5. ch. 18. 36.
e Ch. 3. 18, 36. Acts 4. 12. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 29.
f Heb. 13. 8. ch. 5. 17—47. Is. 9. 6, 7.
g Heb. 4. 13. ch. 7. 28.
h Ch. 3. 32. & 15.
i 1 Cor. 2. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Is. 6. 9, 10. & 42. 19.
k Ch. 3. 14. & 12. 32, 33. & 19. 18. 1 Cor. 2. 8.
l Mat. 27. 50—54. Acts ii—vi. Luke 20. 21—27. & 19. 43, 44. Rom. 1. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 4.
m Ch. 5. 19, 30. & 3. 11.
n Ver. 16. ch. 14. 10. & 16. 32. Is. 42. 1, 6. & 49. 2, 8. & 50. 7, 9. Heb. 9. 14.
o Is. 42. 1, 21. Mat. 3. 15, 17. & 17. 5. Mark 14. 36. ch. 4. 34. & 5. 30. & 6. 38. Heb. 10. 5—10. & 2. 10. & 5. 8.
p Ch. 2. 23. & 6. 14. & 7. 31. & 10. 42.

Verses 21—30. Words of terror to awaken their consciences, as well as words of grace to engage their hearts, did the Redeemer employ, if any thing might at last effectually work upon them.

1. He warns them of their approaching ruin, and the cause

of it. *Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way,* to the Father; *and ye shall seek me,* when your calamities overtake you, and shall long for the Messiah to save you from them; *and shall die in your sins,* or *your sin,* under the guilt of all your other iniquities, and especially that capital one of unbelief, and rejection of me and my gospel: *whither I go, ye cannot come:* the gates of eternal life and glory will be for ever barred against you, and no entrance permitted you into those regions of blessedness, where I shall shortly be. *Note,* (1.) Unbelief is the damning evil. It is the sin against our remedy, and necessarily leads men to destruction. (2.) They who refuse to embrace the Saviour in faith and love, and to follow him in holy obedience here, must never expect admission into his eternal kingdom of glory hereafter.

2. The Jews, instead of trembling before the warnings of Jesus, treated them with derision, saying, *Will he kill himself?* to get rid of his enemies, and be out of their reach.

3. In reply to their malicious suggestion, he answers, *Ye are from beneath,* earthly and sensual in your spirit and temper, and therefore cannot understand and follow me; *I am from above,* celestial in my original, and my conversation in heaven: *ye are of this world,* affecting and pursuing its honours, interests, pleasures, and esteem; *I am not of this world,* dead to it in my affections, and looking forward to that blessed world to which I go. *I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins,* as you must infallibly do, if you continue in your present state of impenitence, worldly-mindedness, and unbelief: *for if ye believe not that I am* he, the eternal, unchangeable, Jehovah, or the Messiah, the Light of the world, the Saviour of the miserable, *ye shall die in your sins,* no pardon or redemption being possible for those who reject the grace of the gospel. Jesus alone can deliver the soul from the guilt, power, and punishment of sin; and out of him there is no help or hope of salvation.

4. With a repetition of the like taunt as before, they replied, *Who art thou?* that talkest such great things, and threatenest so highly; *Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning,* the great object of faith since the first promise was given, and the same Messiah which from the beginning of my ministry I have proved myself to be. *I have many things to say and to judge of you,* to upbraid your infidelity, and prove the inexcusableness of your impenitence; these are reserved for an after-reckoning: *but he that sent me is true,* both in fulfilling his promises and his threatenings; *and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him,* both the purposes of his grace to his people, and the inevitable ruin which will attend those who reject his Christ, and which the issue will infallibly prove to be a true testimony. *They understood not that he spoke to them of the Father;* their hearts were hardened in sin, and their minds blinded by prejudice. *Note,* The plainest truths of God, the most solemn warnings of danger, are not apprehended nor understood. The god of this world hath blinded the minds of sinners, and they continue stupid and insensible.

5. Christ refers them to a future day for a full conviction of what at present they will not believe. *When ye have lifted up the Son of man* upon the cross, as the brazen serpent, in consequence of which sufferings his exaltation to glory would follow, *then shall ye know that I am* he, the true Messiah, as the wonders which happened during his hanging upon the cross bespoke him to be; as was proved by his resurrection and ascension to glory; as many of them to their eternal comfort perceived, when by his Spirit their souls were converted, and turned to him whom they had pierced; and as the rest would terribly feel, when shortly he should take vengeance on their nation, cut them off by the Roman sword, and doom them to eternal misery. Then will ye be convinced, saith he, *that I do nothing of myself,* without divine authority; *but as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things,* in exact correspondence with the instructions that, as man and mediator, I have received from him; *and he that sent me, is with me,* Christ being in nature and essence one with the Father, and having in his presence, power, and Spirit, to enable him for, and encourage him in, the great work of redemption. *The Father hath not left me alone,* without the clearest demonstrations of his favour and regard; *for I do always those things that please him;* and therefore he cannot but take the highest complacency in me and my undertaking, which is in such exact conformity to his will, and ultimately tends so highly to advance his glory. *Note,* (1.) All must know, by happy or dreadful experience, that Jesus is the Christ: they who are not convinced of it by his word and Spirit, will prove it in the judgments he will inflict upon them. (2.) However much we may be deserted of the world, God will never leave nor forsake his faithful servants; and we can want neither company nor comfort, if his blessed presence be with us.

6. Great was the effect produced by these words. *As he spoke* them, *many believed on him,* as come with a divine commission from God, and the true Messiah; at least, so far were they convinced, as to make a profession of their faith, though by the sequel it seems that many of them were far from being sound converts. *Note,* Many for a time make a fair profession, whose hearts are not right with God, and who abide not steadfastly in his covenant.

31. ¶ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, [q] If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; 32. [r] And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. 33. ¶ They answered him, [s] We be Abraham's seed, and [t] were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? 34. Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [u] Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. 35. [x] And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: [y] *but* the Son abideth ever. 36. [z] If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. 37. I know that ye are [a] Abraham's seed; [b] but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

p Ch. 2. 24. & 6. 66. Mat. 24. 13. Heb. 3. 14. & 10. 38, 39. Gal. 6. 9.
r Ch. 7. 17. Hos. 6. 3. Mat. 13. 11. Is. 42. 7. & 61. 1. 2 Cor. 3. 17, 18. Rom. 8. 2, 15, & 6. 14, 18, 22. & 7. 4. Tit. 3. 3, 5. Jam. 1. 25. & 2. 12. 1 Cor. 7. 22, 23. ver. 36.
s Mat. 3. 9. ver. 39.
t Exod. i—x. Judg. iii, iv, vi, x. Ezra ix. Neh. v.
u Rom. 6. 16, 20. 2 Pet. 2. 19. Prov. 5. 22. Eph. 2. 2, 3. Tit. 3. 3.
x Gen. 21. 10. Gal. 4. 30. Ezek. 46. 17. Mat. 8. 12. & 21. 41, 43. Rom. 11. 7—11.
y Heb. 3. 6. & 13. 8. Is. 9. 6, 7. Dan. 7. 14. Job 17. 9. Prov 4. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude 1. Col. 3. 4.
z Ver. 32. Is. 49. 24—26. & 45. 17. Rom. 8. 2. Gal. 5. 1. Rev. 5. 9. & 1. 5, 6. & 2. 7, 10, 17, 26. & 3. 5, 12, 21. 2 Cor. 3. 17.
a Mat. 3. 9. Acts 13. 26.
b Ch. 5. 16, 18. & 7. 1, 19, 25. Mat. 13. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Verses 31—37. We have here,

1. Christ's address to those Jews who professed to believe in him. *If ye continue in my word,* faithfully adhere to the gospel and the profession of it, unmoved with any opposition, and cordially prove your obedience to it in all holy conversation and godliness; *then are ye my disciples indeed:* I will own and accept you as such: *and ye shall know the truth,* obtain deeper and clearer discoveries of it; *and the truth shall make you free,* free from guilt, through the knowledge of the Redeemer's blood and righteousness, free from the dominion of sin and Satan, through the powerful operations of the Spirit; free from ignorance and error, through divine teaching; free from the bondage of the law and corruption, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. *Note,* (1.) The proof of the true discipleship is seen in our *abiding* in faith, and adherence to Jesus and his gospel. Many profess to believe for a while, who, in time of temptation, fall away. (2.) Our measure of attainments in knowledge and grace is very imperfect here: we have need to be looking up continually for daily supplies of divine light and love, and

Christ's faithful followers shall find both abundantly dispensed to them from on high. (3.) That is true liberty, when our souls are brought to God's happy service, and delivered from the servitude of sin and Satan.

2. The Jews who heard him felt their pride hurt by the insinuation of their subjection, which Christ intimated, and with indignation replied, *We are Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?* They boast of their descent from that patriarch, as their great honour, and with the strangest effrontery profess to have enjoyed uninterrupted liberty as their birthright and privilege; when it was so notorious, that, under a multitude of enemies they had suffered the most afflictive servitude and captivity, and were now a conquered province of the Roman empire.

3. Waving the discussion of the point relative to their civil liberty, concerning which he spoke not, he lets them know there is a more dreadful servitude than that of the body, even of the immortal soul, under the yoke of Sin and Satan. *Whoso committeth sin, is the servant of sin;* he that makes a practice of sin, and lives habitually under the power of it, is the worst of slaves, whatever his civil liberties may be, however noble his descent, or high his church privileges. *And the servant abideth not in the house always;* but as the son of the bondwoman was cast out of Abraham's family, so would all the impenitent and unbelieving among the Jews be cut off from the church of God; as every unfaithful professor will be, who continues to live in his sins, however high an opinion he may have entertained of himself, or however respectfully others may have thought of him: *but the Son abideth ever;* he who is Abraham's promised seed emphatically, the true Isaac, his is the inheritance; and all who claim under him, as the sons of God by faith, have a sure title to a place among the household of God. *If the Son therefore shall make you free,* the Son of God, the Lord of the house, where Moses himself was but a servant, *ye shall be free indeed;* not with that *imaginary* freedom, of which the Jews boasted, but (ἀντως) that *real* liberty which only Jesus can give to the fallen, corrupt, and guilty soul. He makes his people free, (1.) From the arrests *of the law;* by an obedience unto death he hath satisfied all its demands, and found a ransom for us. (2.) From *corruption;* his Spirit both delivers us from the blindness of error, and from the power of sin. (3.) As free-born sons we are adopted into God's family, enjoy all the privileges to which perfect obedience in our own persons could have entitled us, and have an assured title to the eternal kingdom.

4. He applies this case to them. *I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but,* very unlike that patriarch in your spirit and temper, *ye seek to kill me;* and the reason is, *because my word hath no place in you;* your hearts are steeled against it; you cannot bear the humbling truths I deliver, and your pride, prejudices, and self-righteousness, effectually prevent their influence: and where this is the case with any soul, there the gospel is as water spilled on the ground, utterly unprofitable.

38. [c] I speak that which I have seen with my Father; and ye [d] do that which ye have seen with your father.* 39. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were [e] Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. 40. [f] But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. 41. [g] Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; [h] we have one Father, *even* God. 42. Jesus said unto them, [i] If God were your Father, ye would love me: for [k] I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. 43. [l] Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. 44. [m] Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. [n] He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 45. And [o] because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not. 46. [p] Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? 47. [q] He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

c Ch. 3. 32. & 5. 19, 30. & 14. 10, 24. ver. 26.

d Ver. 37, 40, 44.

* Or, *Ye do what ye have learned from your father.*

e Rom. 2. 28, 29. & 4. 12, 16. & 9. 7. Gal. 3. 7, 29. with Mat. 3. 9.

f Ver. 37. ch. 7. 19. Gal. 4. 16. Ps. 109. 4.

g Ver. 37, 38, 40, 44.

h Is. 63. 16. & 64. 8. Mal. 1. 6. Mic. 3. 11. Jer. 7. 4.

i Ch. 15. 23, 24. 1 John 5. 1. & 4. 19.

k Ch. 1. 14. & 3. 16. & 5. 43. & 7 28, 29. & 16. 27, 28. & 17. 8, 25. Gal. 4. 4.

l Ver. 27. 2 Cor. 2. 3, 4. ch. 7. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 7, 8.

m Ver. 38, 40. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Thes. 2. 14, 15. 1 John 3. 8, 10. Mat. 12. 29. & 13. 30.

n Jude 6. Gen. 3. 1—6. Rom. 5. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 2. 11. & 11. 3, 14. Eph. 2. 2. 1 John 3. 8. 1 Kin. 22. 22.

o Ver. 25. ch. 5. 17—43. Is. 53. 1. Gal. 4. 16.

p Heb. 7. 26. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22.

q Ch. 10. 26, 27. ver. 37, 43, 45. ch. 6. 44, 65.

Verses 38—47. Christ proceeds in his discourse.

1. He points out the cause of the contrariety of sentiments which subsisted between them. *I speak that which I have seen with my Father,* as perfectly knowing his mind and will, and from eternity acquainted with all his counsels and designs; *and ye do that which ye have seen with your father;* your works show whose children you are, whose example you imitate, and under what father's tuition you have been brought up.

2. Fired with resentment, as if he reflected upon their pedigree, they boasted their descent from Abraham, the friend of God, of whom they could surely learn nothing that was evil. Jesus answered them, *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham; but,* very opposite to his faith and obedience is your conduct, *ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard from God;* a truth so needful to be known, that I am the very promised Messiah, the eternal Son of the Father: *this did not Abraham;* his submission to the first notice of God's will was eminent; and such a murderous spirit, as to contrive the death of any man, much less of a messenger sent from heaven, never dwelt in his bosom; therefore it is sufficiently evident, that your relation to him can never be proved by your temper; for *ye do the deeds of your father,* and who that is, let your conduct tell. *Note,* It is often prudent, in conveying unpleasing truths, to state the premises, and let the persons themselves draw the conclusion.

3. With indignation they replied, perceiving he spoke not in a literal but figurative sense, *We be not born of fornication;* are not idolaters, nor their descendants; have never gone a whoring from God: *we have one Father,* whom we worship and adore, *even* Jehovah, the only living and true *God.* But alas! they who flatter themselves they have the true religion, because they make profession of it, whilst their practice is utterly contradictory to sound godliness, deceive their own souls.

4. Christ shows them their fatal mistake. God could not be their Father whilst their ways were so perverse before him; *if God were your Father, you would love me,* and embrace the truth I deliver to you; *for I proceeded forth, and came from God,* as my Father, and one in nature with him: *neither came I of myself, but he sent me,* to accomplish the great designs of his grace, as the Redeemer of his elect children. *Why do ye not understand my speech?* the reason is, *because ye cannot hear my word;* your

hearts are averse to the truth, and prejudiced against me; and how then can God be your Father. *Ye are of your father the devil;* he is the spirit which worketh in you; *and the lusts of your father ye will do;* obstinately bent on following the dictates of pride, malice, and envy, the grand characteristics of this foul fiend. *He was a murderer from the beginning;* seducing man in paradise from his allegiance to God, he thereby exposed the whole human race to death spiritual, temporal, and eternal; and ever since, from the days of righteous Abel, at his instigation have those horrid deeds of bloodshed and murder been committed, under which the earth groans. *And he abode not in the truth;* he lost the purity and rectitude of his own nature, and then by a daring lie tempted man to disbelieve the divine commination respecting the forbidden fruit; *because there is no truth in him;* his kingdom is supported by falsehood and delusion; all the errors and heresies that rend the church, and all the vain hopes that lull sinners to ruin, derive from him their origin. *When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it:* all his temptations from the beginning have been, and are, a tissue of falsehoods; his own devising; the genuine offspring of his apostate spirit; and as he is in himself faithless in his nature, so is he the father of all lies and liars; they are his children; they bear his strong and striking lineaments, and evidence clearly from whom they are descended: they obey his commands, and follow his example. *And because I tell you the truth,* the truth of my gospel, mission, and divine character, *ye believe me not;* such is your miserable infatuation and delusion, that ye are more disposed to believe the devil's lie, than God's truth; so enslaved are you by this wicked spirit. *Which of you convinceth me of sin?* either of immorality in conduct, or unsoundness of doctrine? *And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?* when every circumstance conspires to prove my mission divine, how inexcusable is your obstinacy! *He that is of God,* as you pretend to be, *heareth God's word;* desirous to know, and willing to obey it: *ye therefore hear them not,* and pay no regard to what I declare to you, *because ye are not of God;* are not his children, nor influenced by his Spirit, but under the power and dominion of the god of this world, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. *Note,* (1.) They who have God for their Father, will show it by an unfeigned love to the Lord Jesus Christ: by a solemn attention to his word, and faithful obedience to his will. (2.) They who do the devil's works, are infallibly the devil's children. By their fruits ye shall know them: Pride, envy, malice, enmity against those that are good, lying, rage, &c. these are the features of Satan, and mark his genuine offspring. (3.) Christ's ministers and people, like their Master, must give diligence to keep a conscience void of offence, that their most envenomed enemies may have no evil thing *justly* to say of them. (4.) They who slight and disregard the Redeemer's gospel and those who preach it, despise not men, but God, and therein prove the unsubdued enmity and apostasy of their hearts.

48. ¶ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art [r] a Samaritan, and hast a devil? 49. Jesus answered, [s] I have not a devil; but [t] I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. 50. [u] And I seek not mine own glory: [x] there is one that seeketh and judgeth. 51. Verily, verily, I say unto you, [y] If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. 52. Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. [z] Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53. [a] Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: who makest thou thyself? 54. Jesus answered, [b] If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: [c] it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say that he is your God: 55. [d] Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: [e] but I know him, and keep his saying. 56. Your father Abraham [f] rejoiced to see my day: and he saw* *it*, and was glad. 57. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? 58. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [g] Before Abraham was, I am. 59. ¶ [h] Then took they up stones to cast at him: [i] but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

r Ch. 4. 9. & 7. 20. & 10. 20. Mat. 10. 25. & 12. 24, 31. Ps. 22. 6, 7. & 69. 20.
s Mat. 11. 29. 1 Pet. 2. 23. 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25. Prov. 15. 1.
t Ver. 29. ch. 17. 4. Is. 42. 21. Mat. 3. 15, 17.
u Ch. 7. 18. & 5. 41.
x Ch. 5. 24. & 12. 43. or 5. 22, 23. Phil. 2. 9—11.
y Ch. 3. 15, 16, 36. & 6. 40, 47. & 5. 24. & 11. 26.
z Zech. 1. 5. Heb. 11. 13.
a Ch. 4. 12. with Is. 9. 6. Rom. 9. 5.
b Ver. 50. ch. 5. 30, 31. 2 Cor. 10. 18. Prov. 26. 12, 16.
c Ch. 13. 31, 32. & 16. 14. & 17. 5. & 5. 20—29. Eph. 1. 20—23. Phil. 2. 9—11. Acts 3. 13. with ver. 41.
d Ch. 7. 28. Eph. 5. 18. Is. 6. 9, 10. & 42. 19, 20.
e Mat. 11. 27. & 3. 15, 17. ch. 1. 18. & 7. 29. & 14. 9, 10. & 4. 34. ver. 29. & 17. 4, 6.
f Or, *longed, desired earnestly.* Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 18. & 15. 6. Gal. 3. 6, 8, 16.
* His faith was equivalent to seeing.
g Ps. 2. 7. Prov. 8. 22—30. Mic. 5. 2. Is. 9. 6. ch. 1. 2. & 17. 5, 24. & 10. 30. Exod. 3. 14, 18. Heb. 13. 8.
h Luke 4. 29, 30. ch. 10. 31, 39. Lev. 24. 16.
i Luke 24. 31. Mat. 10. 16, 23. ch. 10. 39, 40. & 11. 54. & 7. 1.

Verses 48—59. The Jews, cut to the heart at this sharp rebuke, were exceedingly exasperated.

1. They began to abuse him with the most virulent language. *Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?* They would represent him as an enemy to their religion and nation: as one in league with Satan, to whose influence they ascribed the miracles Christ performed; or as a lunatic and madman, possessed by this spirit, thus to call the children of Abraham the children of the devil. *Note,* It is no uncommon thing to hear the best of men branded with the most opprobrious names, abused as satanical, or treated with contempt as madmen; but wisdom is justified of all her children.

2. Christ meekly replies to so unjust and malicious an accusation, *I have not a devil;* neither act in concert with him, nor am possessed by him: *but I honour my Father;* far from derogating from his honour, as you would infer from my pretensions, the great end I propose in all my words and works is to advance it; *and I seek not my own glory,* in contradistinction to him; *there is one that seeketh and judgeth,* that will secure me an interest in the hearts of his people, will vindicate my injured character, and avenge the contempt and indignity you cast upon me. But, however slightly and meanly you may think of me, *verily, verily, I say unto you,* as the most assured truth, *If a man keep my saying,* really believes, embraces, and obeys my gospel, *he shall never see death,* the second, the eternal death, the wages of sin. *Note,* (1.) The most unprovoked abuse must be returned with mildness; the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. (2.) When we are conscious our design is the advancement of the divine glory, we need not be concerned about any malignant interpretation put on our conduct. (3.) They are disciples indeed who hear the word of God and *keep* it, embracing the promises as the most invaluable treasure, and obedient to the commands, as the approved rule of duty. (4.) They who thus walk, have nothing to fear from death; the sting of it is taken away; the power of spiritual death is destroyed: and the grave is now become the gate of eternal life and glory.

3. More confirmed in their prejudices, instead of embracing the glorious privilege to which Christ invited them, they said,

Now we know thou hast a devil, and art stark mad to talk at so strange a rate. *Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my sayings he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead?* though so eminently the friend of God; *and the prophets are dead*, who were so highly favoured of him; *whom makest thou thyself?* what insufferable arrogance, to pretend a power of bestowing that immortality upon thy followers, which God himself never vouchsafed to his most eminent saints and servants?

4. Christ answers their cavil, and vindicates what he had asserted. *If I honour myself*, and assume a character which I could not support with the most powerful evidence, *my honour is nothing*, and you might treat it as an empty boast: *but it is my Father that honoureth me*, bearing witness to my divine mission and authority, and expressing his full approbation of me as his Son, *of whom ye say that he is your God;* glorying, as descendants from the patriarchs, in your covenant relation to him. *Yet ye have not known him*, his nature and perfections, his mind and will; *but I know him*, most intimately acquainted with his person and counsel: *and if I should say, I know him not*, and should retract ought that I have advanced concerning the perfect knowledge I have of him from eternity, *I should be a liar like unto you; but I know him, and keep his saying;* always doing the things which please him, and acting in exact conformity with his mind and will. *Your father Abraham rejoiced*, or *was very desirous to see my day*, and longed for my coming in the human nature to redeem the Israel of God; *and he saw it* by faith, though distant, yet surely approaching. He beheld in Isaac born; in the promise made to his seed; in Melchizedek; in the sacrifice of his son, and the ram provided in his stead; and in the visible appearance of the Lord himself, Gen. xviii. 2. in all these he beheld the incarnate Saviour, *and was glad*, exulted in the glorious hope of my appearing in the fulness of time. *Note*, (1.) The affectation of honour, and courting men's admiration, is the sure evidence of not deserving it. (2.) What was Christ's labour must be ours, to advance not our own, but God's glory. (3.) Many profess to know God, who in works deny him, and against whom their very privileges and opportunities of knowing him will rise up to their great condemnation. (4.) The surest evidence of a right knowledge of God is a practical improvement of his sayings, and submitting to his blessed word and will. (5.) The appearing of Christ is the desire and delight of the faithful, as it is the terror of the wicked; and he will come, and will not tarry. The Lord is at hand. (6.) They who by faith now look to Jesus, and wait for him, shall soon see him face to face, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

5. With sovereign contempt do the Jews treat his declaration, perverting his words, as if he had asserted that Abraham saw him in the flesh. *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* or he thee, when he hath been dead above two thousand years before? How ridiculous the pretension! They judged of Christ's age probably by his look: incessant labours perhaps had marred his visage, and brought on, before their time, the wrinkles of age.

6. He plainly asserts to them his eternal self-existence, as an answer to their objection. *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, as the most certain and undoubted truth, *Before Abraham was* born, or had a being, *I am* the same unchangeable Jehovah, who, by this name, made myself known to Moses in the bush, Exod. iii. 14. and therefore must be infinitely superior and prior to Abraham.

7. Enraged beyond all bounds of forbearance at such an assertion, which they regarded as the most impudent blasphemy, the Jews *took up stones to cast at him*, intending to murder him on the spot: *but Jesus hid himself*, by his divine power probably withholding their eyes from perceiving him, *and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by*, escaping their fury, because his hour was not yet come. *Note*, (1.) It is prudent to hide ourselves when we see the approaching danger. (2.) They who drive Christ from them, are justly abandoned by him to judicial blindness and hardness of heart.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The miraculous cure of a man that was born blind*, ver. 1—7. 2. *The discourses which were occasioned by it:* (1.) *A discourse of the neighbours among themselves, and with the man*, ver. 8—12. (2.) *Between the Pharisees and the man*, ver. 13—34. (3.) *Between Christ and the poor man*, ver. 35—38. (4.) *Between Christ and the Pharisees*, ver. 39. ad finem.

1. AND as *Jesus** passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth. 2. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who [a] did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? 3. Jesus answered, [b] Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: [c] but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. 4. I must work the works of him that sent me, [d] while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. 5. As long as I am in the world, [e] I am the light of the world. 6. When he had thus spoken, [f] he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he † anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, 7. And said unto him, [g] Go, wash in the [h] pool of Siloam, (which is, by interpretation, [i] Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

* Some months after.

a Ver. 34. Luke 13. 2, 4. Acts 28. 4.

b Mat. 7. 1. Luke 13. 1—5.

c Ch. 11. 4. Is. 35. 5. Mat. 11. 5. ch. 14. 11. & 2. 11.

d Luke 13. 32, 33. & 19. 42. Eccl. 9. 10. Eph. 5. 16. ch. 4. 34. & 5. 19. & 13. 9. & 12. 35. & 17. 4.

e Ch. 1. 5, 9. & 3. 19. & 8. 12. & 12. 35, 46. Luke 2. 32. Mal. 4. 2. Is. 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6. with Rev. 3. 18.

f Mark 7. 33. & 8. 23.

† Or *spread the clay upon the eyes of the blind man.*

g 2 Kin. 5. 10.

h Neh. 3. 15. Is. 8. 6.

i Ch. 10. 36. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. Acts 3. 26.

Verses 1—7. The connection between this chapter and the foregoing seems to speak as if the events here recorded immediately followed the preceding, though others suppose they happened at the distance of three months; those being done at the feast of tabernacles, these at the feast of dedication, chap. x. 22. We have here the cure of a poor blind man.

1. Jesus observed him as he passed by, and knew his pitiable case, that he was *blind from his birth.* Such are we by nature; born in sin, and conceived in wickedness; blind to every spiritual object, and utterly unable to find the way to eternal life and peace, till Jesus passing by, regards us with the eyes of his compassion, and is found by them who sought him not.

2. The disciples hereupon proposed a curious question to their Master: *Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?* They seem to have entertained something of the Pythagorean opinion concerning the pre-existence and transmigration of souls from one body to another; and that the commission of some signal offence in a former body might be punished with the present affliction; or that the sin of the parents might have entailed this judgment on their offspring.

3. Christ answers their question, by way of rectifying their mistakes, and checking such censorious conclusions. *Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents:* not that they had never committed actual sin, nor been born in original corruption; but that it was not because of any particular crime which either had committed, that this blindness was inflicted: *but that the works of God should be made manifest in him*, and the Messiah be exalted in working a miraculous cure upon him. *Note*, (1.) We

are not to judge of men's sins by their sufferings, it being often the lot of God's dearest children to be most severely afflicted. (2.) God has purposes of his own glory to answer in those afflictive providences, the reason of which we cannot always discern; and this is at least a sufficient reason to reconcile us to them.

4. He gives the reason of his readiness to help this poor man. *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is yet day.* He was sent upon earth to do good to the bodies as well as souls of men; and therefore whilst his personal ministry lasted, this was his proper employment. *The night cometh when no man can work;* when death should put a period to his mortal days, his works of healing would then be done. *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world;* both corporally giving eyes to the blind, and enabling them to see the day; but more peculiarly in a spiritual sense, as the Sun of Righteousness arisen with healing in his wings, the only true light that can guide the benighted souls of men into the paths of eternal life. *Note,* (1.) Life is our day of usefulness, the moment in which we can serve and glorify God; we have need therefore to be diligent to redeem the time, and lay ourselves out in his blessed service. The night of death is near, when no work can be done for Christ and for souls; how precious then is every passing hour! (2.) What the sun is to the natural world, that Christ is to the spiritual world: without him all is darkness; we know nothing of God, or ourselves, our true happiness, our proper work, or the great end of our being; and he must not only shine upon us as the light, but shine *into* our hearts, giving us also the faculty of vision.

5. He gives sight to the blind man, and this in a way different from the miracles he usually performed, which were done with a word. *He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is, by interpretation, Sent,)* and was the figure of the kingdom of the Messiah, Isa. viii. 6. The blind man immediately obeyed his orders, and instantly felt his eyes opened, and his sight perfectly restored. *Note,* (1.) The word of the gospel is as this clay, unable of itself to communicate spiritual light to the soul; but, when applied by the powerful hand of Jesus, becomes effectual to open the eyes of the mind. (2.) Obedient faith never fails of bringing relief. They who at Christ's command perseveringly wait upon him in the way of his ordinances, will find their darkness enlightened, their doubts removed, their weakness strengthened, their souls comforted.

8. ¶ The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind,* said, Is not this he that sat and begged? 9. Some said, This is he; others *said,* He is like him: *but* he said, I am *he.* 10. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? 11. He answered and said, A man that is called [k] Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. 12. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

* Or. *they who had before seen him blind.*

k Mat. 1. 21, 25. Luke 1. 47. & 2. 10, 11. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Tit. 2. 13, 14.

Verses 8—12. We have here,

1. The amazement of the neighbours, who could scarce persuade themselves that he was the same man whom they had seen stretched along, a poor blind beggar, by the way side during so many years. Some affirmed it was the same man; others doubted, though they owned the resemblance; till the man himself ended the dispute, by affirming he was the very person. *Note,* They who have experienced the power of the healing grace of Jesus upon their souls, should be ready to own it, to the glory of his great name.

2. In answer to their question, how he came to recover his sight, after being blind from his birth, he informed them, that a man called Jesus, had made clay, anointed his eyes, sent him to the pool of Siloam to wash, and that instantly thereupon he received his sight. *Note,* If the opening of the eyes of a dark body awakened such concern to inquire how it was done, much more ought the opening the eyes of the darkened minds of sinners to be matter of astonishment, and awaken our notice and inquiries.

3. They hereupon put another question to him; either out of desire to know this wonderful person, or more probably with a malicious design to seize one whom the Pharisees had proscribed. *Where is he? He said, I know not;* Christ having departed when he had performed the cure. Thus in the work of grace upon the soul we see and feel the blessed change, though the hand which produces it is unseen.

13. ¶ They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. 14. And it was [l] the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. 15. [m] Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. 16. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man [n] is not of God, because he [o] keepeth not the sabbath-day. [p] Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? and there was a division among them. 17. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him? that he hath opened thine eyes? † He said, [q] He is a prophet. 18. But the ‡ Jews [r] did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. 19. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? 20. His parents answered them and said, We [r] know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: 21. But by what means he now seeth, we know not: or who hath [s] opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. [t] 22. These *words* spake his parents, [s] because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that [t] if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. ‖ 23. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. 24. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him,

l Ch. 5. 9, 16. Luke 6. 7, 9. & 13. 10—16. & 14. 1—5.

m Ch. 5. 9. Mark 1. 21, 25, 26. Luke 6. 7. & 13. 14. & 14. 3, 4. ver. 16.

n Ch. 3. 2. ver. 33.

o Ch. 5. 9, 16. Luke 6. 7, 9. & 13. 10—16. & 14. 1—5. with Exod. 31. 12. & 35. 2, 3. Num. 15. 31—36. Exod. 20. 10.

p Ch. 7. 12, 43. & 10. 19.

† Or, *What sayest thou of him for giving thee sight?*

q Ch. 1. 21. & 4. 19. & 6. 14. Deut. 18. 15—18. Acts 3. 22. & 7. 37. & 10. 36, 38.

‡ Members of the Sanhedrim.

r Gen. 19. 14. Is. 7. 9. Luke 24. 25.

s Ch. 7. 13. & 19. 38. & 20. 19.

t Ch. 12. 42. & 16. 2. & 7. 13. & 19. 7. Is. 65. 5. Rev. 13. 17. Acts 4. 18. & 5. 40.

‖ *Should be expelled the synagogue.* This corresponds, in their discipline, to what we call excommunication.

u Josh. 7. 19. 1 Sam. 6. 5. Rom. 16. 18.
x Ver. 16. Gen. 13. 13. Luke 7. 39. & 15. 2.
y Jer. 20. 10. & 18. 18.
* Or, *Did ye not hear?*
z Zech. 7. 11, 12. Mat. 7. 6. Prov. 26. 4, 5.
a Ch. 5. 45. & 7. 19. Acts 6. 11, 14. Rom. 2. 17.
b Exod. ii. Deut. xxxi. Mal. 1. 4.
c Luke 15. 2. & 23. 2. ver. 16, 24.
d Ch. 8. 14.
e Ch. 3. 12. Mat. 11. 5. Is. 35. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 2. 14.
f Job 27. 9. & 35. 12. Ps. 18. 41. & 66. 18. Prov. 1. 28. & 15. 8, 29. & 28. 9. Is. 1. 15. Jer. 11. 11. Ezek. 8. 18. Mic. 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13. Jer. 11. 11. & 14. 12.
g Ps. 34. 6, 15. & 91. 15. Jam. 5. 16—18. Ps. 18. 6. & 50. 15. & 65. 2.
h Is. 35. 5. & 42. 7. Mat. 11. 5. with ver. 16.
i Ver. 2. Acts 28. 4. Luke 13. 1—5.
k Ch. 7. 48, 49. & 11. 49.
l Or *excommunicated him.* Ver. 22 ch. 12. 42. & 16. 2. & 15. 6.

u Give God the praise: we know that this man is x a sinner. 25. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner *or no*, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. 26. y Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? 27. He answered them, I have told you already, and z ye did not hear: * wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples? 28. Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are a Moses' disciples. 29. We know that b God spake unto Moses: *as for* c this *fellow*, d we know not from whence he is. 30. The man answered and said unto them, Why e herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes. 31. f Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him g he heareth. 32. Since the world began was it not heard h that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. 33. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing. 34. ¶ They answered and said unto him, i Thou wast altogether born in sins, and k dost thou teach us? And they l cast him out.

Verses 13—34. Far from being induced by this wondrous miracle to admire the person who wrought it, we find them incensed, and ready to prosecute Jesus as a criminal.

1. Information is lodged against him before the rulers and the Pharisees: and the man who had been lately blind, is brought before the Sanhedrim, because *it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes*, which they regarded as a vile profanation of the day.

2. The Pharisees interrogate the man concerning the matter, very loath to be persuaded of the fact, and determined to find fault, where wonder and praise should have filled their hearts and tongues. The man simply gives a narrative of his case and cure, which divided the sentiments of the council. Some said, admitting the fact, *this man is not of God*, whatever miracles he may pretend to work, *because he keepeth not the sabbath-day*; for they regarded the making clay of the spittle as a violation of the strict rest enjoined by the tradition of the elders. Others were loath to admit the fact, and would fain overthrow its evidence; fearing, lest if it was allowed to be true, the people would justly conclude that no wicked man could work such miracles, and thereby the authority of Jesus would be established: or rather, *How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?* are the words of some, such as Joseph and Nicodemus, who justly objected, that such miracles of grace were a strong evidence of a divine mission, and of God's approbation of the person who wrought them; and this occasioned some debates in the council. Some of them hereupon demanded of the man what he thought of Jesus, and whether he had really opened his eyes. The man from just experience owns, he could not but conclude he must be a prophet. *Note*, (1.) A poor blind beggar often judges more wisely concerning Christ and his character, than those who boast themselves masters in Israel. (2.) Some, even of the great, are called; and their conduct and testimony leaves the rest at least more inexcusable.

3. They cite the father and mother of the man to appear at their bar, hoping to find some way to invalidate the credit of the miracle, but they only the more confirmed it; so easily can God take the wise in their own craftiness. They question the parents of the man, *Whether this was their son? whether he was born blind?* and *how* he now came to see? To the two first questions they gave a clear and explicit answer. He was their son, and had been born blind. How he now saw was a question which they cared not, for certain reasons, to enter into; and therefore rather referred the matter to their son, who was of age, and therefore able to answer for himself. For the truth was, they were timorous and apprehensive of the consequences of making that open confession, which gratitude and truth demanded; because they were afraid they should be excommunicated, according to the Jewish law which the Sanhedrim had passed, that if any should own Jesus as the Messiah, he should be put out of the synagogue: and therefore they were willing to *trim*, and leave the question for their son to resolve. *Note*, (1.) The church's censures, when wicked men are in authority, have often been laid on her best friends. (2.) The true religion of Jesus will ever be a suffering cause, even where the public profession of it is made; experimental godliness being only possessed by a few. (3.) When the profession of Christ only exposes us to persecution, many are ready to conceal their religion in order to escape the cross.

4. The council finding they got nothing to their satisfaction from the parents, again called the man himself; and unable to deny that a notable miracle was wrought, endeavoured to rob the Lord Jesus of the honour due to him for it, saying, *Give God the praise*, who hath done the work; but *we know that this man is a sinner*, and therefore though God may please to use wicked instruments for the accomplishment of his purposes, yet the praise is only due to himself. So confidently do they speak, who, when challenged to bring a single proof of sin against Jesus, could not have the confidence to lodge one accusation. *Note*, Many endeavour thus to supply the want of argument, with confident assertions of virulent abuse.

5. The man replied, *Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not*, I will not determine; though I have all the reason in the world to believe the contrary: *but one thing I know*, by happy experience, *that whereas I was blind, now I see*, and cannot be persuaded out of my senses. *Note*, Many captious questions may be put to a gracious soul, in order to shake the ground of his confidence; but though he may not be able to give a distinct account how that spiritual change is wrought, which he experiences, yet he can say, I know it is wrought: my understanding is enlightened; my heart is changed.

6. Again they demand an answer to their questions, in hopes that through inadvertence or fear he might falter in his evidence, or vary from what he had advanced; but his reply more exasperated them. *He answered them, I have told you already*, distinctly and clearly, *and ye did not hear*, so as to regard or credit what I said: *wherefore would ye hear it again?* to what purpose do you desire it? *will ye also be his disciples?* which he suggests, either ironically, as knowing their aversion to Jesus; or seriously, as very willing to repeat what he had said a thousand times over, if they had the least disposition to hear and believe him, and come to Jesus as their Lord and Master.

7. With rage and resentment at the mention of this, they bitterly revile him. *Thou art his disciple*, a poor deluded wretch; *but we are Moses' disciples*, the followers of that great lawgiver of Israel, and who ought to be regarded as the guides in religious matters, and not to be taught by such a fellow as thee. *We know that God spake unto Moses*, face to face on the Mount, and

delivered the law under a divine commission: but *as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is:* in truth they desired not to know, and would not examine the evidence he had produced of his divine original and authority; for then they might have seen that there was a perfect agreement between Jesus and Moses; and that instead of the worthless fellow whom they scornfully rejected, this was the great Prophet of whom Moses spoke. *Note,* (1.) Many boast of those external privileges which only serve to aggravate their guilt. (2.) The servants of Jesus, like their Master, have often been treated with insolence and contempt, as upstart fellows whom nobody knows. (3.) Many are branded as forsaking the good old religion, who are in fact the very espousers of it, by those who, resting upon the form of godliness, are utter strangers to the power of it.

8. Once more the man replies, *Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is,* when he hath given such an incontestable evidence of his divine mission, by this amazing miracle, *and he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know,* we, who are common people, and much more persons of your learning and sagacity, *that God heareth not sinners,* nor grants their prayers, much less would he enable them to perform miracles to support an imposture: *but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth;* and in the present case, the miracle Jesus hath wrought is an express testimony of God's approbation of him. *Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind:* such a thing not the greatest of the prophets, not even Moses himself, had ever performed. *If* therefore, *this man was not of God,* sent by him, and owned of him, *he could do nothing;* since it cannot be imagined God would enable a bad man to work such extraordinary miracles to carry on a bad cause, and promote delusion. A conclusion most reasonable and unanswerable, and drawn from premises the most evident and allowed. *Note,* (1.) An impenitent sinner, who persists in his iniquities, can never expect God will hear or answer his prayers. (2.) They who in Spirit worship God, and in simplicity obey him, may be assured he will hear and grant all their petitions. (3.) A poor unlettered man, when taught of God, is able to confound the wisest doctors who are with all their learning strangers to divine teaching.

9. Unable to answer his reasoning, they make up in violence and abuse what they want in argument. *Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?* Thou, a vile fellow, stigmatized from thy birth, as carrying a body inhabited by a viler soul; a poor ignorant wretch, a companion of beggars from thy birth; dost thou pretend to direct us, the guides and rulers of the church, famed for wisdom and sanctity, and invested with chief authority. What insolence, what arrogance is thine! *And they cast him out,* excommunicated him immediately, and cut him off from the congregation of Israel. But the curse causeless shall not fall; the anathemas of church rulers, who abuse their authority, shall only light upon their own head. *Note,* Proud worldly-wise men despise the poor, and think their own self-sufficiency above all need of others' help and teaching; whereas none who know themselves, will ever think themselves too wise to learn, or too good to mend.

35. ¶ Jesus heard that they had cast him out; [m] and when he had found him, he said unto him, [n] Dost thou believe on the [o] Son of God? 36. He answered and said, [p] Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? 37. And Jesus said unto him, [q] Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. 38. And he said, [r] Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

m Ch. 5. 14. Is. 65. 1. Ps. 27. 10. & 46. 1. Gen. 22. 14.
n Ch. 3. 15—18, 36. & 11. 25, 26, 40. & 16. 31. & 1. 50. Acts 8. 37. Luke 8. 25.
o Ps. 2. 7, 12. Mat. 3. 17, 14. 33. & 16. 16. & 26. 63. ch. 10. 30.
p Prov. 30. 3, 4. Song 5. 9. & 6. 1.
q Ch. 4. 26. & 8. 25, 58.
r Mark 9. 24. ch. 11. 27. & 20. 28. Ps. 2. 12. & 45. 11.

Verses 35—38. The unjust act of these oppressive church rulers was soon noised abroad, and came to the ears of Jesus. Hereupon we are told,

1. That Christ *found him;* he went in search of him, probably to encourage and comfort him under the persecution he suffered for the truth, *and said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God,* the promised Messiah? *Note,* (1.) Though wicked men may abuse their power in casting out the faithful servants of Jesus, he will visit his outcasts with his love, and own them under their sufferings for his sake. (2.) True faith in the Son of God is the great attainment; to know and trust in him, is everlasting life.

2. The poor man replied with earnestness, *Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?* I do expect him, and should be happy to find him; and wish for nothing more than to be directed to him, that I might by faith embrace him.

3. Christ gives him a clear declaration of his own office and character, *Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee;* whose power thou hast experienced, and is so much nearer to thee than thou art aware of; as he often is to his dear people, when they are afflicted and mourning his absence.

4. That moment, by the power of Jesus, he was enabled to exercise divine faith in his heart, and he makes an open profession of it: *Lord, I believe; and he worshipped him;* giving him that divine honour which was due to him, as the eternal Son of God. For they who truly know and believe in him, pay the same worship and honour to the Son, even as to the Father.

39. ¶ And Jesus said, [s] For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. 40. And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, [t] Are we blind also? 41. Jesus said unto them, [u] If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

s Ch. 5. 22, 27. & 12. 47. & 3. 17. Luke 2. 34. 2 Cor. 2. 16. & 4. 3, 4, 6. & 3. 14. ver. 25, 36, 38. Mat. 11. 25. & 13. 13.
t Ver. 28, 34. ch. 7. 48, 49. Rom. 2. 19, 20.
u Ch. 15. 22, 24 Heb. 10. 26. Prov. 26. 12. 42. 19, 20.

Verses 39—41. Whilst Jesus so kindly encouraged and comforted the poor sufferer, he pronounces just judgment on his malicious persecutors.

1. He gives a general account of the design of his mission. *Jesus said, For judgment am I come into this world,* to fulfil the decree of God; revealing his truth for the illumination of some, and inflicting judicial blindness on others who rejected it: *that they which see not, might see,* both corporally and spiritually; not only opening, by miracle, the eyes of men's bodies, but by his grace shining into their benighted souls: *and that they which see,* conceit themselves wise and knowing in the things of God, *might be made blind,* given up for their pride and self-sufficiency to the blindness, hardness, and impenitence of their own hearts.

2. The Pharisees supposing they were meant, with indignation replied, *Are we blind also?* Dare you insolently suggest, that we, the guides of the people, and the light of the land, are in darkness ourselves? *Note,* Nothing more offends the proud and self-righteous, than to call in question their knowledge or goodness: and their passion on such occasions is a fresh proof of the truth of the charge laid against them.

3. Christ answered, *If ye were blind,* really destitute of the means of knowledge, as the Gentile world, or, deeply sensible of your own native blindness, desired to be led unto me the light of life, *ye should have no sin;* none comparatively speaking; or you would have submitted to a better wisdom and righteousness than your own, whereby ye might have been justified from all things, and your sins be pardoned: *but now ye say, We see;* conceited of your knowledge, and puffed up with pride, and

therefore your sin remaineth; aggravated by the pretensions you make, and the abuse of the means of grace you have enjoyed. *Note,* None are so far from divine wisdom, as those who are wise in their own conceits; none so far from real goodness, as those who value themselves on their own excellence. Publicans and harlots shall enter the kingdom of heaven before such as these.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 32.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Christ's parabolical discourse concerning himself, as the door of the sheep, and the shepherd of the sheep,* ver. 1—18. 2. *The various sentiments of the people upon it,* ver. 19—21. 3. *The dispute Christ had with the Jews in the temple at the feast of dedication,* ver. 22—39. 4. *His departure into the country thereupon,* ver. 40—42.

1. VERILY, verily, I say unto you, [a] He that entereth not by the [b] door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2. [c] But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3. To him [d] the porter openeth; [e] and the sheep hear his voice: and [f] he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. 4. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, [g] he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for [h] they know his voice. 5. And [i] a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. 6. This parable spake Jesus unto them: [k] but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. 7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [l] I am the door of the sheep. 8. All [m] that ever came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. 9. [n] I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10. [o] The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: [p] I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly. 11. [q] I am the good shepherd: [r] the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12. [s] But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the [t] wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14. [u] I am the good shepherd, and [x] know my *sheep,* [y] and am known of mine. 15. [z] As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and [a] I lay down my life for the sheep. 16. [b] And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd. 17. [c] Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18. [d] No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. [e] This commandment have I received of my Father.

a Is. 56. 10—12. Jer. 23. 21, 32. Ezek. xiii. & 34. 2, 10. ver. 10. Heb. 5. 4. Mat. 7. 15 & 23. 1—28. Rom. 10. 15.
b Ver. 2, 7, 9. ch. 14. 6.
c Acts 20. 28. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11—13. Heb. 5. 4, 5. Is. 61. 1. & 40. 11.
d Is. 11. 2—4. Heb. 2. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 12. 1 Cor. 16. 9.
e Ps. 22. 22. & 40. 9, 10. ch. 6. 37, 45.
f Exod. 33. 12, 17. Phil. 4. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Is. 49. 10. Rev. 7. 17. Rom. 8. 30.
g Mat. 11. 29. & 16. 24. Heb. 13. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.
h Song 2. 8. & 5. 2.
i Mat. 7. 15. Prov. 19. 27. Eph. 4. 14. Gal. 1. 8. Col. 1. 23. & 2. 8.
k Ch. 6. 52. & 7. 36. & 8. 27, 43. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Eph. 4. 18. Is. 29. 11, 12.
l Ver. 1, 9. ch. 14. 6. Eph. 2. 18. Heb. 10. 19—22. Ezek. 34. 31.
m Acts 5. 36, 37. Jer. 50. 6. & 23. 1, 32. Ezek. 34. 2.
n See ver. 1, 7. Ezek. 34. 14. Ps. 23. 1—6. Is. 40. 11. & 45. 17. Zech. 10. 12. Is. 49. 9, 10. Rom. 5. 1—5. 1 Cor. 5. 22, 23. Col. 3. 11.
o Mat. 7. 15. & 23. 14. 2 Pet. 2. 1.
p Mat. 20. 28. & 18. 11. Ezek. 34. 16. ch. 3. 14—18. & 6. 32—58. Rom. 5. 11, 15—21. Heb. 7. 25. Is. 45. 17.
q Ps. 23. 1, 2. Is. 49. 11. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Ezek. 34. 23, 29. & 37. 24. Mic. 5. 4. Heb. 13. 20. 1 Pet. 5. 4. & 2. 25. ver. 14, 16.
r Tit. 2. 14. Mat. 20. 28. Rev. 5. 9. ch. 18. 11. Mat. xxvi, xxvii. ver. 15, 17, 18. Eph. 5. 2.
s Zech. 11. 16, 17. Is. 56. 10—12. 2 Tim. 4. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 3.
t Mat. 7. 15. Acts 20. 29. Song 2. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 1.
u Ver. 11. Heb 2. 17. Ezek. 34. 11—16. Ps. xxiii.
x Ver. 27. ch. 13. 18. Ps. 1. 6. Tit. 2. 19.
y Gal. 1. 16. Eph. 1. 17—19. & 3. 17—19. Phil. 3. 8—10. 1 John 5. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 7. & 1. 8. 2 Tim. 1. 12.
z Mat. 11. 27. ch. 1. 18. & 8. 29, 55. & 15. 9, 10.
a Ver. 11. Rom. 5. 6—11. & 8. 3, 4, 32, 33. 1 Thes. 5. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. 1 John 2. 2.
b Is. 56. 8. & 43. 6. & 11. 10. Ezek. 37. 22. Hos. 1. 11. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20, 23. Eph. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 25.
c Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Is. 42. 1, 21. & 55, 10. & 9. 14, 2—12. Acts 3. 15. ch. 2. 19. ver. 11, 15. Heb. 2. 9, 10.
d Acts 3. 15. Mat. 20. 28. & 16. 24. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19. 27, 28.
e Ps. 40. 6—8. ch. 14. 31. Acts 23. 24. & 4.

Verses 1—18. As the Pharisees and priests arrogated to themselves the dominion over the church, and boasted of their authority, wisdom, and sanctity, as the only true pastors; traducing Jesus as an impostor, because he acted without their ordination; Christ here, in a parable, warns the people against these faithless pastors.

1. He proposes a parable to them, borrowed from a shepherd and his flock, *Verily, verily, I say unto you,* with deepest solemnity, and most infallible certainty, *He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber;* such a clandestine entry shows the ill design on which he comes. *The sheepfold* is *the church of God,* where the faithful are united together in love, and share in the provision of gospel ordinances provided for them: *the door is Christ* himself, by whom the faithful enter, and who, by his Spirit, calls and qualifies his ministers for their work. *The thieves* are those who intrude into the ministry without a divine call, influenced by the hopes of the honours and profits of the service, instead of being *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost,* and animated by love to Jesus and zeal for immortal souls. *But he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep,* whom Jesus calls and qualifies for his office; and who, with fidelity and diligence attends, feeds, and watches over, those gracious souls whom the Saviour commits to his care. *To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice:* the Spirit of God makes his ministry successful, and opens the hearts of sinners to receive the gospel he preaches; *and he calleth his own sheep by name:* the Lord knoweth those that are his, and, by his effectual power upon their hearts, calls them to himself by the instrumentality of his under shepherds, who also are personally and particularly acquainted with their own peculiar flocks; *and leadeth them out* into green pastures of ordinances, and beside the waters of comfort. *And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them* as their shepherd, to protect them from danger, *and the sheep follow him,* close at his footsteps, imitating his example, *for they know his voice;* they have a discernment of gospel truth, and approve of, and submit to, his teachings. *But a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers;* they discover the false principles or bad practices of those who set up for pretended guides, and will not put their souls under their tuition, or be influenced by their examples.

2. The Jews understood not the meaning of his discourse, and therefore Christ more explicitly opens to them his meaning.

(1.) He is *the door;* the only way of access to God and glory is through him, and none can enter into the ministry but by his call, and under his commission. All that went before, with pretensions to the character of the Messiah and those who, with-

but an eye to him, exercised their ministry; or who endeavoured, as the Scribes and Pharisees of that age did, to prejudice the people against the true Messiah's character, all these were thieves and robbers, intruders into the office to which God never called them, and robbing him of his glory: but from their delusive teachings the Lord preserved his own people, so that they were not deceived by them, nor paid regard to the teachings of these false shepherds. But of himself Christ saith, *I am the door* of access to, and acceptance with, God: *by me*, through faith in my name, *if any man enter in, he shall be saved* from sin, from the condemning guilt and enslaving power of it, from the law, and the curse which it pronounces; from Satan, and all the powers of evil; from deceivers, and all their wiles; yea, he shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, *and shall go in and out, and shall find pasture*, during his journey through life; he shall have free access to the ordinances, possess a glorious liberty in the Spirit, be safe under the Shepherd's constant care, and be fed with the sweetest refreshments which the grace of the gospel ministers. Blessed and happy are they who thus walk under the constant guard and guidance of the divine Redeemer.

(2.) He is the *shepherd*, the great, the good, the true shepherd.

[1.] The gracious design which he is come upon is quite different from that of the false teachers. They, by their pernicious heresies, steal away the heart of the unwary, prejudice them against the truth, and whilst they promise them life and salvation, really murder their souls; and seek by persecutions to destroy or disperse the flock of Christ, which they cannot deceive; whilst he is come, that his people and the sheep of his pasture may have life, the life of grace here, and of glory hereafter: yea, that they might have it *more abundantly*, fuller assurance of it than ever they had before; or in a more abundant measure, and with greater glory and advantage than even Adam in innocence possessed.

[2.] The way in which he obtains these privileges for his people, is by his death for them. *I am the good shepherd* eminently so; and as the greatest instance of it, *the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep*, as I am ready to do, dying in their stead, to redeem them from sin, death, and hell. And herein Christ's love towards them is in the most convincing manner evidenced. *But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd*, who serves for lucre merely, not for the love of souls, *whose own the sheep are not*, regarding them with none of that affectionate concern which the owner feels; such a one *seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep;* whenever danger approaches, he deserts his post, *and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep*, perverting and seducing them. *The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep:* behold the true character of the false and faithless shepherd. (1.) He is one who serves for hire, and makes the ministry his trade. (2.) He feels no concern about the souls of men; and if he gets the revenues of the church, concerns himself not if the devil runs away with his flock. (3.) He never exposes himself to any danger nor labour in the ministry, only careful about his own safety, and consulting his own ease. The reverse is the character of a good minister; like his Master, his bosom glows with desire after the salvation of men's souls; he is ready to spend and be spent in the service of the ministry; he labours willingly, not for hire but from principle; and no dangers can deter him from his duty, or drive him to desert his post.

[3.] As the good shepherd, he is acquainted intimately with his flock and their concerns, and takes care of them. *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine;* Christ knows particularly those that are his; he regards them with tenderest affection; takes cognizance of all their wants, and kindly relieves and supplies them; and he is known by his people as the great object of their faith and hope, the author of their joy and happiness. *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father;* such intimate knowledge of each other as subsists between the Father and the Son, subsists also between Christ and his people: *and I lay down my life for the sheep*, to testify his love, and to accomplish the eternal designs of grace towards them. *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold*, out of the pale of the Jewish church; *them also must I bring*, according to the eternal decrees of the covenant of grace, from their guilt, misery, and ruin, into a state of favour and acceptance with God; *and they shall hear my voice*, effectually wrought upon by the mighty and irresistible influences of the Divine Spirit; *and there shall be one fold and one shepherd;* when all true believers, both Jews and Gentiles, shall be united in one glorious church under their common head, Christ Jesus, and share the same blessings and privileges. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life;* highly well pleased in my undertaking whereby such glory would accrue to him, and salvation, certain and eternal, be obtained for the redeemed: for I lay it down *that I might take it again*, rising for their justification, and thus effectually triumphing over all their foes. *No man taketh it from me*, neither force nor fraud avail any thing, till my own time comes; *but I lay it down of myself*, voluntarily, with my own consent; *I have power to lay it down*, a right and authority to lay it down as a satisfaction to divine justice; *and I have power to take it again;* having made the atonement, by my own almighty power I will quicken my dead body, and raise it to eternal life and glory. *This commandment have I received of my Father;* according to the eternal counsels between them, he had engaged thus to die for his people, and herein he delighted to do the will of God.

19. ¶ [f] There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. 20. And many of them said, [g] He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? 21. Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. [h] Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

[f] Ch. 9. 16. & 7. 41—43. Mat. 10. 34, 35.
[g] Ch. 7. 20. & 8. 46, 52. Mat. 9. 34. Mark 3. 21.
[h] Exod. 4. 11. Ps. 94. 9. & 146. 8. Is. 35. 5. ch. 9. 6, 7, 32.

Verses 19—21. The discourse of Jesus gave occasion for warm debates among the Jews, whose sentiments were greatly divided concerning them.

1. Many, who were his enemies, cried out, *He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?* Can you be so weak and deluded, as to attend to such absurd and blasphemous nonsense? Thus doth the world often scoff at the serious discourses of Christ's faithful ministers, and ridicule and revile those who pay attention to their preaching: but we should neither be threatened nor laughed out of our religion.

2. Others entertained very different sentiments, and said very sensibly, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil;* the nature of his doctrine, and his manner of speaking, savour nothing of insanity; nor can possibly tend to advance, but to destroy Satan's kingdom. Besides, *Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* Can a madman, or much less a bad man, under diabolical influence, perform such a miracle? The supposition is absurd and incredible. It evidently appeared that this was the finger of God.

22. ¶ And it was at Jerusalem the * feast of the dedication, and it was winter. 23. And Jesus walked in the temple in [i] Solomon's porch. 24. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou [k] make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25. Jesus answered them, [l] I

* Which Judas Maccabeus instituted.
[i] Acts 3. 11. & 5. 12. Built where he had built one, and called by his name.
[k] Or *hold us in suspense*, Ch. 16. 29. Mat. 11. 3.
[l] Ch. 5. 17—43. & 6. 27—64. & 8. 12, 24, 58.

told you, and ye believed not: [m] the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. 26. [n] But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27. [o] My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28. [p] And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. 29. My Father, [q] which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand. 30. [r] I and *my* Father are one. 31. ¶ [s] Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. 32. Jesus answered them, [t] Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; [u] for which of those works do ye stone me? 33. The Jews answered him, saying, [x] For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. 34. Jesus answered them, [y] Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? 35. If he called them gods [z] unto whom the word of God came, (and [a] the scripture cannot be broken,) 36. Say ye of him, whom [b] the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, [c] I am the Son of God? 37. [d] If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. 38. But if I do, though ye believe not me, [e] believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father *is* in me, and I in him.

m Ch. 5. 36. & 14. 10, 11. ver. 32, 38. Mat. 11. 5. Acts 10. 38.
n Ch. 8. 47. & 12. 37—40. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. Rom. 11. 7, 8. ch. 6. 44, 65. Acts 13. 48. 1 John 4. 6.
o Ver. 4, 14. 2 Tim. 2. 19. ch. 9. 37, 44, 45. Acts 13. 48. Mat. 19. 24. Heb. 12. 1, 2.
p Ver. 9, 10. ch. 11. 25. Rom. 6. 21. & 5. 21. Col. 3. 3, 4. Jude 1. ch. 6. 37. & 17. 2, 11, 12. & 18. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Mat. 16. 18, 27. Deut. 33. 3. Ps. 125. 1, 2. Is. 45. 17. & 26. 1—4. & 46. 3, 4.
q Ch. 14. 28. & 17. 6. & 6. 37. Mat. 11. 27.
r 1 John 5. 7. ch. 14. 9, 10. & 17. 11, 22. ver. 38. Mat. 28. 19.
s Ch. 5. 18. & 8. 59. Luke 4. 29.
t Mat. 11. 5. ch. 5. 17, 18, 36. Luke 24. 19. Acts 10. 38.
u Ps. 109. 4. Eccl. 4. 4.
x Lev. 24. 16. ch. 5. 18. ver. 30.
y Ps. 82. 6. Exod. 2. 28.
z Deut. 17. 15. Exod. 7. 2. Rom. 13. 1.
a Num. 23. 19. Mat. 5. 18. Luke 16. 17. Tit. 1. 2.
b Ch. 6. 27. & 3. 17. & 6. 57. Is. 42. 1. & 49. 1—3, 6, 8. & 48. 16. & 61. 1—3. & 11. 2—5. Gal. 4. 4.
c Ch. 5. 17, 18. Luke 1. 35. Ps. 2. 7, 12. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. ch. 1. 14, 34, 49. & 3. 16—18. ver. 30.
d Ch. 15. 24. & 5. 31.
e Mat. 2. 11. ch. 5. 36. & 14. 10, 11. & 15. 24. & 17. 21, 22. ver. 25, 30, 32.

Verses 22—38. We have here another discourse between Jesus and the Jews. We have,

1. The time and place. It was the feast of dedication, observed in remembrance of the renovation of the temple service, when Judas Maccabæus dedicated the new altar, and cleansed the temple which Antiochus had profaned, which was in the winter, in the month of December. And therefore Christ walked under cover, in a placed called Solomon's porch; a magnificent building, which, standing on the same ground where Solomon's porch formerly stood, continued to bear that name.

2. Hither the Jews came to him; and surrounding him, in order to pick a quarrel with him, they urged him to tell them plainly and boldly; and leave them no longer in suspense by his figurative and dark expressions, whether he were the Christ or not.

3. Christ knew their malicious designs, and therefore *answered them, I told you,* in terms sufficiently plain, if you chose to understand them, *and ye believed not,* and were determined not to believe: it was vain, therefore, to add farther assertion, and he chose to refer them to the miracles which abundantly proved his mission; *the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not,* obstinate in your infidelity, *because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you;* their temper and dispositions plainly showed they were not, and Christ knew they were not of those whom the Father had given him, whose character and conduct he describes. *My sheep hear my voice,* with attention, discernment, and spiritual delight, *and I know them,* take cognizance of them, and distinguish them with my peculiar favour and regard; *and they follow me* in the ways of truth and righteousness, obedient to my word, and imitating my example. *And I give unto them eternal life;* they have a present sure title thereto, experience the beginnings of it here, and shall be put into the full possession of it after death; *and they shall never perish;* no wiles of Satan, craft of men, no power of corruption, shall be able finally and fatally to prevail against them and separate them from the love and protection of me their shepherd: *neither shall any pluck them out of my hand,* whatever efforts the devil, the world, and the flesh may make to destroy them. *My Father which gave them me is greater than all* their foes, *and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand;* they must be safe when omnipotence is their guard. *I and my Father are one,* in nature, essence, and perfections, and our power, wisdom, and truth, are engaged for the preservation of the redeemed flock. *Note,* (1.) Eternal life is wholly the gift of God through Jesus Christ. (2.) They whom Christ will save, can never perish. O that we had faith to trust him!

4. The Jews, fired with rage, could no longer refrain, *but took up stones to stone him* as a blasphemer.

5. Jesus mildly expostulated with them on their baseness, saying, *Many good works have I showed you from my Father;* works of such benevolence and wonder, as evidenced his mission divine: *for which of those works do you stone me?* how horrid is your ingratitude! how base your returns! *Note,* (1.) Nothing aggravates our sins against God, so much as our vile ingratitude. (2.) If we meet with the most ungrateful returns from those on whom we had conferred the greatest obligations, we may not think it strange: Jesus was so treated before us.

6. The Jews attempt to vindicate their conduct, saying, *For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God;* for, in this light they interpreted his claim of unity with the Father, and his assuming the incommunicable attributes of the Deity. *Note,* Pretended zeal for God's honour hath been the pretext which persecutors have often used to cover the most violent outrages against his most faithful servants.

7. Christ proves he had the fullest right to those divine honours which he claimed. *Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?* Psalm lxxxii. 6. *If he called them gods,* who as magistrates were the types of the King Messiah, and *unto whom the word of God came;* entrusted by him with the government of the Jewish church and nation; *and the scripture cannot be broken,* but must receive its accomplishment in that Messiah, who really possesses divine honour and authority, and is entitled to that high name which they bore as his representatives; *say ye* then *of whom the Father hath sanctified,* and set apart before the worlds were, *and* in the fulness of time *sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?* But besides the scripture testimony, I appeal to my miracles. *If I do not the works of my Father,* as great as might be expected from him, and by my own power as God; if these do not speak my divine character, and that I am entitled to the honour I claim as the Son of God, *believe me not;* I am content to be rejected by you; *but if I do* works so great, and in such a manner, as declare my divine power and Godhead, *though ye believe not me,* on my own word and assertions, *believe the works,* those unexceptionable evidences, *that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him;* we being one in nature and essence, having the most intimate union and communion in the same undivided Godhead.

39. ¶ [f] Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their

f Ver. 31. ch. 5. 16, 18. & 8. 59. & 7. 30, 44. Luke 4. 29, 30.

hand, 40. And [g] went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. 41. [h] And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. 42. [i] And many believed on him there.

[g] Mat. 10. 23. ch. 1. 28. & 7. 1. & 11. 54.
[h] Mark 1. 45. Mat. 4. 23—25. Luke 5. 1. ch. 3. 30. Gen. 49. 10. Ps. 72. 17—19. & 22. 30.
[i] Ch. 2. 23. & 4. 39, 41. & 8. 30. & 11. 45. & 12. 42.

Verses 39—42. Far from appeasing their fury, Christ by maintaining his right to the essential glories of Divinity, exasperated them to the highest pitch. Whereupon,

1. *They sought again to take him;* concluding they had now full evidence against him to convict him as a blasphemer, and get him legally condemned by the Sanhedrim, and put to death.

2. As the time for Christ's suffering was not yet come, *he escaped out of their hand;* either holding their arms by an invisible power from seizing him, or their eyes from seeing him.

3. He retired *beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized:* and *there he abode,* preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and gathering probably some fruit from the seed, which John had sown there about two or three years before.

4. Multitudes *resorted to him* there, drawn by his preaching and miracles: *and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.* He appears with that transcendent greatness and glory, in which John spoke of him. *And many believed on him there,* as the true Messiah. *Note,* (1.) Though persecutors drive the ministers of Christ from one place, God will take care to send them where he hath greater work for them to do. (2.) Jesus will be peculiarly welcome with his gospel to those, whose hearts, by the sharp convictions of the law, as by the austere Baptist's ministry, are broken with a humbling sense of sin.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Here is, 1. *The tidings sent to our Lord Jesus of the sickness of Lazarus, and his entertainment of those tidings,* ver. 1—15. 2. *The visit he made to Lazarus' relations when he had heard of his death, and their entertainment of the visit,* ver. 17—32. 3. *The miracle wrought in the raising of Lazarus from the dead,* ver. 33—44. 4. *The effect wrought by this miracle upon others,* ver. 45—57.

1. NOW a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of [a] Bethany, the town of [b] Mary and her sister Martha. 2. ([c] It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) 3. Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, [d] he whom thou lovest is sick. 4. When Jesus heard *that,* he said, [e] This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. 5. Now [f] Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. 6. When he had heard therefore that he was sick, [g] he abode two days still in the same place where he was. 7. Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, [h] Let us go into Judea again. 8. *His* disciples say unto him, Master, [i] the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? 9. Jesus answered, [k] Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. 10. [l] But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.* 11. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, [m] Our friend Lazarus [n] sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. 12. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, † he shall do well. 13. Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. 14. [o] Then said Jesus unto them [o] plainly, [p] Lazarus is dead. 15. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent [p] ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him. 16. Then said [q] Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, [r] Let us also go, that we may die with him.

[a] Mat. 21. 1. Mark 11. 1. ch. 12. 1.
[b] Luke 10. 38—42.
[c] Ch. 12. 3. Mat. 26. 6, 7. Mark 14. 3. Luke 7. 37, 38.
[d] Ch. 13. 23. Ps. 16. 3. Heb. 12. 6. Mark 10. 21.
[e] Or, *will not prove fatal.* Mark 5. 39. ch. 9. 3. ver. 15, 40. 2 Cor. 12. 9.
[f] See ver. 3.
[g] Hos. 6. 2. Deut. 32. 36. Gen. 22. 14. Is. 30. 18. with ch. 10. 40.
[h] Acts 20. 22—24. & 21. 13.
[i] Ch. 10. 31, 39 Mat. 16. 21, 22. Acts 21. 12.
[k] Ch. 9. 4. Luke 13. 32, 33. There is no danger of death till my work be finished.
[l] Ch. 9. 4. & 12. 35. Ps. 104. 22, 23. When my work is finished I cannot escape death.
* Rather, *in it.*
[m] Is. 41. 8. Jam. 2. 23. ch. 15. 9, 14, 15. 2 Chr. 20. 7.
[n] Mat. 9. 24. ver. 13. Acts 7. 60. & 13. 36. 1 Thes. 4. 14, 15.
† It is a token that he is past danger.
[o] Ch. 10. 24. & 16. 25.
[p] Ver. 4. ch. 9. 3. & 2. 11. & 4. 48. & 5. 36. & 10. 38. & 14. 10, 11.
[q] Mat. 10. 3. Mark 3. 18. Luke 6. 15. ch. 20. 24—29. & 21. 2.
[r] Ver. 8. Mat. 26. 35. Let us risk our lives along with our Master, and die as well as Lazarus.

Verses 1—16. The miracle contained in this chapter is recorded by this evangelist alone. We have,

1. The persons particularly interested. *Lazarus,* a particular friend of Christ's, who was now sick at Bethany, a little village near Jerusalem, where he had lived with Mary and her sister Martha; at whose house Jesus seems to have chiefly resided, when he went up to Jerusalem on the great festivals. Mary, whose brother was ill, was a woman of singular piety, which particularly appeared in the respect she paid our Lord some time after this, chap. xii. 3. when at a public entertainment she anointed his feet with a box of precious ointment, and wiped them with her hair. *Note,* Christ keeps a faithful account, and will not fail to make honourable mention of all the works of faith and labours of love done for his sake by his faithful people.

2. The sisters, anxious for their brother, who was so dear to them, despatched a messenger to acquaint their Lord and Master of his imminent danger: knowing it would be enough to mention the case to him, since *he who was sick* was a person *he loved* so tenderly. *Note,* (1.) When we ourselves, or our dear relatives are sick, we must spread the case before the compassionate Saviour, and commit it with humble submission to his care. (2.) They are happy souls indeed, who are distinguished as the disciples whom Jesus eminently loves. (3.) The dearest children of God share in the common afflictions incident to humanity; yea, often are most severely exercised.

3. Christ foretold the issue of the sickness, that it should not be *unto death;* at least that death should not keep him as his prisoner, but that the *glory of God* should be most eminently displayed in his recovery, for which end this sickness was sent. *Note,* (1.) It is a great consolation to every child of God, that in all his sufferings, God hath purposes of his own glory to answer. (2.) Though we are sick, even unto death, we know if Jesus loves us, that the perishing of the outward man can do us no real harm, but will open for our disembodied souls a passage to eternal life and blessedness.

4. He defers his visit to Lazarus two days, though his love to him and the family was well known, and very singular; and this he did to prove their faith and patience, and give them a

more singular manifestation of his power and grace. *Note*, Christ's very delays, however irksome and trying to us, are designed in the issue for our greater comfort and his greater glory.

5. When the two days were expired, Christ calls upon his disciples to attend them to Bethany, designing to carry relief to the afflicted family there. But they expostulate with him on the danger to which he must expose himself by such a journey, when so lately the Jews had attempted to murder him, and still harboured the same malicious intentions: but perhaps this concern for his safety was not without some regard to their own also, who were so nearly connected with him; for very apt are we to mix selfish considerations where we seem to mean only our divine Master's honour and interests. In reply to their suggestions, he answers, *Are there not twelve hours in the day*, according to general estimation, allotted for labour? *if any man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of the world*, that sun which gilds his path, and makes his way plain before his face. Thus whilst the time of life appointed by the Father, lasts, I fear no danger, and go forward in my work; *but if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.* So when my day of work expires, then, and not till then, shall I be suffered to fall into the hand of my foes. *Note*, (1.) The consideration how soon the night of death approaches, should quicken our diligence, whilst yet the day of life continues, to redeem the time, and finish the work Christ hath given us to do. (2.) They who walk under the guidance of the word and Spirit of Jesus, go on their way unmoved; whilst they who follow any other guide are sure to stumble upon the dark mountains of error, and fall into the pit of destruction.

6. He informs them of the death of their common friend Lazarus, and his design to raise him up again to life, which he represents under the figure of sleep. *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.* The disciples understanding him literally, thought this a favourable symptom, and that he would do well without their Master's going into the jaws of danger. But as he spoke of his death under this figure, and not of common rest, as they apprehended, he rectified their mistake by plainly telling them, *Lazarus is dead;* and adds, *I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there* before he died, *to the intent ye may believe*, when by his resurrection from the grave, after so long a time, your faith may receive the greater confirmation. *Nevertheless*, though he is dead, *let us go unto him. Note*, (1.) Sleep is death's lesser mysteries; and every day that we awake from our beds, we experience a kind of resurrection. (2.) The great restorative to weak and wearied nature is soft repose: but no sleep is so sweet to the body, as the sleep of death to the gracious soul, from which he awakes in eternal day.

7. Thomas, called Didymus, or the twin, on hearing what Jesus had said, and his resolution to go into Judea, said to his fellow-disciples, *Let us also go, that we may die with him;* either with Lazarus, whom he loved so much as not to wish to survive him, or rather with their Master; who, by going, seemed to expose his life to inevitable danger; and he, zealous to attend him, offers himself, and encourages his brethren to cleave to him wherever he went, though death itself should be the consequence. *Note*, (1.) The loss of those on whom our fond affections were placed, often embitters life, and makes death appear desirable. (2.) To go to join the spirits of just men made perfect, is indeed a consummation devoutly to be wished for. (3.) Faithful disciples will be intimidated by no danger from following their Master, and encouraging each other to stand fast in the day of trial.

17. Then, when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already. 18. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, † about fifteen furlongs off. 19. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, [a] to comfort them concerning their brother. 20. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: [t] but Mary sat *still* in the house. 21. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, [u] if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. 22. But I know, that even now, [u] whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee. 23. Jesus saith unto her, [x] Thy brother shall rise again. 24. Martha saith unto him, [y] I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25. Jesus said unto her, [z] I am the resurrection and the life: [a] he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26. [b] And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. [c] Believest thou this? 27. She saith unto him, [d] Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.* 28. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, [e] The Master is come, and calleth for thee. 29. [f] As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him. 30. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. 31. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and [g] comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. 32. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, [h] she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, [i] Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

† That is, *near two miles.*

[a] Gen. 37. 35. Job 2. 11. Rom. 12. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 14. & 4. 18. Eccl. 7. 2.

[t] 2 Kin. 5. 11. ch. 4. 47, 49. Mat. 9. 18.

[u] Ver. 41, 42. ch. 9. 30, 31. ver. 43, 44. Mat. 9. 25, 26.

[x] Luke 14. 14. ch. 5. 29. 1 Thes. 4. 14. Is. 26. 19. Dan. 12. 2.

[y] Acts 23. 8. & 25. 15.

[z] That is, I am the author of the resurrection and life. 1 Cor. 15. 22, 45. ch. 6. 39, 44. & 14. 6. & 1. 4. & 5. 21, 25.

[a] Job 19. 26, 27. Rom. 8. 11. 1 Cor. xv. Phil. 3. 11, 21.

[b] Rev. 20. 6. ch. 3. 15—18, 36. & 8. 51, 52. & 10. 28, 29. & 6. 35—38. 1 John 5. 10—12.

[c] Ch. 16. 31. & 9. 35. Luke 8. 25. Mark 9. 23.

[d] Mat. 16. 16. ch. 1. 49. & 6. 14, 69. & 4. 42. & 9. 38. Acts 8. 37.

* Or, *Thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, he who cometh into the world.*

[e] Mat. 23. 8—10. & 26. 18. ch. 13. 13. & 20. 16. Mark 5. 35. & 9. 5. & 10. 17. Eccl. 9. 10.

[f] Ps. 119. 59, 60. Prov. 27. 1.

[g] See ver. 13.

[h] Luke 7. 38. & 10. 39. Ps. 45. 11. Mat. 2. 11. Mark 5. 33. Luke 5. 8.

[i] Ver. 21. Mat. 9. 18. ch. 4. 47, 49. 2 Kin. 5. 11.

Verses 17—32. Jesus having declared his purpose, began his journey with his disciples; and arrived at Bethany, which was distant from Jerusalem about two miles.

1. He found a melancholy scene. The house, where with joy he had lately been entertained, is drowned in tears; such awful changes do we often see after the shortest absence from our friends. Lazarus had lain in the grave four days already, and many of the Jews from Jerusalem, which was near, had come to console the afflicted sisters. *Note*, (1.) It is kind to weep with those that weep; and, by partaking, to alleviate the sorrows of the miserable. (2.) When we lose our dearest relatives, if they fall asleep in Jesus, we have abundant reason to be comforted *concerning our brother;* his lot is to be envied; our tears should rather flow for ourselves left yet behind, to conflict with the powers of evil. (3.) The house of most distinguished piety is not barred against affliction; but though we sorrow as men, we can rejoice as believers. There is hope in the end.

2. Martha no sooner heard of the Master's approach, than she

went to meet him; whilst Mary, who had not yet heard of his arrival, sat still in the house. We are here told what passed at this first interview.

[1.] Martha with deep respect addressing the Saviour, said, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;* so confident was she of his power and compassion, though her weakness appeared in supposing his bodily presence necessary to the cure. *But I know that even now,* desperate as the case is, *whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee;* she mentioned no particulars, but meekly referred the case to his grace and wisdom. *Note,* In our deepest sorrows, our only relief is to draw near to Jesus, to tell him our griefs, and cast our care upon him.

[2.] Christ answers her with good words, and comfortable words. *Thy brother shall rise again.* He expresses it so as to leave it doubtful, whether he meant a present or future resurrection: in either view it administered matter for her faith, and hope, and consolation. *Note,* It is a most reviving consideration when death robs us of our brethren in Jesus, that the separation is but short; we shall meet them again at the resurrection of the just.

[3.] Martha professes her faith in what her Lord had spoken. *I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day;* that there should be a resurrection she was persuaded, and that Lazarus would rise among the just; but though this was some consolation, her loss hung heavy upon her.

[4.] *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life;* not only by his prayer could he obtain life from God for whom he would, but he had the power of life in himself, and at his own pleasure could raise the dead, and call the things that are not, as though they were. *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;* his body, as well as soul, shall live in the eternal world; *and whosoever liveth and believeth in me,* quickened to spiritual life, and walking now by faith, *shall never die;* shall never lose the life of grace he possesses, which is the beginning of the life of glory; and though this body may return to the dust, from whence it came, yet shall it be raised again, and be made immortal as his never-dying soul. *Believest thou this?* A solemn question which we should often put to ourselves. The resurrection of the body is to sense improbable, impossible; but faith overlooks every difficulty. He who raised us from the dust at first, can again re-assemble the scattered atoms, and bring bone to his bone. *Note,* (1.) Christ is the author of *natural life;* in him we live, and move, and have our being: of *spiritual life;* by his power and his Spirit we are quickened from the death of sin: *of eternal life;* as he hath procured the title for us, and by him we shall be raised up at the last day. (2.) They who have this faith in them, are truly blessed and happy; they live in comfort, and die in hope.

[5.] Martha said unto him, *Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world;* the true Messiah so long promised, so greatly expected; and that thou hast all power to do whatsoever thou pleasest, and that nothing is impossible with thee. *Note,* They who know the Saviour's all-sufficiency, may comfortably and confidently rest all their hopes upon him.

3. Mary comes to meet the Lord. Martha, in haste to communicate the glad news, and to make her sister partaker of the blessings of his converse, goes and secretly whispers to her that Jesus the Master was come, and wished to see her. Eager to meet him, she hastily arose, and came to him without the town where he had halted, as nearer the grave where his business lay. The Jews, who came to condole with her, observing her sudden departure, concluded she was gone to the grave to weep, and followed her. But Mary had now found her Lord, and at his feet poured out with tears her sorrowful complaint, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.* *Note,* (1.) Gracious souls delight to be instrumental in bringing others to Jesus, to partake of his consolations. (2.) Christ is a better comforter than ten thousand friends: at his feet under all our sorrows let us be found, and he will calm our troubled breasts. (3.) It is kind to visit the house of mourning, and seek to divert from inordinate sorrow the afflicted, who often study how to sharpen and aggravate their own griefs. (4.) We are often apt to torment and grieve ourselves unnecessarily with apprehensions that something was neglected or overlooked, that might have been done for our departed friends, instead of submitting to the divine decree with silent resignation.

33. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, [k] he groaned in the spirit, and [*] was troubled, 34. And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see. 35. [l] Jesus wept. 36. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! 37. And some of them said, Could not this man, [m] which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? 38. Jesus therefore again [n] groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. [o] It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. [†] 39. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, [p] by this time he stinketh; for he hath been *dead* four days. 40. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, [q] that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? 41. Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, [r] I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42. And I knew [s] that thou hearest me always: but [t] because of the people which stand by I said *it,* that they may believe that thou hast sent me. 43. And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, [u] Lazarus, come forth. 44. And he that was dead came forth, [x] bound hand and foot with grave clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

k Heb. 2. 17. & 4. 15. Mark 3. 5.

* Gr. *he troubled himself.*

l Luke 19. 41. Is. 53. 3. Heb. 2. 17, 18. & 4. 15. Rom. 12. 15. On account of the afflicting circumstances, and at the unbelief of the spectators.

m Ch. 9. 6.

n Heb. 5. 7. ver. 41. Rom. 8. 26. Ps. 6. 6.

o Gen. 23. 19, 20. Mat. 27. 60.

† Or, *and shut up with a stone.*

p Ver. 17. Gen. 22. 14. Deut. 32. 36.

q Ver. 25, 26, 34. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Mark 9. 23. Rom. 4. 6, 17—20. with Mat. 13. 58. Luke 1. 20, 45.

r Mat. 11. 25. Luke 10. 21. Phil. 4. 6.

s Mat. 3. 17. ch. 8. 29. Heb. 5. 7. & 7. 25.

t Ver. 31, 45. ch. 12. 30. & 2. 11. & 20. 31. & 10. 38. & 14. 11.

u Luke 7. 14. & 8. 54. Acts 9. 40. Rom. 4. 17. Ps. 33. 9.

x With ch. 20. 5. He was to return to death after some time.

Verses 33—44. We have here,

1. The compassion of Jesus. He felt for the anguish which appeared in the tears so plentifully shed; *he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled;* either sympathizing with Mary and her friends in their grief, or, as the words seem in their signification to intimate, with indignation at the unbelief and hardness of heart which he saw in many of the Jews there present; and knowing his own designs of grace, he asked, *Where have ye laid him?* Not that he could be unacquainted with any event, but that it might appear there was no contrivance between him and the relations of the deceased; *They say unto him, Lord, come and see;* and being come to the place, he, whose tender heart felt deeply for human misery, and as man possessed the tenderest

feelings of our nature, gave vent to his grief; *Jesus wept. Note,* (1.) Jesus was very man as well as very God, and subject to all our sinless passions and infirmities. (2.) Tears of tender sympathy become the disciples of Jesus, who are commanded to weep with those that weep.

2. The reflections made by those present on the tears of Jesus. Some said, and the observation was most natural, *Behold how he loved him!* Others, with more malignant insinuations, suggest, *Could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?* Intimating, that had he really possessed the power he pretended, he would have kept his friend from death; but as he could not do this, it was to be suspected that what had passed for so extraordinary a miracle before, was really a mere sham. *Note,* (1.) If we consider what Jesus hath done, how he hath shed not only tears, but drops of blood for us, with much more reason may we say, *Behold how he loveth us!* (2.) They who determine to cavil, will always find a pretence.

3. Jesus, groaning in spirit at the malice and wickedness of such a suggestion, *cometh to the grave;* which, according to their usual method of burying the dead, was a cave, with a stone laid on its mouth. This he bids them remove, that all might be convinced of Lazarus' death, by the putrefaction of the corpse. Martha, concluding from the time he had lain in the grave, that the body must be very offensive, and thinking it too late to hope for his revival, would have diverted Jesus from his purpose, but *he said unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God,* displayed in a more eminent manner than hath yet appeared? And herein he probably refers to something which he had said in the former conversation with her, which is not recorded by the evangelist. *Note,* (1.) Nothing serves more deeply to mortify our pride in any bodily excellences, than the reflection how awful will be the change, when we have lain but a few days in the grave. (2.) If we have true faith, we shall surely see the great salvation of God, whatever difficulties may seem to be in our way.

4. The grave being opened, and the corpse discovered, *Jesus lifted up his eyes* to heaven, *and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me;* not as imploring assistance for the performing the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection, which by his own power he would accomplish, but as thanking him for the present opportunity afforded him, for the display of his divine power and authority. *And I knew that thou hearest me always,* because my will and thine are one: *but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they might believe that thou hast sent me,* and be assured of my being the true Messiah by this stupendous miracle, which will add still greater evidence to my mission. *Note,* (1.) In our approaches to God, we should draw near to him as the Father of mercies, with full confidence in his faithfulness, power, and love. (2.) Thanksgivings for past mercies are an encouragement to the present exercise of our faith. (3.) Christ is an all-prevailing advocate; his prayers for us are always heard; therefore we may boldly draw near to a throne of grace.

5. By a word the miracle is wrought. With the voice of majesty, as the Lord of life, he speaks aloud, *Lazarus, come forth;* and instantly, obedient to his command, death surrenders his prisoner: by omnipotent power the corpse is raised, Lazarus comes forth alive, enveloped with all the swathings, and the napkin round his face, as he was laid in the grave. Jesus bids them *loose him, and let him go;* being perfectly restored to health and strength, he was as able as ever to walk to his own house. *Note,* (1.) Such is the mighty call of Jesus to the soul dead in trespasses and sin; and power accompanies his gospel, by which the dead are quickened to newness of life. (2.) The change in a resurrection day will be thus instantaneous, in the twinkling of an eye, 1 Cor. xv. 52.

45. [y] Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. 46. [z] But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. 47. ¶ [a] Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, [b] What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 48. If we let him thus alone, [c] all *men* will believe on him: [d] and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. 49. And one of them *named* [e] Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, [f] Ye know nothing at all, 50. Nor consider that [g] it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. 51. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that [h] Jesus should die for that nation; 52. And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. 53. [i] Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. 54. [k] Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called [l] Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples. 55. ¶ [k] [m] And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, [n] to purify themselves. 56. [o] Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? 57. [p] Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where he were, he should shew *it*, that they might take him.

[y] Ch. 2. 23. & 4. 39, 41. & 8. 30. & 10. 42. & 12. 11, 43.
[z] Ch. 5. 15. Acts 5. 25. 1 Sam. 29, 10.
[a] Ps. 2. 1—4. Mat. 26. 3. Mark 14. 1. Acts 4. 6, 27.
[b] Ch. 12. 19. Acts 4. 16.
[c] Gen. 49. 10. Is. 9. 6, 7. & 11. 10. & 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6.
[d] Dan. 9. 26, 27. Deut. 28. 51—68. Mat. 22. 7. Luke 19. 27, 42—44. & 21. 20, 24.
[e] Luke 3. 2. ch. 18. 14. Acts 4. 6.
[f] Ch. 7. 48, 49. Or, *ye are utterly at a loss.* They were in perplexity; they knew not what to resolve on.
[g] Ver. 48. ch. 19. 12. & 18. 14. He meant that they had better murder Christ, than provoke the Romans against them all.
[h] Mat. 20. 28. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. 1 John 2. 2. Gal. 3. 13, 28. ch. 10. 15, 16. Eph. 2. 13—22. & 3. 6—9. Is. 49. 6.
[i] Ps. 2. 1—4. & 22. 12, 16. & 31. 13.
[k] Ch. 4. 1—3. & 7. 1, 10. & 10. 40.
[l] 2 Chr. 13. 19.
[m] Exod. 12. 6. & 23. 14—17. & 34. 23. Deut. 16. 1. Lev. 23. 5.
[n] Gen. 35. 2. Exod. 19. 10. 2 Chr. 30. 15, 18. Num. 9. 6.
[o] Ch. 7. 11, 12.
[p] Ch. 5. 16, 18. & 8. 59. & 10. 31, 32. Ps. 109. 4. ver. 12, 16, 22.

Verses 45—57. This miracle produced very different effects upon the spectators.

1. Many of the Jews there present, who had come to console the sorrowful sisters, struck with the evidence of the divine power of Jesus, believed in him as the Messiah. Thus their kindness to the afflicted was repaid with the best of spiritual blessings upon their own souls.

2. Others, obstinate in infidelity, and exasperated, instead of being convinced by what they had seen, went with malicious wickedness to the Pharisees, who were members of the Sanhedrim, and informed them what was done, that they might take measures to suppress the increasing fame of Jesus.

3. A council is instantly summoned, in order to deliberate on some more vigorous methods to stop this man. Being assembled, they said, *What do we?* How dilatory are our proceedings?

How long shall we see ourselves run down, and our interests in the people usurped? *for this man doeth many miracles*, which could not be denied; and *if we let him thus alone* to root himself in the people's affections, *all men will believe in him* as the Messiah, and set him up as king: the consequence of which will be, that *the Romans will come* to crush such a rebellion, *and take away both our place and nation*. This they dreadfully apprehended; and by the very methods they took to prevent it, filled up the measure of their iniquities, and brought that very destruction which they feared upon their own heads. *Note*, (1.) The enemies of Christ have often pretended zeal for the public good, as a pretence to persecute the public's best friends. (2.) They who, under the influence of carnal policy, by wicked methods think to extricate themselves from their difficulties, only pull down the more surely that ruin which they seek to shun.

4. Caiaphas, the high priest that year (this dignity and office under the Roman government having become venal, and the persons being often changed,) a man of a Sadducean spirit, Acts v. 17. unconcerned about a judgment to come, with daring effrontery and haughtiness said, *Ye know nothing at all*, to sit thus debating and deliberating; *nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not:* when matters are come to such a crisis, there can be no ground to hesitate about proceeding, nor need we enter into the inquiry whether he be a prophet or no; the case is desperate, and requires a desperate remedy: better is it, though he were innocent, to destroy him, than endanger, by a foolish lenity, the safety of the nation. *Note*, (1.) When secular interest, court favour, bribery, and corruption, exalt men to the highest offices in the church, no marvel if the chief rulers are arch-persecutors. (2.) Reason and justice stand in little stead, where power is in the hand of oppressors.

5. The evangelist informs us, that Caiaphas *spoke not this of himself; but being high priest that year*, whose words would be looked upon as oracular, God so ordered it that he should express his sentiments in such a way, as that, though he designed the most malignant and murderous counsel, he declared the most important and glorious truth, *he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation*, as the Messiah, to redeem his people: *and not for that nation only*, to save the elect remnant, Rom. xi. 3. of the Jewish people, *but that also he should gather in one the children of God that were scattered abroad;* even those of the Gentiles also, wherever dispersed, as well as Jews, who were predestinated to the adoption of children by Christ Jesus, Eph. i. 5. and designed to become one fold under one shepherd.

6. Caiaphas' discourse determined the council, and from that day forward, with resolute purpose, they took council to put Jesus to death, and thought only on the properest means to execute their design.

7. Christ, who knew this combination against him, and the determination of his implacable enemies, withdrew, and *walked no more openly among the Jews;* retiring to a city called Ephraim, in the least frequented part of the country, where he spent his time in conversation with his disciples. The hour of his departure approaching, this season was most usefully employed in teaching them the things which pertained to the kingdom of God.

8. The last passover which our Lord was to celebrate on earth, now drew nigh; and multitudes, according to custom, resorted to Jerusalem, to purify themselves from any ceremonial uncleanness which they had contracted, before the feast began, that they might be legally prepared to partake of it. Many inquiries were then made concerning Jesus, by those who met together in the temple; it being a question much agitated among them, whether he would venture to come up to the feast or not? For the chief priests had issued strict orders, that if any man knew where he was he should show it, that they might arrest him, and put him to death. And this made some doubt, whether such an open declaration of their intentions might not intimidate him, whilst others would have been glad to have had an opportunity of delivering him up to his implacable enemies. *Note*, When rulers are wicked, they never want instruments to execute their iniquitous purposes.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we are told, 1. *How Mary anointed the feet of Jesus at Bethany*, ver. 1—8. 2. *The consultation of the chief priests to kill him and Lazarus, whom the people flocked to see*, ver. 9—11. 3. *He enters Jerusalem in triumph*, ver. 12—19. 4. *The Greeks desire to see him*, ver. 20—22. 5. *He foretells his death*, ver. 23—33. 6. *He solemnly warns the Jews*, ver. 34—36. 7. *They in general persist in their infidelity, though some of the rulers believed, but durst not own him*, ver. 37—43. 8. *He asserts his divine mission*, ver. 44—50.

1. THEN [a] Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. 2. [b] There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. 3. Then took [c] Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. 4. [d] Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him, 5. Why was not this ointment sold for * three hundred pence, and given to the poor? 6. [e] This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. 7. [f] Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my [g] burying hath she kept this. 8. For [h] the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always. 9. ¶ [i] Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. 10. [k] But the chief priests consulted † that they might put Lazarus also to death; 11. [l] Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

[a] Mark 14. 3—9. Mat. 26. 6—13. ch. 11. 1—45.
[b] Luke 10. 38—41. ch. 11. 1, 5, 19—28, 39—44.
[c] Ch. 11. 2, 28, 32. Luke 10. 39, 42. Mat. 26. 7. Mark 14. 3. with Luke 7. 37, 38.
[d] Mat. 26. 8, 9. Mark 14. 4, 5. Eccl. 4. 4. Job 5. 2. 1 Thes. 2. 5. Ps. 55. 21.
* Nine pounds six shillings.
[e] Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. Prov. 26. 25.
[f] Ps. 109. 31. Zech. 3. 2. Gen. 3. 4.
[g] Mat 26. 12. & 27. 57—60. Mark 14. 8. & 15. 42—47. Luke 24. 50—56. ch. 19. 38—42. Is. 53. 9.
[h] Deut. 15. 11. Mat. 26. 11. Mark 14. 7.
[i] Ch. 11. 44, 45. Mark 1. 45. Acts 17. 21.
[k] Ch. 11. 47—53, 57. Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16.
† *Determined*; literally, *had resolved*.
[l] Ch. 16. 18, 20, 24, 25. Acts 13. 45. Eccl. 4. 4. Mark 15. 10. & 11. 18. ch. 2. 23. & 11. 45.

Verses 1—11. We have here,

1. The visit of Jesus to Bethany. He came there six days before the passover, and took up his lodgings with Lazarus, a person now uncommonly distinguished, as having been dead, and miraculously restored to life by his power. He knew the danger to which he exposed himself; but his hour approached, and therefore he offered himself a willing sacrifice, as the true paschal Lamb, who should be sacrificed for us.

2. Lazarus and his sisters gave him a most welcome reception, and in honour of their guest made a great supper: and Martha, to do honour to her heavenly visitant, waited herself upon him, whilst Lazarus sat at the table with him, a living monument of his power and grace.

3. During the entertainment, Mary, to testify her deep respect for her divine Lord and Master, came with a pound of very costly spikenard, and anointed his feet, wiping them with her hair; and the odour of the ointment filled the house: expressing hereby her faith, love, and deep humility, receiving him as the anointed Messiah, and paying her dutiful homage to him. *Note*, No fragrance of the sweetest perfume can adequately represent that sweet savour of Christ, and of the graces of his Spirit, which fill the believer's soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

4. Judas, in heart a traitor, but yet in profession ranked among the apostles, pretending charity for the poor, testified indignation at this act of respect shown to his Master, as if it had been an unnecessary piece of waste: not indeed that this divine grace of charity ever glowed in his false bosom, but *because he was a thief;* and being intrusted with the common purse, he had purloined part of the money which was put into it, and applied it to his own use, and hoped if this ointment had been sold, and the money brought into their joint stock, some part of it might be easily secreted. *Note*, (1.) Hypocrites, when they make the most zealous profession, really dislike that serious godliness they discover in others; and their worldly mindedness in trifles shows how ready they will be to apostatize, the moment a greater temptation besets them. (2.) Satan transforms himself often into an angel of light, and gilds with specious names and pretences the vilest purposes. Thus *worldly wisdom* is called *rational prudence;* and *covetousness* wears the mark of *zeal against others' extravagance.* (3.) The love of money is usually most fatal to the soul. They who are fond of the bag, will not long be faithful to their Lord.

5. Christ vindicates what Mary did from the ill construction which Judas had put upon it. *Jesus said, Let her alone;* neither blame nor trouble her: *against the day of my burial hath she kept this;* so divine providence ordered it, that, though she knew not his approaching death, she thus should embalm him when alive, because she would have no opportunity to perform that kind office when he was dead. Besides, he adds, *the poor always ye have with you;* such objects would never be wanting whereon to exercise their charity; *but me ye have not always;* and therefore during the short moment of his stay with them, they could not be too sedulous to show him every token of respect and honour. *Note*, Opportunities to serve Christ are precious, and must be embraced without delay.

6. Multitudes of people from Jerusalem flocked to Bethany, in order to gratify their curiosity with a sight of Jesus, concerning whom they had heard so much; and also to see Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead, the fame of which miracle had been greatly spread.

7. The chief priests, far from being affected with such an instance of Christ's power, not only persisted in their bloody purpose to murder him, but also consulted to put Lazarus to death, being filled with rage and envy, that many of the Jews, struck with the evidence of this miracle, had deserted their party and joined themselves to Jesus, professing their faith in him as the Messiah. *Note*, (1.) They who are most eminently distinguished with God's favour, are the objects against whom wicked men level their most malignant enmity. (2.) The stronger the evidence is, the more exasperated do they grow who obstinately resolve not to be convinced.

12. ¶ [m] On the next day, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was come to Jerusalem,

[m] Mat. 21. 8—11. Mark 11. 8—10. Luke 19. 36—38.

13. Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, [n] Hosanna: blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. 14. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, 15. [o] Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. 16. [p] These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was [q] glorified, then [r] remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him. 17. [s] The people therefore, that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. 18. [t] For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. 19. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, [u] Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing?* behold, the world is gone after him.

[n] Ps. 118. 25, 26. & 72. 17—19. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Rev. 6. 9. Mat. 23. 39. & 21. 1—7. Mark 11. 1—7. Luke 19. 29—35.

[o] Zech. 9. 9. Is. 62. 11. Mat. 21. 5. with Deut. 17. 16.

[p] Luke 9. 45. & 2. 50. & 18. 34. & 24. 25, 45.

[q] Ch. 7. 39. & 17. 5. & 13. 31. Mark 16. 19. Heb. 1. 3. & 4. 15. & 8. 1.

[r] Ch. 14. 26. & 2. 22.

[s] Ch. 11. 31, 45, 46. Is. 43. 10. Ps. 105. 2. & 145. 6, 7.

[t] Ver. 9, 12.

[u] Ch. 11. 47. & 3. 26. Eccl. 4. 4. Prov. 27. 4. Job 5. 2. Mat. 27. 18. & 21. 15. Luke 19. 47, 48.

* *Ye have no influence.*

Verses 12—19. The triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem is recorded by all the evangelists.

1. A vast crowd, with loudest acclamations and every expression of joy attended him. *A great multitude, who were come to the feast when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,* from Bethany, *went forth to meet him,* and welcome his arrival, with palm-branches in their hands, the emblem of that victory which Jesus was shortly to obtain over sin and Satan, the issue of which conflict was already sure: and with loud hosannas they cried, *Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.* They acknowledge Jesus as the King Messiah, so long expected to sit on David's throne; they wish him all prosperity, success, and happiness; and hail the glad day of his appearing. *Note,* With great joy doth the sinner welcome the Saviour to the throne of his heart, and wishes him to set up his throne there for ever and ever.

2. He made his entry, not with the pomp of earthly majesty, but, as better suited to his state of humiliation, on an ass's colt; that thus also he might fulfil the Scripture, which had said, *Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold thy King cometh,* to save thee from all thy spiritual foes, *sitting on an ass's colt,* that humble supplicants may be emboldened to approach him, and present their petitions. *These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified,* and from his throne on high had sent his Spirit into their hearts, to open their understandings, that they might understand the Scripture, *then remembered they that these things were written of him; and that,* though at the time they had no thoughts about the fulfilment of the Scripture, *they had done these things unto him,* which had been foretold. *Note,* (1.) Christ is Zion's King, and he must reign till he hath put all his enemies and hers under his feet. (2.) The Scriptures are often fulfilled by those who at the time have not the least intention so to do. (3.) Many times the Scriptures are read without the least knowledge of their true meaning; but, when God opens the understanding, the Bible then becomes a book perfectly new, and treasures of wisdom are discovered in it which were utterly unknown before.

3. The reason of so great a multitude coming to usher Jesus into Jerusalem at this time was, that many of those who beheld

the miracle of Lazarus' resurrection declared what they had seen: and such an astonishing work, attested by so many and credible eye-witnesses, could not but procure general admiration.

4. The Pharisees beheld with the utmost rage and vexation, the increasing respect paid to Jesus; and said one to another, *Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing?* instead of crushing him, all our attempts are baffled, and his rising fame threatens utterly to supplant us in the esteem of the people: *behold, the world is gone after him;* the generality of our followers have forsaken us, and commenced his disciples. It is high time to put some stop to these proceedings, or the grievance will be past redress. *Note,* (1.) They who oppose Christ, in vain lift up their impotent arm: against his church and kingdom no powers of earth or hell shall be able finally to prevail. (2.) Obstinate sinners grow more resolute and determined in sin, by the very checks which God gives them, and madly rush *on the thick bosses of his buckler.*

x 1 Kin. 8. 41. Gen. 9. 27. Acts 2. 10. & 17. 4. & 8. 27. *i. e.* Gentile proselytes.
y Ch. 1. 44, 45. & 6. 5, 8. & 14. 8, 9.
z Mat. 11. 8. Luke 23. 8. Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 66. 19.
a Ch. 13. 1. & 31. 32. & 17. 1, 5. Is. 52. 13. & 53. 10—12.
b Heb. 2. 10. Is. 4. 2. & 52. 14, 15. & 53. 2—12. Mat. 20. 28. 1 John 2. 1, 2. & 3. 8. & 4. 14. Rev. 5. 9. with 1 Cor. 15. 36.
c Mat. 10. 37—39. & 16. 25. & 19. 29. Mark 8. 35. Luke 9. 24. & 17. 33. & 18. 29, 30. Phil. 3. 7—10.
d Mat. 11. 29, 30. & 16. 24. & 10. 38. Mark 8. 34. Luke 9. 23. & 14. 27. Heb. 12. 1, 2.
e Ch. 14. 3. & 17. 24. 1 Thes. 4. 17. Phil. 1. 23. 2 Cor. 5. 8.
f 1 Sam. 2. 30. ch. 14. 21, 23. 2 Tim. 4. 8.

20. ¶ [x] And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: 21. The same came therefore to [y] Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, [z] we would see Jesus. 22. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. 23. ¶ And Jesus answered them, saying, [a] The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. 24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, [b] Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. 25. [c] He that loveth his life shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26. [d] If any man serve me, let him follow me; and [e] where I am, there shall also my servant be: [f] if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour.

Verses 20—26. Christ's fame had been spread far and wide. We have here,

1. The inquiry of some Greeks after him. They seem to have been devout men, proselytes from among the Gentiles, who came up to Jerusalem to worship: and, having heard so much of Jesus, were greatly desirous to see and converse with him: for which purpose they applied to Philip, with whom, probably, they might formerly have had some acquaintance. *Note,* (1.) They who have a real desire after Christ will seek him, and beg advice and assistance from those who are his ministering servants. It is good to know those that know the Saviour. (2.) The awakened sinner desires to see Jesus, his fulness of grace and all-sufficiency to save, to obtain an interest in his regard, and be admitted to communion with him.

2. Philip first consulted his brother Andrew, whether it was proper to mention the request of Gentiles to their Master; and, being agreed on the point, they informed Jesus of the matter. *Note,* In doubtful cases it is wisdom to consult a faithful friend.

3. Christ took occasion, from this application to him, to discourse on the glorious issue of his undertaking, when Jews and Gentiles by the power of his Spirit should be converted unto him. *The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified;* when, being lifted up on the cross, and exalted to the throne of his glory, he should draw all men unto him, and be honoured in the salvation of sinners from every nation, without distinction. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* So, he intimates, he must die, and be laid in the earth, that having thereby made the atonement, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, he might, in his resurrection, become the root and author of spiritual life to innumerable multitudes of his redeemed people, who should be raised by him from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness, and bring forth abundant fruits of grace, the glory of which would be ascribed to him alone. And as those whom he died to save, would, for his sake, when called and converted unto him, be exposed to the greatest sufferings, he suggests the most powerful arguments to engage their fidelity. *He that loveth his life,* and for fear of losing a temporal being, or the advantages of this world, deserts the cause of Jesus; *shall lose it,* and perish everlastingly: *and he that hateth his life in this world,* sitting loose to its honours, ease, and interests, when they stand in competition with Christ, and ready, if need be, to seal his testimony with his blood; he *shall keep it unto life eternal,* and be made for ever happy with God in glory. So that, *if any man serve me, let him follow me,* my example, the teachings of my word and Spirit, and the directions of my providence; *and* then, whatever difficulties, dangers, or sufferings he may be exposed to, *where I am, there shall also my servant be,* inheriting the same glory to which I shall be advanced; *if any man serve me,* in simplicity and godly sincerity; *him will my Father honour,* seating him on his own right hand, and causing him to sit down on my throne, as I am set down with the Father on his throne. *Note,* (1.) They who would faithfully follow Christ must prepare for sufferings. (2.) When we by faith look to and realize the glories of the world above, we cannot but sit loose to every thing here below. (3.) If Christ be our master, and our affections are placed upon him, where he is we shall shortly be. (4.) However dishonoured we may be by a world which lieth in wickedness, we shall find the most abundant recompense in the honour which cometh from God only.

27. [g] Now is my soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. 28. [h] Father, glorify thy name. [i] Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying,* I [k] have both glorified *it,* and will [l] glorify *it* again. 29. The people therefore, that stood by and heard *it,* said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. 30. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, [m] but for your sakes. 31. [n] Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. 32. And I, if I be [o] lifted up from the earth, [p] will draw [q] all *men* unto me. 33. (This he said, signifying what death he should die.) 34. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law [r] that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The son of man must be lifted up? [s] who is this Son of man? 35. Then Jesus said unto them, [t] Yet a little while is the

g Mat. 26. 37—39, 42. Mark 14. 33—36. Luke 12. 50. ch. 13. 21. Heb. 5. 7. Mat. 20. 28. Luke 22. 23.
h Ch. 18. 11. & 21. 19. Luke 2. 14. Heb. 2. 10.
i Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 17.
k Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. ch. 2. 11. & 9. 3. & 11. 4.
l Heb. 2. 10. Eph. 2. 20—22. & 3. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Is. 49. 3. ch. 13. 31, 32.
m Ch. 11. 42.
n Ch. 5. 22, 27. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. 1 John 3. 8. Heb. 2. 14. Col. 2. 14, 15. Acts 26. 18. Eph. 2. 1, 2. & 6. 12. Mat. 12. 29. Luke 10. 18. Is. 49. 25.
o Ch. 3. 14. & 8. 28. Mat. 27. 26, 35, 40, 42. Gal. 6. 14.
p Song 1. 4. Jer. 31. 3. Hos. 11. 4. ch. 6. 44.
q Rom. 5. 18, 19. Heb. 2. 9, 10. Gal. 3. 28. Rev. 5. 9. Is. 11. 10. & 49. 6.
r 2 Sam. 7. 13. Ps. 89. 4. & 110. 4. Is. 9. 6, 7. Ezek. 37. 25. Dan. 2. 4. & 7. 14, 27. Mic. 4. 7.
s Mat. 21. 10, 11. ch. 8. 53. & 1. 14. & 3. 16.
t Ch. 7. 33. & 16. 16. ver. 46. Is. 42. 6, 7. ch. 1. 5, 9. & 8. 12. & 9. 5.

u Ver. 36. Ps. 2. 12 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2. Jer. 13. 16. Zech. 10. 12. 1s. 2. 5. Eph. 5. 8, 14.
x Ps. 69. 22—28. & 21. 8—12.
y Eph. 4. 18. & 5. 9. 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15. Rom. 11. 7, 8. ch. 11. 10.
z Heb. 4. 1. Eph. 5. 14. ch. 8. 16—20, 30.
a Eph. 5. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 8. Luke 16. 8. 1 John 2. 9, 10. b Mat. 21. 17. ch. 8. 49. & 11. 54. Mat. 10. 23.

light with you. [u] Walk while ye have the light, lest [x] darkness come upon you: for [y] he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36. [z] While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be [a] the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and [b] departed, and did hide himself from them.

Verses 27—36. We have here,

1. The address of Jesus to his heavenly Father. *Now is my soul troubled*, with the prospect of his approaching sufferings, from which the humanity shrunk back; *and what shall I say*, in his distress? *Father, save me from this hour;* shall I desire to be excused the pains and death which I foresee? No; *but for this cause came I unto this hour*, according to the eternal counsels being appointed in the stead of sinners to bear their sins and carry their sorrows; and therefore he desired not to be saved from the sufferings to which he had consented, but to be supported under them, *Father, glorify thy name*, and by my death display, in the most eminent manner, the glory of thy justice, faithfulness, mercy, and every divine perfection. *Note*, (1.) The remembrance of the distress of the Redeemer's soul should be a relief to us when our spirits are troubled. He gave *his* soul an offering for sin, that he might take away the bitterness of it from *ours*. (2.) Though *now* for a little moment we feel distress, the time is near when every trouble shall end in everlasting joy. (3.) When we are under difficulties we must fly to God, humbly resign ourselves to his will, and beg for strength to glorify him in the fires.

2. The Father answers him by a voice from heaven. *Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it*, in the incarnation, obedience, miracles, and doctrine of Jesus; *and will glorify it again*, by his death, resurrection, and ascension.

3. The people who stood by heard, with astonishment, the voice; some more confusedly, who said it *thundered*, others more distinctly, who said that *an angel spoke to him*, either ignorantly or wilfully mistaking the glorious testimony.

4. Christ declares to them the meaning of what they heard. *This voice came not because of me*, for my satisfaction merely; *but for your sakes*, that you, my disciples, might be encouraged by this testimony borne to my divine mission. *Now is the judgment of this world;* the hour is near when the Jewish nation shall receive their doom, and a blessed change be wrought in the heathen world, when God shall separate the precious from the vile, and gather his chosen people to himself, the power of sin and Satan being broken: for *now shall the prince of this world be cast out:* the devil's usurped dominion over the souls of men shall be destroyed, his oracles in the heathen world be silenced, and at last his kingdom shall be finally rooted up: *and* this by a method which to human view may appear the most unlikely. *I, if I be*, or *when I am, lifted up from the earth*, on the cross as a sacrifice for sin, *will draw all men unto me*, Gentiles as well as Jews, who should be made partakers of all the inestimable blessings of his blood-shedding, and drawn to him by the irresistible cords of his dying love. (*This he said, signifying what death he should die*, even by crucifixion.) *Note*, (1.) Satan is now a vanquished foe; since Christ hath died, the head of this old serpent is bruised. (2.) Christ is the glorious centre of unity, the banner under which his redeemed with delight are gathered, and, cleaving to him in faith and love, are made more than conquerors by him over all their enemies. (3.) The cross of Christ is the powerfully attractive object, and therein all the glories of redeeming love are most eminently displayed, which effectually constrain the sinner's soul.

5. The people, hearing him speak of himself as about to be lifted up and die, object this as a confutation of the character which he assumed as the Messiah, because the Scriptures spoke of his continuing a king and priest *for ever*, Ps. cx. 4. lxxxix. 29. but they overlooked what the same Scriptures had said concerning his sufferings, and would not attend to the repeated notices which Christ had given of his rising again, and thus entering into his glory, which made his sufferings not at all inconsistent with his everlasting dominion: therefore they insultingly ask, *Who is this Son of man?* As if he himself could not possibly be the person of whom Daniel prophesied, since he acknowledged he must be lifted up and die. *Note*, They cannot but err, who take one part or text of Scripture, without considering its connection and relation with the rest. Thus many pervert the very life-giving truths of God, and make them a savour of death.

6. As Christ saw the ill spirit and temper that raised these cavils, he declines a direct answer to their question, and rather chooses to reply by warning them of their danger, if they neglected the present opportunity vouchsafed unto them. *Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you;* either meaning himself, the Sun of Righteousness, now about to set in blood; or the gospel, which should for a season be continued among them: *walk while ye have the light*, make use of your day of grace; *lest darkness come upon you*, as it certainly will if you neglect the present salvation; you will then be given up to judicial blindness, the light of the gospel will be removed, and you will be left, as a man benighted, to stumble and fall into eternal misery: *for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth*, not apprized of the precipice which is before him, and the ruin which approaches. *While*, therefore, *ye have the light*, of my presence and gospel, *believe in the light*, receive me as the Messiah, and walk under the influence of my word; *that ye may be the children of light*, the children of grace on earth, of glory in heaven, admitted *to the inheritance of the saints in light*. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is more conducive to awaken the conscience, than the remembrance of the momentariness of our time, and the infinite importance of that eternity which depends upon our improvement of it. The day of life is short, the day of grace may be much shorter. To-day, therefore, whilst it is called to-day, harden not your hearts. (2.) They who are favoured with the light of the gospel, are under peculiar obligations to know and improve the day of their visitation. (3.) Christ is the light of a benighted world, and out of him there is nothing but blackness of darkness. They who know him not, nor the rich salvation which his blood and righteousness have obtained for us, are walking in the darkness of error and sin, and hastening into that eternal darkness where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. (4.) They only are children of the light who walk in the light as Christ also walked, habitually looking to him for direction, and desiring to follow his example.

Lastly, Christ, having finished this discourse, withdrew, *and hid himself from them.* He knew their wicked designs to apprehend him, and therefore, as his hour was not yet come, he concealed himself, probably at Bethany; abandoning them also hereby to their impenitence and unbelief. Wo to the sinner from whom Jesus finally departs, and leaves him to his own heart. His ruin is inevitable.

37. ¶ But though he had done so [c] many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: 38. That the [d] saying of Esaias the prophet might be [e] fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath [e] the arm of the Lord been revealed? 39. [f] Therefore they could not

c Ch. 1. 11. Mat. 11. 20. & 21. 14, 15. & 23. 37.
d Is. 53. 1. Rom. 10. 16.
e 1 Cor. 1. 24. Rom. 1. 16. Ps. 110. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13. Eph. 2. 17—20.
f 2 Thes. 2. 11. Rom. 1. 24, 28. & 11. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

believe, because that Esaias said again,
40. [g] He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. 41. These things said Esaias, [h] when he saw his glory, and spake of him. 42. ¶ Nevertheless, [i] among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but [k] because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:
43. [l] For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

[g] Is. 6. 5, 10. & 29. 10, 11. Mat. 13. 13—15. Mark 4. 11, 12. Luke 8. 10. Acts 28. 26, 27. Rom. 11. 8. Jer. 5. 21. Ezek. 12. 2. Is. 44. 18. & 42. 19, 20.

[h] Is. 6. 1—5.

[i] Ch. 2. 23. & 8. 30. & 10. 42. & 11. 45.

[k] Ch. 3. 2. & 9. 22. & 19. 38. & 7. 13. & 16. 2.

[l] Ch. 5. 44. Mat. 16. 2, 3. Luke 16. 15. with 1 Thes. 2. 4—6. Gal. 1. 10.

Verses 37—43. The miracles and preaching of the Lord Jesus were, we find, ineffectual to the conversion of the Jewish people.

1. *Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.* In general their hearts were obstinately hardened, and they could not bear to think of acknowledging one who appeared so mean and poor as their Messiah, concerning whom they had formed such high expectations.

2. Herein the prophecy of Isaiah was eminently fulfilled, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* the declaration made by Jesus and his ministers; *and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* how few have been effectually wrought upon by the power of the Spirit, and brought to the obedience of faith? *Therefore they could not believe;* they were under, not a fatal necessity, but a moral impotency; God had determined to leave them to the hardness and impenitency of their hearts, and had predicted their infidelity and destruction; which prophecy therefore now received its accomplishment, *because that Esaias said again,* Isa. vi. 9, 10, *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts,* giving them up to follow their own devices, and punishing them with the curse of impenitence: *that they should not see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them:* they *would* not, and therefore they *shall* not. He abandons them to their wickedness, and they awfully fulfil the prophetic word. *Note,* (1.) God's spiritual judgments are a great deep. We know he is righteous, and will be found just when he judgeth. (2.) They cannot believe to whom the arm of the Lord is not revealed: for our minds are darkness, till God shines into us, to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. (3.) The Scripture must be fulfilled; and they cannot but perish whom God abandons to their own hearts' lusts.

3. The evangelist shows that the prophecy he had quoted looked farther than the times of Isaiah, even to the days of the Messiah, when the prophet *saw his glory and spoke of it.* The place referred to is Isa. vi. 1—10. and contains one of the most glorious visions of the eternal Jehovah in the whole book of Scripture, and the strongest and clearest proof of the proper and essential divinity of Jesus our Lord.

4. Though, in general, Christ was rejected by the Jewish people, *Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him,* convinced in their consciences that he was the Messiah; *but, because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue;* the Sanhedrim, his inveterate enemies, having thus determined; and, unwilling to take up this reproach of Christ, they were ashamed to own what they felt; *for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Note,* (1.) Many approve in their hearts the truths and practices, which the fear of man and the reproach of the world deter them from professing and following. (2.) They who are ashamed of Christ, and his gospel, may justly expect to be disowned by him in the great day of his appearing.

44. ¶ [m] Jesus cried, and said, [n] He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. 45. [o] And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. 46. [p] I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. 47. And [q] if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him [r] not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48. [s] He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: [t] the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. 49. [u] For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. 50. And I know that [x] his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

[m] Ch. 7. 37. Prov. 1. 20—23. & 8. 1—4.

[n] Mark 9. 37. 1 Pet. 1. 21. Mat. 10. 40. & ch. 13. 20.

[o] Ch. 14. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 4. 9. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 3.

[p] Ch. 1. 5, 9. & 3. 19. & 9. 5, 39. & 12. ver. 35, 36.

[q] Ver. 48. Mat. 26. Luke 7. 30. Is. 53. 1.

[r] *Not yet.* Ch. 5. 45. & 8. 15, 16, 26. & 3. 17. Mark 16. 16. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Mat. 18. 11. & 20. 28. Luke 9. 56. & 19. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 9, 15.

[s] Deut. 18. 19. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 29, 31. Luke 10. 16.

[t] Mark 16. 16. Rom. 2. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 20. 12.

[u] Ch. 3. 3, 11, 32. & 5. 20. & 8. 26, 38. & 14. 10. & 15. 15. & 7. 16. Deut. 18. 18.

[x] Ch. 6. 63. & 17. 3. & 20. 31. 1 John 2. 25. Ps. 19. 11. Is. 3. 10.

Verses 44—50. Jesus takes his last farewell of them, and leaves his finishing testimony, with earnestness addressing to them his discourse, if so be that at last, in this their day, they might know the things which made for their everlasting peace, before they should be for ever hid from their eyes.

1. He shows the excellence of faith. *Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me* as the Messiah, the true and only Saviour of lost souls, *believeth not on me* only, or ultimately, *but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me,* by faith in my true character as God, as well as man, and in my office as commissioned from my Father, *seeth him that sent me,* from whom as Mediator I derive my authority, and whose glory and perfections are manifested in and by me: for *I am come a light into the world,* from heaven, where I shone eternally bright in uncreated glory, *that whosoever believeth on me* as the Author of eternal salvation, and bringing life and immortality to light by the gospel, expecting to receive from me direction and guidance in the way to glory; *should not abide in darkness* in the ways of error and sin, or go down into eternal darkness. *Note,* They who walk by faith in Jesus have the light of life before them, and can never finally or fatally err.

2. He warns them of the great peril of unbelief. *If any man hear my words and believe not,* wilfully rejecting the incontestable evidences of my divine mission; *I judge him not,* do not yet pass sentence upon him, but give him a longer respite: *for I came not to judge the world,* to take vengeance upon sinners; *but to save the world,* to bring to all in general, Gentiles as well as Jews, the glad tidings of a free and full salvation. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words,* making light of the gospel and despising its offers, *hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day,* and rise up to witness against his obstinate infidelity and hardened impenitence. *Note,* (1.) The great end of Christ's coming into the world was the salvation of lost souls. They who reject him sin against their own mercies. (2.) In a judgment day, nothing will rise up to aggravate more fearfully the guilt of those that perish, than all the means of grace which they have abused

and the word of the gospel preached to them, which they have slighted.

3. He declares the authority on which he acted. *For I have not spoken of myself*, as a private person, on my own authority; *but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak*, under whose commission I act, and from whom I have received my instructions; *and I know that his commandment is life everlasting*, the doctrines, which from him I declare unto you, are the only means of leading sinners to eternal blessedness; *whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak*, and acting under his authority, and declaring his will, it would be at their peril if they rejected the truths which from God he delivered unto them. *Note*, (1.) They who would obtain everlasting life must attend to the word of Jesus. There, and only there, is it to be found. (2.) They who reject the gospel do it at their peril. Their ruin is inevitable.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Having finished his public discourses, our Saviour improves the time in private with his disciples. In this chapter, 1. *He washeth his disciples' feet,* ver. 1—17. 2. *He foretells who should betray him,* ver. 18—30. 3. *He instructs them in the great doctrine of his own death, and the great duty of brotherly love,* ver. 31—35. 4. *He foretells Peter's denying of him, ver.* 36—38.

1. NOW [a] before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that [b] his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, [c] having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2. And [d] supper being ended; ([e] the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;) 3. Jesus, knowing that [f] the Father had given all things into his hands, and that [g] he was come from God, and went to God; 4. [h] He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself. 5. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to [i] wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded. 6. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter said unto him, Lord, [k] dost thou wash my feet? 7. Jesus answered and said unto him, [l] What I do thou knowest not now: but thou shalt know hereafter. 8. Peter saith unto him, [m] Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, [n] If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, [o] not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head. 10. Jesus saith to him, He that is [p] washed needeth not, save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and [q] ye are clean, but not all. 11. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. 12. So, after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, [r] Know ye what I have done to you? 13. [s] Ye call me Master and Lord: * and ye say well; for *so* I am. 14. [t] If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16. [u] Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17. [x] If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

[a] Mat. 26. 2. Mark 14. 1. Luke 22. 1.
[b] Ch. 7. 30. & 8. 20. & 12. 23. & 17. 1. Luke 22. 53.
[c] 2 Tim. 2. 19 ch. 17. 10—12. & 15. 13. Rom. 8. 29. Jer. 31. 3.
[d] Ver. 4, 26.
[e] Ver. 27. ch. 6. 70. Luke 22. 3. Acts 5. 3. Eph. 6. 16.
[f] Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. ch. 3. 35. & 5. 22, 27. & 17. 2. Heb. 1. 2. & 2. 8. Acts 2. 36. Ps. 89. 27. Eph. 2. 22.
[g] Ch. 1. 18. & 3. 13, 16. & 8. 14, 21, 42. & 7. 29, 33. & 10. 10, 18. & 14. 2. & 16. 27, 28. & 17. 4, 8, 11, 13. Ps. 110. 1.
[h] Luke 17. 8. & 12. 37. & 22. 27.
[i] 1 Sam. 25. 41. 1 Tim. 5. 10. ver. 14, 15, 16. Mat. 11. 29. with ver. 8, 10. Eph. 5. 26, 27. 1 John 1. 7. Rev. 1. 5.
[k] Luke 5. 8. Mat. 3. 14.
[l] Ver. 12. ch. 14. 26. & 12. 16.
[m] Luke 5. 8. Mat. 16. 22. & 26. 33, 35. Col. 2. 18, 23.
[n] Ch. 3. 3, 5. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Eph. 5. 26. Tit. 3. 5. Heb. 10. 22. Mat. 3. 11. Acts 1. 5. Ezek. 36. 25.
[o] Ps. 51. 2—7.
[p] 1 Thes. 5. 23. ch. 15. 3. & 17. 17. Acts 15. 9. Num. 23 21. Song 4. 7. Jer. 50. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 17, 21. Phil. 2. 15.
[q] Ch. 6. 64, 70, 71. & 17. 12. ver. 18, 21, 26.
[r] Mat. 13. 51. & 16. 9.
[s] Mat. 23. 8, 10. Luke 6. 46. 1 Cor. 8. 6. & 12. 3. Phil. 2. 11.
* Or, *ye call me the Teacher, and the Master.*
[t] Mat. 11. 29. Rom. 12. 10. Phil. 2. 3, 5. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Luke 22. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 8. 9. & 10. 1. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 21. Gal. 5. 1, 2.
[u] Mat. 10. 24. Luke 6. 40. ch. 15. 20.
[x] Mat. 7. 21, 24. Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 21—25. & 4. 17. Luke 12. 47, 48.

Verses 1—17. This transaction is supposed by some to have passed two days before the passover, during the supper at Simon's house in Bethany; though others imagine it was done at the paschal supper itself.

1. Christ in deepest humility condescends to wash his disciples' feet, to testify his love towards them, and set them an example. *When he knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world to the Father*, by his death, resurrection, and ascension; *having loved his own which were in the world*, with an everlasting love, *he loved them unto the end*, unchangeable in his regards, and purposing to bring them to a state of everlasting happiness with himself. *And*, as an instance of his love, *supper being ended*, or, *it being supper-time, (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,) Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands*, all power in heaven and in earth; *and that he was come from God, and went to God*; notwithstanding the transcendent glory which he possessed in consequence thereof, yet to make his humiliation more illustrious, and his love appear more astonishing, *he riseth from supper, and laid aside his* upper *garments, and*, as a servant, *took a towel and girded himself*, tucked it round his waist. *After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Note*, (1.) Christ hath a peculiar people in this world, whom he distinguishes from all others with special marks of his love and regard, for whose sake he came into the world, and whom he will love to eternity, perfecting their salvation, and bringing them to be with him to enjoy him for ever and ever. (2.) The devil's wiles are fatally prevalent: even an apostle becomes his prey. Who need not then tremble for himself? (3.) Whilst the amazing humility of Jesus raises our highest admiration, we should learn to imitate his bright example and count nothing beneath us which may tend to God's glory, or the good of immortal souls.

2. We have the conversation which passed between Christ and Peter on this occasion. After having washed the feet of others he came to Peter, who, amazed at such condescension, could not bear to see his Master in so servile an office, and saith, *Lord, dost thou*, the God of glory, the divine Messiah, *wash my feet*, a vile sinner as I am? *Jesus answered and said, What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter*, be made acquainted with my purpose and design in this matter. *Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet:* he was shocked at the thought of his Master's degrading himself so low, and thought he never would consent that he should perform so mean a service to so worthless a creature as he felt himself to be. *Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not*, if thou art not spiritually washed from thy sins by my blood, and cleansed by my Spirit, which is sig-

nified by this washing of water, *thou hast no part in me*, no communion with me, no interest in me. Simon Peter saith unto him, *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head*; convinced of his error, and desiring nothing so much as his favour, and communion with him, and sensible how polluted he was throughout, he longs to be thoroughly purged from corruption, and to be washed all over. *Jesus saith to him, He that is washed*, justified, and sanctified, *needeth not, save to wash his feet* by daily application to the same fountain of my blood, to cleanse him from the remaining corruption that cleaves to him, and the guilt daily contracted in this polluted world; and will not be hereby cast out of my favour; *but is clean every whit*, regarded as complete in me, and habitually freed from the dominion of sin: *and ye are clean* in this sense, *but not all*, not every individual of you. *For he knew who should betray him, therefore he said, Ye are not all clean*, Judas the traitor being of their number. *Note*, (1.) The condescensions of Jesus cannot but be the astonishment of the enlightened soul. (2.) Though God's dispensations appear dark and intricate, it becomes us never to object; we know not now, but we shall know hereafter, the reasons of his procedure. (3.) None have a part in Christ who are not cleansed by his heavenly washing. We cannot partake of his glory, if we are not first made partakers of his grace, washed by his blood, and cleansed by his Spirit. (4.) It is good not to be peremptory in our resolves, as we may see cause to change our minds. (5.) They who have tasted the grace of God in truth, desire the perfect sanctification of their hearts and lives. (6.) We need not only once to come to Jesus for pardon and grace, but every day to renew the exercise of faith and repentance. (7.) Christ tries the hearts of his professing people, and knows who are hypocrites, and who are disciples indeed.

3. Christ explains to them the meaning of what he had done. *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet*, condescending to every office of kindness towards the meanest disciple. And to reconcile them to duties so self-denying, he adds, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him.* With such an example therefore before them, they need not think the lowest offices of charity a disparagement to them. *If ye know these things*, and understand my meaning, *happy are ye if ye do them*, and in your spirit and practice conform to my precepts and pattern. *Note*, (1.) Jesus is our Lord and Master; his teaching we must observe, his commands obey. (2.) A faithful disciple of Jesus studies how to serve his brethren, and is ready to condescend to the lowest in every work of faith and labour of love. (3.) Christ hath set us an example that we should follow his steps; what he enjoins on us he hath practised first himself. (4.) Knowledge is good, but practice is the life of religion. They are doubly criminal who know better and do worse.

18. ¶ I speak not of you all; [y] I know whom I have chosen: but, that the scripture may be fulfilled, [z] He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. 19. [*] Now [a] I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*. 20. [b] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 21. When Jesus had thus said, [c] he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, [d] Verily, verily, I say unto you that one of you shall betray me. 22. [e] Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. 23. Now there was leaning on Jesus' [*] bosom one of his disciples, [f] whom Jesus loved. 24. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. 25. He then, [g] lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it? 26. Jesus [h] answered, He it is to whom I shall give a [i] sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. 27. And after the sop [k] Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, [l] That thou doest, do quickly. 28. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. 29. For some *of them* thought, because [m] Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. 30. He then, having received the sop, [n] went immediately out: and it was night.

y 2 Tim. 2. 19. ch. 7. 12.
z Ps. 41. 9. Deut. 32. 15. Mat. 26. 23.
* Or *From henceforth.*
a Is. 41. 23. & 46. 10. ch. 14. 29. & 16. 4.
b Mat. 10. 40. & 25. 40. Luke 10. 16. ch. 12. 44. 1 Pet. 1. 21.
c Ch. 11. 33. & 12. 27. Mark 3. 5. Acts 17. 16.
d Mat. 26. 21. Mark 14. 18. Luke 22. 21. Acts 1. 16, 17. 1 John 2. 19. ch. 6. 70.
e Mat. 26. 22. Mark 14. 19. Luke 22. 23.
* Or, *there was lying close to his breast.*
f Ch. 19. 26. & 20. 2. & 21. 7, 20, 24. & 11. 3.
g They sat at meals in a recumbent posture. Ver. 23 ch. 21. 20.
h Softly to John alone. Ver. 28.
i Or *morsel*, i. e. the bitter herbs, Exod. 12. 8.
k Ver 2. Luke 22. 3. Ps. 109. 6. Acts 5. 3. Mat. 12. 45.
l Ps. 81. 11, 12. Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. 2 Thes. 2. 10—12. Jam. 1. 13—15. Rev. 17 17.
m Ch. 12. 6.
n Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. Is. 59. 7. Rom. 3. 15. Job 24. 13, 14. ch. 3. 19, 20.

Verses 18—30. Christ knew who should betray him, and here he begins to point out the traitor to his disciples.

1. In general he lets them know there was a false disciple among them, on whom none of the things he had spoken would have any effect. *I speak not of you all*, as clean and faithful; *I know whom I have chosen* to salvation, as well as apostleship; *but that the Scripture might be fulfilled*, which said, *He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me*, therefore have I called one to be an apostle whom I knew to be a traitor, notwithstanding all the kindness I have shown him. *Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he*, and may be the more confirmed in your faith of my divine omniscience and mediatorial character, when you see this prediction awfully verified. And to encourage you to be faithful, whatever falsehood you may see in others, or whatever humbling services you may be called to, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me*, and testifies his respect for me, in the honour paid to my ambassador; *and he that receiveth me* as the Messiah sent of God, *receiveth him that sent me. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit*, deeply affected with the traitor's guilt, and the ruin hanging over his head, *and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Note*, (1.) The Lord knows those that are his, and whom he hath chosen to grace and glory, and they shall never perish. (2.) Many eat at Christ's table who most ungratefully lift up their heel against him, and with aggravated guilt prove faithless and betray him. (3.) Every true minister of Jesus is his ambassador, and represents his Prince's person. For his sake therefore he is to be honoured.

2. He points out Judas in particular as the person designed. Shocked at what they heard, doubtful which of them was meant, and anxious to know, each of them looked at the other, to observe whether either would betray any symptoms of guilt; and, as John, the beloved disciple, lay on a couch next below Jesus, as it were at his bosom, Simon Peter eager to be resolved, privately gave him a hint that he should softly ask their Master who was

meant: when, taking an opportunity, he whispered, *Lord, who is it? Jesus answered*, so low as not to be heard by the rest, *He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it* in the sauce. *And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon*, intimating to John that he was the person. *Note*, (1.) It is a bitter grief to true disciples to hear of the scandals brought upon Jesus by false professors of religion. (2.) Those are happy whom Jesus favours with his especial regard, and lays in the bosom of his love.

3. Judas immediately sets himself to accomplish his hellish purpose. *After the sop, Satan entered into him*, possessed his body and soul, and drove him to the precipice of destruction. *Then said Jesus, What thou doest, do quickly*, either challenging him to do his worst, or abandoning him to Satan's devices. None at the table having heard what he said to John, they suspected Christ had given Judas orders to provide something against the feast, or to distribute some relief to the poor, he being the purse bearer. Urged on by the power of the wicked one, *he went out presently*, fixed in his base and wicked purpose; *and it was night*, the fittest time for such deeds of darkness; and, however unseasonable the hour, so eagerly was he bent upon his treachery, that nothing could delay him. *Note*, (1.) When Christ abandons the sinner to Satan's power, he rushes headlong to ruin. (2.) They who withdraw from the society of the faithful, begin to show the apostasy of their hearts.

o Ps. 40. 8. ch. 18. 11. Luke 12. 50. Col. 2. 14, 15. Heb. 2. 10, 14. ch. 21. 19. & 12. 23, 28. Luke 2. 14.

p Ch. 12. 16, 23, 24, 27, 28. & 17. 1, 5, 6. & 7. 39. Phil. 2. 6—11. Is. 53. 10—12. Heb. 1. 3. Rev. 3. 21. Ps. 110. 1.

q Ch. 16. 16. & 7. 34. & 8. 21. & 14. 19.

r Lev. 19. 18. ch. 15. 12. Eph. 5. 2. 1 John 4. 21. & 2. 7, 8. & 3. 11, 16, 23. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 3. 8, 9. Gal. 6. 2. Mat. 22. 39. Jam. 2. 8. 1 Thes. 4. 9. Rom. 12. 10. & 13. 8—10. Gal. 5. 14, 22. Heb. 13. 1.

s Acts 4. 32. & 2. 46. 1 John 2. 10. & 3. 14. & 4. 20.

31. ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, [o] Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32. [p] If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. 33. Little children, [q] yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34. [r] A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35. [s] By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Verses 31—35. When Judas was gone out, Jesus addressed himself to his faithful apostles.

1. He informs them, that the hour of his glorification was now nearly arrived. *Jesus said, now is the Son of man glorified*; he is ready by his sufferings to obtain the glorious victory over all his own and his people's foes, sin, Satan, death, and hell; *and God is glorified in him*: all his divine perfections being most eminently displayed in the obedience to death of the Redeemer. *If God be glorified in him*, his justice, truth, wisdom, mercy, exalted to the highest by his cross; *God shall also glorify him in himself*, or *with himself*; bringing him to the mediatorial throne in heaven: *and shall straightway glorify him*, in the amazing signs and wonders which should accompany the death of Jesus, and especially by his speedy resurrection.

2. He intimates to them, that the time of his stay with them would be very short. *Little children*, so tenderly and affectionately doth the Lord Jesus regard his dear people, *yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me*: longing for my bodily presence with you: *and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come: so now I say unto you*; you must be content for a while under the irksome separation, till the hour of your glory shall also arrive, (ver. 36.) and ye shall then come to be with me where I am.

3. He charges them to cultivate mutual love. *A new commandment I give unto you*; not indeed now first enjoined, since it was the old commandment which had been from the beginning, but through the degeneracy of the times it had ceased to be practised, but was now more clearly explained, and enforced by new motives; a command the most excellent, and the fundamental law of that kingdom which he came to establish; *that ye love one another, as I have loved you*; ready to every act of kindness, and to part with every thing, if need be, even life itself, for the good of your brethren: and this was to be the characteristic mark of their discipleship; for *by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*; they shall take knowledge of you that you have been with me, and learned of me. *Note*, The distinguishing badge of true Christianity is this spirit of fervent charity. Love is the image of Jesus: he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in him. This will make us meek and lowly towards our brethren; ready to pass by their provocations; to forgive their offences; to pity their infirmities; to bear with their differences in opinion or practice; to delight in their prosperity; to promote their good, spiritual and temporal; and ever to maintain towards them the kindest sentiments, and be constant in warmest applications to the throne of grace on their behalf. Then shall the wondering world say of us as of old, *See how these Christians love one another*. A spirit of selfishness, narrowness, bitterness, dispute, animosity, is a reproach to the profession of Christianity; and proves, that those who are actuated by it, deceive their own selves, when they call themselves the followers of Jesus.

t Ver. 24. ch. 21. 21. & 14. 5, 8, 22. & 16. 17.

u Ver. 33. ch. 21. 18, 19. 2 Pet. 1. 14.

x Ver. 33, 36. Mat. 26. 34, 35. Mark 14. 29, 31. Luke 22. 33.

y Mat. 26. 34. Mark 14. 30. Luke 22. 34. 1 Cor. 10. 12. Prov. 16. 18. & 29. 23. & 26. 12, 16.

36. ¶ Simon Peter said unto him, [t] Lord, Whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; [u] but thou shalt follow me afterwards. 37. Peter said unto him, Lord, [x] Why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. 38. Jesus answered him, [y] Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Verses 36—38. We have here a conference between Christ and Peter on what he had said, ver. 33.

1. Peter, dissatisfied perhaps with what Christ had spoken, ver. 33. is solicitous to know whither he was going, and therefore eagerly inquires. Probably he thought he was about to quit Judea, and, according to their prejudiced opinions of the Messiah, to erect his kingdom in some other part of the world.

2. *Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now*; Christ had work yet for Peter to do upon earth, before he should gain the glorious crown of martyrdom; *but thou shalt follow me afterwards*, partaking both of my sufferings and glory. *Note*, Our eternal inheritance is secured for us; and though here we wait and suffer a while, the happy hour will arrive, when we shall come to be with Jesus where he is.

3. Peter, with too much self-confidence, unwilling his Master should doubt his courage, or determined purpose to cleave to him wherever he went, replied, *Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?* what dangers or difficulties can deter me? *I will lay down my life for thy sake*, and will sooner die than desert thee.

4. Christ warns him of the weakness of his resolution, and how unable he would find himself for the last part of what he promised. *Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?* how little dost thou know thy own weakness! *Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, take notice of it as the most certain truth, *The cock shall*

not crow till thou hast denied me thrice; before another sun shall rise, and the time of cockcrowing is over, thou shalt not only deny me as thy Master, but disown the very knowledge of my person. *Note,* We know not our weakness till the temptation comes, and every boast of self-confidence is a certain prelude to a fall.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

This chapter is a continuation of Christ's discourse with his disciples after supper. When he had convicted and discarded Judas, he set himself to comfort the rest, who were full of sorrow upon what he had said of leaving them, and a great many good words and comfortable words he here speaks to them. The general scope of this chapter is in the first verse; it is designed to keep trouble from their hearts: now in order to that, they must believe. And let them consider, 1. *Heaven as their everlasting rest,* ver. 2, 3. 2. *Christ himself as their way,* ver. 4—11. 3. *The great power they shall be clothed with by the prevalency of their prayers,* ver. 12—14. 4. *The coming of another comforter,* ver. 15—17. 5. *The fellowship and communion that should be between him and them after his departure,* ver. 18—24. 6. *The instructions which the Holy Ghost should give them,* ver. 25, 26. 7. *The peace Christ bequeathed to them,* ver. 27. 8. *Christ's own cheerfulness in his departure,* ver. 28—31. *And this which he said to them is designed for the comfort of all his faithful followers.*

1. LET [a] not your heart be troubled: [b] ye believe in God, believe also in me.
2. [c] In my Father's house are many mansions: [d] if *it were* not *so,* I would have told you. [e] I go to prepare a place for you. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, [f] I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

a Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 1, 2. ver. 27, 28. ch. 16. 6, 22.
b Ps. 112. 7. Is. 26. 3, 4. Acts 4. 11, 12. & 8. 37.
c 2 Cor. 5. 1. Rev. 2. 7. & 3. 12, 21. 2 Pet. 1, 11.
d Ch. 3. 2. Rev. 1. 5. & 3. 14. Tit. 1. 2.
e Heb. 11. 16. & 6. 20. & 7. 25. & 9. 24. ch. 17. 24. & 13. 33, 36.
f Ver. 18, 28. Mat. 28. 20. Acts 1. 11. Heb. 9. 28. 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17. Phil. 1. 23. Rom. 18. 17. ch. 12. 26. & 13. 36. & 17. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Rev. 3. 21.

Verses 1—3. To comfort them against the approaching trials, which would be apt to shake the foundation of all their hopes,

1. He exhorts them to maintain unshaken confidence in him amidst all their difficulties. *Let not your heart be troubled;* the thought that one disciple should betray him: another deny him; that he should suffer, die, and leave them: these things deeply affected them; and he, who knows the souls of his people in adversity, endeavours to provide for their comfort. *Ye believe in God,* according to the revelation he hath made of himself in his word; *believe also in me,* as the true Messiah, as the almighty Saviour, able to support you in all your exigencies, and to comfort you under every affliction. Or it may be read, *Believe in God;* live in the constant exercise of faith in the power and grace of my Father; and *believe also in me;* have the same confidence in me, who am one with him in the same undivided Godhead.

2. He assures them his absence would be to their great advantage. *In my Father's house,* in heaven, the place where the eternal Father makes the brightest manifestations of his glory, there are *many mansions,* abiding dwelling-places, where there is perfect peace and joy, and love and happiness; *if it were not so, I would have told you,* and not encouraged you to follow me at the loss of all things, if I had not an eternal recompense to bestow upon you. *I go to prepare a place for you,* as your forerunner, to take possession of the purchased inheritance, to be ready there to receive and welcome you, having prepared you for the mansions prepared for you. *And if I go and prepare a place for you,* as surely as I leave you now, *I will come again,* and that quickly, *and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also;* admitted to my presence, partaking of my glory, and made for ever blessed and happy in the enjoyment of my love and favour. *Note,* (1.) The believing prospect of the glory which shall be revealed, should comfort us under all our present trials and afflictions. (2.) In heaven there are mansions for the many sons whom Jesus shall bring home to his Father's house: *none shall thrust out his mate: for there is room enough for all.* (3.) None who trust on Jesus, whatever they may quit or lose for his sake, shall ever have cause to lament their choice: in heaven they will be abundantly repaid. (4.) They who look for a better country, that is a heavenly, shall by blessed experience shortly prove the faithfulness of him who hath promised to bring them thither, who also will do it. (5.) As surely as Christ is gone into heaven, so surely will he come to bring his people home to himself: either calling them away by death, or finally appearing at the great judgment day, when all his elect shall be gathered together unto him, and be taken to reign with him in glory everlasting; and well may we comfort one another with these words.

4. [g] And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5. ¶ [h] Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6. Jesus saith unto him, I am [i] the way, and [k] the truth, and [l] the life: [m] no man cometh unto the Father but by me. 7. [n] If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8. ¶ Philip saith unto him, Lord, [o] shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me [p] hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then,* Shew us the Father? 10. Believest thou not [q] that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak [r] not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, [s] he doeth the works. 11. Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me; or else [t] believe me for the very works' sake.

g Ver. 2. Luke 24. 26. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12.
h Ch. 20. 25, 27, 29.
i Is. 35. 8. Acts 4. 12. Eph. 2. 18. Heb. 10. 19—22.
k Ch. 1. 14, 17. & 8. 32. Acts 10. 43. Eph. 1. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 20. Col. 2. 9, 17. Rev. 1. 5.
l Ch. 1. 4. & 3. 14—18, 36. & 6. 33—58, 63. & 8. 52. & 10. 10, 28. & 11. 25. & 14. 19.
m Acts 4. 12. Eph. 2. 18. ch. 10. 7, 9. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9.
n Ch. 8. 19. ver. 9, 10, 20. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 3.
o By some visible representation. Mat. 11. 27. ch. 1. 18. Exod. 33. 20.
p Ch. 10. 30. & 12. 45. & 17. 21—23. ver. 20. Heb. 1. 3. Col. 1. 15. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Phil. 2. 6.
q Ver. 9, 11. ch. 10. 30, 38. & 17. 21—23. ver. 20. 1 John 5. 7.
r Ch. 3. 2, 32, 34. & 5. 36. & 7. 16. & 10. 38. & 12. 49. & 17. 8. & 6. 8, 14. Luke 24. 19.
s Ch. 5. 17. Acts 10. 38. Heb. 2. 4. 24. Mat. 11. 5.
t Ch. 5. 36. & 10. 25, 32, 38. & 17. 21, 22. & 15.

Verses 4—11. Having set before them the happiness provided for them, Christ farther encourages them, saying, *Whither I go, ye know:* I have repeatedly told you; *and the way ye know,* which I have taught you by my word and my example.

1. Thomas replied to this, *We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* Though in general they had some knowledge of the way to heaven, whither Christ was going; yet mistaking his discourse, and having his head filled with the conceits of Christ's temporal kingdom, Thomas, like the rest, supposes he was going somewhere to erect his throne upon earth, but where, was a secret to him, and he wished to know, as Peter had done, that, though with less self-confidence, he might follow his Master.

2. Jesus answers, *I am the way;* through his blood alone there is access unto God, and by his grace only can we be enabled

to walk in the path which leads to eternal glory: *the truth;* whom all the ritual services prefigured, in whom they were fulfilled, whose promises are faithful, and who hath never failed those that trust him: *and the life;* who hath life in himself, and is the author of spiritual and eternal life to his people; *no man cometh to the Father but by me;* in our present fallen state we can neither draw near to a throne of grace with acceptance, but by Jesus Christ as our advocate and surety; nor can we ever hope to appear before the throne of glory, but as complete in him, and making mention of his righteousness only. *If ye had known me,* in my true character as God, as well as man, *ye should have known my Father also;* forasmuch as we are in nature and essence one: *and from henceforth;* as by this intimation ye may perceive my meaning, *ye know him and have seen him* in me. *Note,* (1.) The knowledge of the Godhead of the Redeemer is essential to salvation. (2.) Christ can discover in his disciples more knowledge of his blessed self than they think themselves possessed of, and are therefore complaining of their ignorance.

3. Philip not yet entering fully into his Master's meaning, *saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father,* some visible and corporeal representation of him, *and it sufficeth us;* this will fully satisfy us, and silence all our further inquiries.

4. Jesus gently rebukes the dulness of his comprehension, and *saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?* my divine original as well as mission? *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;* the divine perfections which I have displayed, prove my essential Godhead, as partaker of the same nature, attributes, and glory with him: *and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? believest thou that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* though in person distinct, yet in essence one, inseparably united in the same eternal Godhead. *The words that I speak unto you,* deep and mysterious as some of the doctrines are which I declare, *I speak not of myself,* by any authority purely my own, or as apart from the Father: *but the Father that dwelleth in me he doeth the works,* which confirm my divine mission, and set God's seal to the truth which I deliver. *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me,* upon the credit of the testimony which I bear; *or else,* if you think that insufficient, *believe me for the very works' sake,* which are such convincing proofs of the truths which I preach, and done in such a godlike manner, by my word, in my own name, and by my own power, as shows my Godhead and glory. *Note,* (1.) They who have been long in Christ's school, should make their profiting appear. They are justly culpable who, blessed with the richest means, do not grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (2.) In Christ Jesus we behold a brighter display of God's glory and presence than ever before appeared, seeing in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

u Mark 16. 17, 18. Luke 10.17. Acts 2. 4. & 5. 16. & 8. 7. & 10. 46. & 16. 18. & 19. 6. 22. 1 Cor. 12. 10. 28. Mat. 21. 21.
x Acts 5. 15. & 19. 12. & 2. 41. & 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 6. 7. Rom. 15. 19.
y Mat. 7. 7. & 21. 22. Is. 45. 11. Mark 11. 24. ch. 15. 7. & 16. 23, 24. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14. Jam. 1. 5. & 5. 16. Eph. 3. 20, 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Col. 3. 17. Luke 2. 14.

12. ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, [u] the works that I do shall he do also; and [x] greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. 13. [y] And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it.*

Verses 12—14. The loss of their Master's presence and company dejected his poor disciples. To comfort them, he promises,

1. To endue them with the most astonishing miraculous powers. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me,* as you do, *the works that I do shall he do also;* the same miracles ye have seen me perform: *yea, and greater works than these shall ye do;* more numerous and more wonderful, (See Acts v. 15. xix. 12.) And particularly this may refer to *the gift of tongues,* and the vastly superior success which should attend the preaching of the apostles, and the much more numerous converts they should make, than their Master had done; and this *because I go to the Father,* when, having received all power in heaven and earth, he would, in the most abundant manner, pour out the Spirit upon them from on high, to enable them for the great work whereunto he had ordained them.

2. To grant them all their petitions. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name,* pleading my promise, and depending on my advocacy; *that will I do,* by my own divine power, giving you an answer to every prayer according to the various necessities of your souls; *that the Father may be glorified in the Son;* and his glory should be the end of all our petitions; and in gratifying them Christ designs to advance his Father's honour, and manifest his power, grace, and faithfulness. *If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it,* granting you every needful supply of grace and strength for your support and success in the work of the gospel.

15. ¶ [z] If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16. [a] And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17. [b] *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom [c] the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [d] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

z Ver. 21, 23. ch. 15. 10, 14. 1 John 2. 3, 5. & 3. 24. & 5. 2, 3.
a Ver. 26. ch. 15. 26. & 16. 7, 13. Rom. 8. 34, 26, 27. Mat. 28. 20.
b Ch. 15. 26. & 13. 13. 1 John 2. 27. & 4. 6.
c 1 Cor. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 7.
d Ch. 4. 14. Rom. 8. 9, 14—16, 26. 1 Cor. 3. 16. Gal. 4. 6. & 5. 18. 25. 2 Tim. 1. 14. Ezek. 36. 27

Verses 15—17. Our Lord proceeds to encourage and comfort them in the view of the service before them, and in the prospect of his departure from them.

1. They must give a proof of their love of him by their observance of his commandments. *If ye love me, keep my commandments.* He speaks not as doubting the truth of their regard, but as quickening them to give increasing proofs of the sincerity of their love, by a conscientious respect to all his precepts.

2. He promises to send them another Comforter, who should abundantly supply the loss of his bodily presence. *I will pray the Father,* and effectually be your advocate, *and he shall give you another Comforter,* and counsellor, to support, direct, and quicken you, whose loss they should no more fear, for Christ will take care *that he may abide with you for ever,* carrying you through all your trials, and death itself, to an eternal inheritance in glory; *even the Spirit of truth,* the Spirit of the true God, whose inspiration dictates the sacred oracles, and who leads the minds of benighted sinners into the knowledge of all truth; *whom the world cannot receive,* the men of the world, who harden their hearts in pride and impenitence; *because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him;* are strangers to his operations; are led by sight, not by faith; and therefore count his teaching to be foolishness and enthusiasm. *But ye know him,* as having already illuminated your hearts, and sanctified, in a measure, your souls; *for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you,* as his living temples, guiding, governing, strengthening, comforting, and blessing you continually. *Note,* (1.) In the one Godhead there are three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each possessed of the same divine perfections. (2.) All Christ's true disciples to the end of time may expect divine teaching and consolation amidst all their trials; and, whilst they are looking to him, shall be strengthened, quickened, and comforted in his blessed work and ways. (3.) Every faithful soul is the temple of the Holy

Ghost, and by experience feels the indwelling power of his effectual grace.

18. [e] I will not leave you [*] comfortless: I will come to you. 19. [f] Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: [g] because I live, ye shall live also. 20. At that day ye shall know [h] that I *am* in my Father, and [i] ye in me, and I in you. 21. [k] He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he [l] that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. 22. Judas [m] saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, [n] how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? 23. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and [o] we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24. [p] He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: [q] and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

e Mat. 18. 20. & 28. 20. Heb. 13. 5. Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 1, 2. & 46. 4. ver. 3, 28.
* Or *orphans*.
f Ch. 7. 34. & 8. 21. & 13. 33. & 16. 16.
g Ch. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 13, 20.
h Ver. 9, 10. ch. 17. 3, 21—23.
i Rom. 8. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 30. & 6. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 17, 21. Gal. 2. 20. Eph. 2. 10. & 5. 30. ch. 17. 21, 23.
k See ver. 15, 23, 24. & 15. 14. 1 John 2. 5. & 5. 3.
l Ps. 149. 4. & 147. 11. & 35. 27. Is. 62. 3—5. Zeph. 3. 17. 2 Cor. 3. 18.
m Luke 6. 16. Acts 1. 13. Jude 1.
n Luke 1. 34. ch. 3. 4, 9. & 6. 52, 60. & 7. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 7. ch. 16. 18.
o See ver. 21. Rev. 3. 20. Heb. 13. 5. Ps. 91. 1. & 121. 3—8. 1 John 4. 16. Rev. 3. 12, 21. & 7. 15, 16. & 21. 3, 11. 1 John 2. 24.
p See ver. 15, 21, 23.
q Ch. 5. 19, 26, 38. & 3. 32, 34. & 7. 28. & 8. 26, 28, 38, 42. & 12. 44, 50.

Verses 18—24. Christ pursues the same reviving subject. He was indeed going from them for a while, but his absence would not be long.

1. *I will not leave you comfortless*, as orphans: *I will come to you*; either at his resurrection, or by the mission of his Spirit, or by his final appearing to judgment. *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more*; they who rejected him, would no more be favoured with a sight of him after his resurrection: *but ye see me*; I will appear to you; ye shall see me now by faith, and shortly shall eternally enjoy the full vision of me in glory. *Because I live ye shall live also*; I, as the fountain-head of spiritual life, will communicate the living influences to you my members; and, vitally united to me, you shall live in holy conformity to me here, and in the eternal enjoyment of me hereafter. If we are disciples indeed, our life is bound up with that of the Son of God himself, nor can death destroy our union with him: he that liveth and believeth in him shall never die eternally. *At that day*, of Christ's resurrection as a triumphant conqueror over all his foes; or when, by the effusion of the Holy Ghost, their minds should be more deeply illuminated; and more especially when they should come to meet him in the kingdom of his glory; *ye shall know that I am in my Father*, one in essential union; *and you in me, and I in you*, as living members of my body mystical, joined to me in one spirit. And, in consequence of this, *he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them*, is enabled truly to understand, and in simplicity to obey them, *he it is that loveth me*; he gives hereby an undoubted proof of his unfeigned affection to me: *and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father*, as the object of his favour, delight, and complacence: *and I will love him*, with unchangeable regard; *and will manifest myself to him*, making the richest discoveries of grace and glory to his soul. *Note*, (1.) Every faithful soul is a partaker of a divine nature, and lives in a state of inseparable union with the Son of God. (2.) Christ gives increasing discoveries of his truth and love to the souls of his people, till they are brought to see him face to face. (3.) The proof of our love to Jesus must appear in our fidelity and obedience. *If we say we abide in him, and walk in darkness, we lie.* (4.) Though our love to him is not the cause of his love to us, but the effect: yet, as we are enabled to make it appear more clearly, we shall find brighter manifestations made to our souls of our interest in him; shall experience sweeter foretastes of the eternal bliss which is promised; and shall receive increasing supplies of the Spirit, to perfect in us what is yet lacking, and prepare us for our eternal abode with him.

2. One of Christ's disciples, either not apprehending fully his meaning, desired him to explain it; or overwhelmed with admiration, could not but wonder at the endearing condescensions of Jesus *to them* in particular; *Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot*, but Jude the brother of James, another of the twelve apostles, *How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Note*, They who are the objects of God's distinguishing favour, cannot but admire the grace of which they are partakers, and with wonder cry, *Why me, Lord?*

3. Christ graciously confirms and explains what he had spoken. *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him*, and make the most delightful discoveries to him of his grace and favour; *and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*; take up our dwelling in the temple of his heart, manifesting our gracious presence to him, and maintaining, through the Spirit, in the word and ordinances, the most blessed and abiding communion with him. On the other hand, *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings*, disobeys my commands, and neglects my institutions; and, thereby proving his aversion to me, shuts the door of his heart against me, and wilfully rejects my gospel, with all its inestimable blessings. *And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me*; therefore they who disrelish and reject it, must be necessarily excluded from his favour as well as mine.

25. [r] These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you. 26. [s] But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, [t] he shall teach you all things, and [u] bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. 27. ¶ [x] Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let [y] not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28. Ye have heard how I said unto you, [z] I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, [a] ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is [b] greater than I. 29. [c] And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. 30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for [d] the prince of this world cometh, and [e] hath nothing in me. 31. [f] But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

r Ch. 16. 1, 16, 25.
s Ver. 16, 17. ch. 15. 26. & 16. 7. Luke 24. 49. Acts 1. 5. Rom. 8. 26. Joel 2. 28.
t Ch. 16. 13, 14. 1 John 2. 20, 27. Jer. 31. 34.
u Ch. 2. 22. & 12. 16.
x Rom. 5. 1, 10. 2 Cor. 5. 20, 21. Eph. 2. 14, 16, 17. Col. 1. 20. & 3. 15. Phil. 4. 7. ch. 16. 33. Hos. 2. 18, 19. Is. 54. 7—10. 1 Pet. 3. 14.
y See ver. 1. Rev. 1. 17, 18. Is. 35. 3, 4. & 51. 12. & 41. 10.
z See ver. 3. Acts 1. 11.
a Ps. 47. 5, 6. ch. 16. 7.
b Ver. 12, 18. ch. 10. 29. 1 Cor. 11. 3. Is. 49. 1—6. & 42. 1—6. Jer. 31. 22. Gal. 4. 4. with ch. 5. 18. & 10. 30. Phil. 2. 6. 1 John 5. 7. Is. 9. 6.
c Ch. 13. 19. & 16. 4, 30, 31. & 10. 38. & 11. 15, 42.
d Eph. 2. 2. & 6. 12. Luke 4. 6. 2 Cor. 4. 3. ch. 12. 31. & 16. 11. Luke 22. 52.
e Heb. 7. 26. Luke 1. 35. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 1. 19. & 2. 22. 1 John 3. 5, 8.
f Heb. 5. 7, 8. Phil. 2. 8. ch. 10. 18. & 18. 11. Ps. 40. 8. Mat. 26. 39, 42.

Verses 25—31. For the further encouragement of his disciples, he proceeds,

1. To assure them of the teaching and consolations of the Holy Ghost. *These things have I spoken, being yet present with you:* the time being short, I have endeavoured to lay them clearly before you: *but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost,* the third person in the sacred Trinity, *whom the Father will send in my name,* at my intercession, to supply my absence, and to advance my kingdom and glory; *he shall teach you all things,* opening your understandings to clearer discoveries of the truth, enlarging your capacities, and strengthening your memories; for he shall *bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you;* he would not only revive the memory of all the works and discourses of Christ which they had forgotten, but give them a distinct knowledge of what, at the time Christ spoke, they did not understand.

2. He engages to give them peace in the midst of all their troubles. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you,* as my last bequest; *peace* with God, as reconciled to you; *peace* in your own consciences, from the confidence of his love; *peace* with each other, united in bonds of firmest union; *my peace,* which none but I your Master could procure or bestow, the purchase of my blood, the fruit of my intercession; *I give it* freely, fully *to you,* and all who follow you as my disciples. *Not as the world giveth, give I unto you;* not as a piece of compliment, but as a real blessing; not as worldly gifts, uncertain and precarious, but as a gift infinitely more valuable than all that earth can bestow, and infinitely more abiding. It is what the world can neither give, and, blessed be God, can never take away from us. *Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,* under the apprehension of any sufferings or trials when I am absent from you: my peace, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds.

3. He assures them his departure would be for his own glory and their good, and therefore they ought rather to rejoice than be sorry for it. *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you,* to take you to the mansions prepared for you. *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father,* to receive the mediatorial throne; *for my Father is greater than I;* not in his divine nature, but as, in the economy of man's salvation, the Son of God humbled himself to take the human nature, and submitted to the form of a servant: *though equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead, yet inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood;* therefore, in his exaltation, as the man Christ Jesus, it became them to be joyful. *And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass,* in my death, resurrection, ascension, and the effusion of the Holy Ghost, *ye may believe,* that I am the true Messiah, and will assuredly fulfil all the promises which I have made to you.

4. He tells them, that the great enemy of souls would now be finally vanquished. *Hereafter I will not talk much with you;* the time of my departure is at hand: *for the prince of this world,* he who hath usurped the dominion over the hearts of fallen men, and once pretended to offer me the kingdoms of the world, (Luke iv. 5—7.) he *cometh,* with all his fury and rage, to make his last, his desperate attack; *and hath nothing in me;* all his attempts will be baffled, and his malice recoil upon his own head with greater aggravation of his guilt; and to his utter confusion and destruction, he will find no guilt in me to accuse my conscience, no legal power over me in consequence of sin, see Heb. ii. 14. no corruption to work upon, or afford an opening for his temptations: and as Christ once conquered for his people in his own person, so will he conquer in them, and bruise Satan shortly under their feet.

5. He informs them, that his departure from them was according to the Father's commandment, and a matter of his most willing obedience. *But, that the world may know that I love the Father,* though Satan hath no power over me, I am ready to lay down my life, according to the Father's will: *and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do;* readily offering myself to suffer according to his eternal counsels. *Arise, let us go hence,* and meet the approaching danger. *Note,* When duty calls, and God so ordains, instead of flying from sufferings, we must cheerfully offer ourselves up, willing to glorify God, if he so pleases, even in the fires.

CHAP. XV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter, 1. *Christ speaks of himself under the figure of a vine,* ver. 1—7. 2. *Commands them to abound in fruits of love,* ver. 8—17. 3. *Comforts them against the world's hatred,* ver. 18—27.

1. I [a] AM the true vine, and my Father is [b] the husbandman. 2. [c] Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and [d] every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3. [e] Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4. [f] Abide in me, and I in you. [g] As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: [h] he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for [g] * without me ye can do nothing. 6. [i] If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, [k] ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8. [l] Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; [m] so shall ye be my disciples.

a Is. 4. 2. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. with ch. 1. 9. & 6. 32, 35.
b Is. 5. 1. Mat. 20. 1. & 21. 33. 1. Cor. 3. 9. Is. 60. 21.
c Mat. 15. 13. Luke 13. 7. & 3. 9. Mat. 13. 41, 42. ver. 6. Heb. 6. 8.
d Is. 27. 9. Eph. 5. 9, 26. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 5—9.
e Ch. 13. 10. & 17. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 22. Eph. 5. 26.
f Gal. 2. 20. Col. 2. 6, 7. & 1. 23. 1 John 2. 6. Is. 45. 24, 25.
g Ch. 6. 68. & 1. 14, 16. ver. 5. Acts 4. 12. Phil. 4. 13.
h Hos. 14. 8. Phil. 1. 11. ch. 1. 14, 16. Gal. 5. 22—24. 2 Pet. 1. 2—8. & 3. 18. Col. 2. 9—12, 19. 2 Cor. 3. 5.
* Or *severed from me.*
i Ps. 1. 4. & 21. 9, 10. Mat. 3. 10. & 7. 19. 2 Tim. 3. 13. Jude 12. Mat. 25. 26, 41. & 13. 41. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22. Rev. 22. 15. & 21. 8.
k Ch. 14. 13, 14. & 16. 23, 24. ver. 16. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14. Jam. 5. 16. Is. 58. 9. & 65. 24. Job 22. 27. 1 Ps. 92. 13—15. Mat. 5. 16. Eph. 1. 12. Phil. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 12. & 4. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 20.
m Ch. 8. 31. & 13. 35. Mat. 5. 44, 45. Luke 6. 35.

Verses 1—8. We have here a continuation of Christ's farewell discourse to his disconsolate disciples.

1. He represents himself to them under the figure of a vine. *I am the true vine;* as a *vine,* mean and weak in his outward appearance, yet spreading on every side; sending his salvation to the ends of the earth, and bringing forth the most reviving fruits, pleasing to God, and cheering to man: *the true* vine, the life-giving source of spiritual influences conveyed from him to all the branches of his body mystical; and those who are ingrafted upon him, will never find him to fail or deceive them: *and my Father is the husbandman,* who planted it in the earth, and with watchfulness and care every moment preserves and waters it; supporting Christ in the exercise of his mediatorial office, with complaisance delighting in him, and guarding him and every member of his church, who are grafted upon him, from every evil.

2. His professing people are the branches, on whom the great husbandman employs his care. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away.* Some professing members of Christ are only nominally disciples, not vitally united to Jesus by faith and love, and bearing no true fruits of grace and holiness: these the Lord taketh away. In time of persecution they fall off; or

they turn aside into such errors in principle, or immoralities in conduct, as discover their hypocrisy: or, if they are spared to the last, by death they are cut off, and then the hypocrite's hope perisheth. *And every branch in me that beareth fruit,* truly ingrafted into Christ, partaking of the quickening influences of his Spirit, and bringeth forth the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God; *he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit:* by his word, his Spirit, his afflictive providences, he continues to cut off the luxuriant and noxious shoots of pride, lust, and worldliness, which would still spring from the remainders of indwelling corruption, even in the hearts of the faithful; and to encourage, cultivate, and increase the gracious dispositions he hath implanted, that they may shoot more vigorously, and bring forth more abundantly in all good conversation and godliness.

3. As he had now purged out Judas from among them, he exhorts them to approve their fidelity. *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you;* your hearts being purified by faith, in which way the word becomes effectual to all Christ's disciples in every age, purging out the dross of in-dwelling evil, and sanctifying the soul. *Abide in me,* as the root and stock from whence all spiritual supplies of grace are drawn; placing all your dependence on my blood and righteousness, my Spirit and power; *and I* will then abide *in you,* as the living principle of all goodness. *As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine,* and maintain a constant communication with the root, *no more can ye, except ye abide in me.* The best of men have no stock of grace within themselves, but must maintain habitual communion with Jesus, if they would continue to bring forth fruit unto God. *I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me,* in the constant exercise of faith, *and I in him,* by the powerful operation of my Spirit, *the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me,* separate from me, and for a moment destitute of my quickening influence, *ye can do nothing* truly good and acceptable to God, but must wither, droop, and die, as a branch deprived of communication with the living root. Without Christ we can do nothing towards our justification, sanctification, or glorification; he must be to us *all* and *in all.*

4. He warns them of the fatal consequences of departure from him. *If any man abide not in me;* basely desert my cause, and make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience; or, whilst he hath a name to live, be really found dead in trespasses and sins: *he is cast forth as a branch;* excommunicated from the company of the faithful here below, if his iniquities are brought to light: or, at farthest, cut off at death from the society of the blessed, and *is withered;* his gifts wither; his zeal grows cold; his devotion dies; his reputation decays; his hopes perish; *and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned;* and thus shall the angels of God at the last gather out of Christ's kingdom all that offend and do iniquity, when hypocrites will have their portion with the unbelievers and impenitent, and be cast together into the everlasting burnings. Let us read and tremble.

5. He assures them the prayers of all his faithful people should be heard and answered. *If ye abide in me,* steadily cleaving to me under all discouragements; *and my words abide in you,* and habitually influence your conduct; *ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you;* whatever is for his glory and our good shall be granted. And *herein is my Father glorified,* by your abiding in me, and asking and receiving out of my fulness; *that ye bear much fruit* of grace, which will redound to his praise; *so shall ye be my disciples;* evidently proved to be such by your good conversation and approved fidelity, and shall be acknowledged by me in the day of my appearing and glory.

9. [n] As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: [o] continue ye in my love. 10. [p] If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11. [q] These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full. 12. ¶ [r] This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13. [s] Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14. [t] Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; [u] for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. 16. [x] Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and [y] ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that [z] whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. 17. [a] These things I command you that ye love one another.

n Mat. 3. 17. & 12. 18. Col. 1. 13. Gal. 2. 20. Rev. 1. 5.

o 1 John 4. 16. Gal. 2. 20. Jude 21.

p Ver. 14. ch. 14. 15, 21, 23. 1 John 2. 5. Is. 42. 1. ch. 10. 17.

q See ch. 14. 29. & 16. 24. & 17. 24, 13. 1 John 1. 4.

r Ch. 13. 34, 35. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 4. 8. 1 John 3. 14, 16. & 4. 21.

s Rom. 5. 6—8. John 3. 16. Eph. 5. 2. Gal. 2. 20. ch. 10. 10, 11, 15. 1 John 4. 10.

t Ver. 10. ch. 14. 15, 23. 2 Chr. 20. 7. Jam. 2. 23. Is. 41. 8. Mat. 12. 50.

u Gen. 18. 17. Ps. 25. 14. ch. 17. 8, 26. Eph. 1. 9. & 3. 5. Col. 1. 26. 2 Tim. 3. 15—17. Mat. 13. 11.

x 1 John 4. 10. ch. 6. 70. & 13. 18, 19.

y Mat. 28. 19, 20. Mark 16. 15. ch. 4. 36 & 20. 21—23. Acts 28. 28. & 13. 46, 47. Eph. 3. 5—8. Gal. 1. 16. Col. 1. 6, 23, 26. Acts ii—xix.

z Ch. 14. 13, 14. Is. 45. 11. Mat. 7. 7, 11. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Mat. 21. 22. see ver. 7.

a See ver. 12.

Verses 9—17. We have here,

1. The love of Christ towards his people. *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you;* and this love of his appeared most eminent and singular;

(1.) In his laying down his life for them. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:* but greater even than this hath been the love of Jesus; when we were enemies Christ died for us.

(2.) In his kindness towards them, admitting them into his favour and friendship. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,* and herein show yourselves faithful to me. *Henceforth I call you not servants;* though to be employed by such a Master, and that he condescends to accept of our services is abundant honour; *for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth,* nor is admitted to any such intimacy and familiarity as you have been indulged with: *but I have called you* by the honourable name of *friends,* and have treated you with the most cordial affection and confidence; *for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you;* all things that as Mediator he came to preach and teach, respecting the salvation of sinners, and the counsels of grace; he had kept back nothing from them, and his Spirit would shortly give them a clearer knowledge of what he had revealed to them.

(3.) In his ordaining them to the high dignity of apostleship as well as to eternal life and glory. *Ye have not chosen me,* and by your choice laid any obligations on me to return the kindness; *but I have chosen you,* of my sovereign will and pleasure, and to manifest the riches of my grace and love; *and ordained you,* both to your office as apostles, and to salvation, as elect vessels; *that ye should go and bring forth fruit,* in the purity of your conversation, and the abundant success of your ministry; *and that your fruit should remain,* when your fidelity shall receive an eternal recompense, and the blessed effects of your labours, preaching, and writings, remain to the latest ages.

(4.) In his granting them all their petitions. *That whatsoever*

ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you: and the assurance of being heard is the great inducement and encouragement to us to pray. How can we but be happy to draw near to God, when we are thus constantly assured of receiving an answer of peace.

2. He exhorts them, from the consideration of his love to them, to make the due and grateful return to him, by loving and serving him, and one another. *Continue ye in my love:* invariable and unchangeable. *If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love:* if ye approve your fidelity, ye shall have the unutterable satisfaction of my approbation, and have increasing supplies of grace ministered to you, yet farther to establish, strengthen, and settle you. *Even as I have kept my Father's commandments,* with unabating ardour and constancy: *and abide in his love,* am now, and shall for ever be, the object of his highest delight and complacence, as you shall be of mine. And next to your love of me, *this is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* And again, ver. 17. this being among the best proofs of real love to Jesus, and the great commandment which he especially enjoins, as the distinguishing badge of true discipleship. *Note,* (1.) The love of Christ known and believed, can alone engage our hearts to a return of love. (2.) The purpose of universal obedience to Christ's commands, is the sure evidence of love without dissimulation. (3.) No duty is more frequently and earnestly urged upon us, than Christian charity, because nothing is more ornamental to our profession; nor do we in any thing more resemble him whose name and nature is love.

18. ¶ [b] If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you. 19. [c] If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but [d] because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. 20. Remember the word that I said unto you, [e] The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; [f] if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. 21. [g] But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. 22. [h] If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no † cloak for their sin. 23. [i] He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24. [k] If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: [l] but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25. But *this cometh to pass,* [m] that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

b Mat. 10. 22, 25. 1 John 3. 1, 13. Jam. 4. 4. Ps. xxii, lxix. Is. liii.
c Eph. 5. 7, 11. 1 John 4. 5. & 2. 16.
d Ch. 17. 14, 16. Rom. 12. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 4. Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 16, 17.
e Mat. 10. 24, 25. Luke 6. 20. & 2. 18. & 5. 16, 18. & 6. 66. & 7. 32. & 8. 40, 59. & 9. 22. & 10. 31, 39. & 11. 46—57. Acts ii—xxvi. 1 Thes. 2. 14, 15.
f Is. 53. 1—3. Ezek. 3. 7.
g Is. 65. 5. Mat. 5. 11. & 10. 22. & 24. 9. ch. 16. 3. & 8. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
h Mat. 7. 28. ch. 3. 2. & 7. 46. & 9. 39, 41. ver. 24. Acts 17. 30. Jam. 4. 17. Ezek. 2. 5. Luke 12. 47, 48. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26—31. Rom. 1. 20—32.
† Or *excuse.*
i Ch. 5. 38. & 8. 19, 47. & 12. 49. & 14. 9—11. 1 John 2. 23. 2 John 9.
k Mat. 11. 5. Luke 24. 19. Mark i—x. Acts 2. 22. & 10. 38. Heb. 2. 4.
l Ch. v—xii. Mat. iv, viii—xxii. Luke iv—xx. ch. 3. 2. & 9. 32.
m Mat. 5. 18. ch. 19. 24, 28, 36. Ps. 35. 19. & 69. 4.

Verses 18—25. They who will be faithful to the Saviour, must expect the enmity of a sinful world; where wicked men, many and mighty, will unite in hatred, opposition, and persecution against them.

1. The followers of Jesus may expect to be hated, persecuted, despised. Since the original enmity put between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman, never was there one truly godly man, but more or less experienced the like treatment.

2. So dealt they with our great Lord and Master, whose example should reconcile us to suffer with him. *If the world hate you,* marvel not; *ye know that it hated me before it hated you:* never was character so spotless as his, never one suffered so much from the enmity of the world.

3. The reason for the world's hatred of us is evident. *If ye were of the world,* conformed to it in your tempers, manners, and practice, *the world would love his own,* would caress and esteem you; *but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you;* because by my distinguishing grace I have taken you for my own, and ordained you to eternal life and glory; your heavenly minds and conversation cannot but witness against, and reprove their vain and wicked ways, and therefore their anger rises. *Note,* The men of the world have not only a hatred of real Christians in general, but an especial enmity against gospel ministers, whose preaching and rebukes exasperate those who reject the counsel of God against their own souls.

4. He reminds them, that this was no more than he had all along taught them to expect. *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord,* nor may expect more respectful treatment. *If they have persecuted me,* with all manner of rancour, reviling, and injuries, *they will also persecute you,* my ambassadors, who bear the same message, and go forth into the same world that lieth in wickedness: *if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also;* the gospel you preach will be despised and rejected, and your words be misrepresented, cavilled at, and ridiculed, as mine in general have been. *But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake,* because you have an interest in my love, vindicate my honour, and preach my gospel, whatever other pretences they may feign as the ground of their opposition; *because they know not him that sent me,* their minds are blinded by pride and prejudice, ignorant of the true God and his Messiah. *Note,* (1.) All who will live godly in Christ Jesus, may expect persecution of one kind or other. (2.) The faithful ministers of the gospel may not be surprised, if their preaching is treated with contempt or ridicule; their Lord was so insulted. (3.) Persecutors often pretend other causes to cover their enmity against God's people: but whatever be their pretext, the true reason is his image in them which they cannot bear, and his gospel which they abhor.

5. Christ suggests the inexcusable guilt of those who rejected him and his gospel. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin,* comparatively speaking: *but now they have no cloak for their sin,* their infidelity is wilful, their impenitence obstinate. *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also;* the hatred shown to his person, ministers, and gospel, ultimately centres in God himself. *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did,* such stupendous miracles as incontestably proved my divine mission, *they had not had sin;* they might have had some cloak for their unbelief, *but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father,* rejecting the testimony he thus hath borne to me, and fixed in a rooted aversion to me and him. *But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written,* Psalm xlix. 4. *in their law, They hated me without a cause. Note,* (1.) They are left most inexcusable, and their guilt most aggravated, who persist in unbelief, and go to hell with Bibles in their hands. (2.) They who hate the gospel, and Christ the author of it, whatever they may pretend, truly hate God. Enemies to the Christian religion, are enemies to all religion; and Deist is really but another softer name for Atheist. (3.) Enmity against Christ and his gospel is most absurd and unreasonable; it is quarrelling with our own mercies, and being, in fact, the worst enemies to ourselves.

26. ¶ [n] But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he [o] shall testify of me: 27. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

n Luke 24. 49. ch. 14. 17, 26. & 16. 7. 13, 14. Acts 2. 33. Rom. 8. 9. Gal. 4. 6. 1 John 2. 20, 27. & 5. 5, 8.
o Acts 1. 8, 21, 22. & 2. 32. & 3. 15. & 5. 32. & 4. 20, 33. & 10. 39, 41. & 13. 31. 1 Pet. 5. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 16. 1 John 1. 1—3. Luke 1. 2, 3. Mark 1. 1.

Verses 26, 27. Though the enemies of Jesus and his people are many and mighty, he hath provided such supports for them, as shall enable them to triumph over all opposition.

1. His Spirit shall be their comfort and strength. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.* On the day of Pentecost, the most abundant influences of the Holy Ghost were to be poured forth upon them, he being the third person in the sacred Trinity, proceeding from the Father and the Son, whose peculiar office in the economy of man's salvation is to testify of Christ, as the Spirit of truth speaking in the apostles, bearing witness to the divine glory and grace of the Redeemer, and making the preaching of the gospel effectual to the consciences of men. He is *the advocate*, convincing men of sin, righteousness, and judgment; *the Comforter*, filling the souls of Christ's faithful people with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

2. They shall themselves hereby be enabled to bear a noble testimony for Christ. *Ye also shall bear witness*, preaching my gospel in the face of all opposers, and confirming it by the miraculous powers with which you shall be invested; and your evidence cannot be justly excepted against, *because you have been with me from the beginning*, and speak the things of which you have yourselves the most undoubted assurance. *Note*, Ministers can then powerfully preach Christ, when they have themselves experimentally known him, have been with him in faith and love, and for a season have walked in a state of communion with him.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

We have here the conclusion of Christ's discourse. 1. *He warns them of their approaching trials.* 2. *He promises,* (1.) *That he should send them the Comforter,* ver. 7—15. (2.) *That he would visit them again at his resurrection,* ver. 16—22. (3.) *That he would secure them an answer of peace to all their prayers,* ver. 23—27. (4.) *That he was now but returning to his Father,* ver. 28—32. (5.) *That whatever troubles they might meet with in this world, by virtue of his victory over it, they should be sure of peace in him,* ver. 33.

1. THESE [a] things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. 2. [b] They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh, [c] that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. 3. [d] And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. 4. [e] But these things have I told you, that, when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, [f] because I was with you. 5.

a Ch. 14. 25. & 15. 11. Mat. 5. 11, 12. & 11. 6. & 24. 6, 10. & 26. 31. ver. 4, 6.
b Ch. 9. 22, 34. & 12. 42. Luke 6. 22.
c Is. 65. 5. Acts 26. 9. & 23. 14. & 9. 1. Gal. 1. 13. Mat. 24. 9 ch. 15. 21. Phil. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 14. Acts iv—xxvi. 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. 2 Cor. 4. 8—12. & 11. 23.
d See ch. 15. 21. & 8. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Acts 3. 17. Rom. 10. 2. Mat. 24. 9.
e Mat. 24. 25. & 10. 17. ch. 13. 19. & 14. 29. Is. 46. 10.
f Mat. 9. 15. Mark 2. 19. Luke 5. 34.

¶ [g] But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? 6. But because I have said these things unto you, [h] sorrow hath filled your heart. 7. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; [i] It is expedient for you that I go away: [k] for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but, if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8. And when he is come, he will * reprove [l] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9. [m] Of sin, because they believe not on me: 10. [n] Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more: 11. [o] Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. 12. [p] I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13. [q] Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: [r] and he will shew you things to come. 14. He shall [s] glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you. 15. [t] All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

g Ch. 7. 33. & 8. 14, 21. & 14. 3, 28. ver. 10. 16, 28. ch. 17. 4, 5. Heb. 1. 3. Ps. 110. 1.
h Ch. 14. 1, 27, 28. ver. 20, 22.
i Ch. 11. 50. Rom. 8. 28. 2 Cor. 1. 17. Eccl. 3. 1.
k Ch. 7. 39. & 14. 16, 26. & 15. 26. Luke 24. 49. Acts 1. 4, 5, 8. & 2. 4, 33. Eph. 4. 8—13. Ps. 68. 18.
* Or *convince.*
l Mark 16. 15. Rom. 10. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 12. 1 Thes. 1. 5. Acts ii—xix.
m Rom. 3. 19, 20. & 7. 9. Acts 2. 37, 38. & 3. 13—19. & 19. 18—20. & 7. 54.
n Is. 53. 10—12. & 42. 21. & 45. 24, 25. Luke 24. 26. Dan. 9. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Rom. 4. 25. & 10. 4. & 3. 24—26. 1 Tim. 3. 16.
o Is. 49. 24—26. Mark 12. 27. Ps. 68. 18. ch. 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 5. 22. Col. 2. 14, 15. Heb. 2. 14. Luke 10. 18. 1 John 3. 5, 8. Rev. 12. 7, 8. Eph. 2. 1, 2. Tit. 3. 3—7. Acts 10. 42. & 17. 31.
p Ch. 15. 15. with ver. 6. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. & 10. 23. Heb. 5. 11. Mark 4. 31.
q Ver. 14. ch. 14. 17, 26. & 15. 26. 1 John 2. 27. Esth. 4. 11—13.
r Joel 2. 28. Acts 11. 28. & 13. 11. & 21. 11. & 20. 29. 1 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Tim 2. 1—6. 2 Pet. 1. 14, &c. Rev. iv—xxii.
s Ver. 9, 11. Phil. 2. 8—11. Heb. 2. 9. ch. 2. 11. with Acts 20. 35. 1 John 2. 27.
t Mat. 11. 27. ch. 3. 35. & 13. 3. & 17. 2, 10. Col. 1. 19. & 2. 3, 9.

Verses 1—15. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Christ lets his disciples know what they had to expect.

1. He tells them what they must expect, and warns them to prepare for it. *These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended:* that ye might not be discouraged by sufferings, faint under the cross, and desert the path of duty. *They shall put you out of the synagogues,* excommunicate you from their society, and assemblies for divine worship; *yea, the time cometh,* when so infatuated and bloody will their persecutions be, *that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service. Note,* (1.) The best friends of the church of Christ have been often branded, by those who pretend to be church rulers, as her worst enemies. (2.) Blind bigotry raises the bitterest persecution; the blood of martyrs hath never flowed more liberally than by their hands, who murdered them, as excommunicated heretics, in the name of the Lord.

2. He suggests the real cause of this treatment. *These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me;* though they may pretend the highest attainments of wisdom and piety, and persecute you as a set of poor, illiterate, deluded enthusiasts; yet they are sunk in spiritual ignorance, which, though no excuse for their wickedness, is an argument for you to bear patiently with them, and to pity and pray for them.

3. He lets them know that he gave them these warnings for the confirmation of their faith in him, and to encourage them to bear up when the day of temptation came upon them. *These things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them,* and have a fresh proof of my omniscience and faithfulness to you. *And these things I said*

not unto you at the beginnign, because I was with you, to bear the chief burden myself, and to comfort and support you. *Note,* Christ graciously proportions our trials to our strength, and will never suffer us to be tempted above what he will enable us to bear.

4. He assures them, though he was going, and they were dejected, it would be abundantly for their good. *But now I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?* Though they had asked him with a temporal view, they had no apprehension that he was going to heaven, to prepare an abode for them in glory, and therefore did not pursue their inquiries. *But because I have said these things unto you,* of my departure and your approaching troubles, *sorrow hath filled your heart,* when you ought rather to rejoice. *Nevertheless, I tell you the truth,* greatly as you dread my going from you, *it is expedient for you that I go away,* and a kind father will give his children not what they foolishly wish, but what he knows will be best for them; *for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you;* such being the decree of the Most High: *but if I depart,* according to the eternal counsels, finishing my work, and entering into my glory, *I will send him unto you,* as the fruit of my death, and the effect of my intercession; and this would more than supply the loss of his bodily presence. *Note,* We are often melancholy, when we ought to rejoice; much readier to pore over our corruptions, and terrify ourselves with the fear of our enemies, than to exult in the promises, and look up with confidence to Christ Jesus; and this is as dishonourable to him, as uncomfortable to ourselves.

5. He describes the blessed work of the Spirit which he promises to send: *When he is come, he shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.*

[1.] *Of sin;* awakening the consciences of many, both Jews and Gentiles, to a discovery of their native corruption, actual transgressions, exceeding sinfulness, and liableness to the wrath of an offended God: especially of the great sin of unbelief, this being the damning iniquity, and the cause of sinners' destruction, *because they believe not in me* for pardon, grace, life, and salvation; and under this view of themselves, he lays them in the dust of deepest debasement.

[2.] *Of righteousness;* of the perfect personal righteousness of Jesus, whom the Jews had so blasphemed; and of the completeness of that everlasting righteousness which, as the mediator, he wrought out for miserable sinners, and to which the Spirit directs the self-despairing soul to look, as the grand foundation of hope towards God; *because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;* his exaltation to the right hand of God being the fullest token of his Father's approbation of him, and that he is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; and therefore he was no more to appear in his present state of humiliation, because he had, to his Father's entire satisfaction, finished the work he had given him to do.

[3.] *Of judgment;* that all power is given to Christ, in heaven and earth, to sanctify and renew the hearts of his people, and execute judgment on all their enemies and his, the finally impenitent and obstinate sinners, *because the prince of this world,* the devil, *is judged;* his power is broken, his kingdom destroyed; and whilst the triumphs of a Redeemer's grace are now continually spreading through the earth, in multitudes rescued from the hands of this enemy, he and all his adherents shall shortly be brought to receive their final sentence at the bar of this eternal judge; and wicked devils and wicked men together be cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

6. The Spirit shall wonderfully enlarge their understandings, and give them a clear insight into many glorious truths, that as yet they did not fully apprehend. *I have many things to say unto you,* respecting the abolition of the Mosaical economy, the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, &c. *but ye cannot bear them now,* through the deep-rooted prejudices which still held possession of their hearts; bigotted to their ritual institutions, and expecting a temporal kingdom. *Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come,* then they should be enabled to receive those discoveries which they now could not bear; *for he shall guide you into all truth;* opening their understandings to understand the Scripture, as an unerring guide leading them into the most explicit views of the gospel truths, and enabling them to speak and act under his direction with infallible wisdom; *for he shall not speak of himself,* as a private person, or serving any interest merely his own, *but,* in exact correspondence with Christ and the Father, *whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak,* according to the eternal counsels of peace between them both, with which he is fully acquainted, searching *the deep things of God, and he will show you things to come;* as a spirit of prophecy, enabling them to look into futurity, and make known to the church the things which in succeeding ages should come to pass, even to the end of time.

7. In all this work of the Divine Spirit, his intention eminently is to glorify the Redeemer. *He shall glorify me;* all the gifts and grace he bestows, and the miracles he enabled the apostles to perform, were designed to exalt Jesus as the Redeemer of men; and bear witness to his divine mission, *for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.* Christ hath obtained all blessings for us; the office of the Spirit is to apply them to our hearts, and put us in possession of that pardon, righteousness, adoption, comfort, grace, and glory, which he hath purchased by his obedience unto death in behalf of his people. *All things that the Father hath are mine;* not only as we are one in nature, perfection, and unity of interest, but as all the blessings he designs for his chosen people, are lodged in my hands as mediator; *therefore said I, He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.* Spirit of truth and grace, apply these inestimable blessings to my soul!

16. ¶ [u] A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again [x] a little while, and ye shall see me, because [y] I go to the Father. 17. [z] Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? 18. They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? [a] we cannot tell what he saith. 19. Now Jesus [b] knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me? 20. Verily, verily, I say unto you, that [c] ye shall weep and lament, [d] but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, [e] but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. 21. [f] A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, [g] for joy that a man is born into the world. 22. [h] And ye now therefore have sorrow: [i] but I will see you again,

[u] Ver. 5, 17—19. ch. 7. 33. & 13. 3, 33. & 14. 19.
[x] Acts 2. 4. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Rev. 1. 7. Heb. 9. 28. & 10. 37.
[y] Ver. 5, 28, ch. 13. 1, 3. & 14. 2, 28. Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51.
[z] Luke 9. 45. & 18. 34. & 24. 25. ch. 12. 16. & 14. 5, 8, 22.
[a] Mat. 16. 9, 11. Heb. 5. 11. Prov. 30. 3. Ps. 73. 22. & 94. 8.
[b] Ch. 2. 24, 25. & 21. 17. Mat. 9. 4. Acts 1. 24. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23. Ps. 139. 1—4. Jer. 17. 10. ver. 30.
[c] Mat. 27. 27—50. Mark 15. 15—37. Luke 23, 27. & 24. 17.
[d] Rev. 11. 10. & 18. 7. Mat. 21. 38. Mark 12. 7.
[e] Ps. 126. 5, 6. Acts 2. 46, 47. & 5. 41. & 13. 52. Jude 24. 1 Thes. 4. 17, 18. 2 Thes. 2. 16, 17.
[f] Is. 26. 17. Gen. 3. 16.
[g] Gen. 21. 6. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Heb. 12. 11.
[h] Ver. 6, 20.
[i] Luke 24. 41, 52. ch. 17. 13. & 20. 19, 20, 28. & 21. 1—14. Acts 5. 41. & 13. 52. & 20. 21. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Mat. 25. 23. Is. 61. 7.

and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

Verses 16—22. To comfort his sorrowful disciples, the gracious Saviour suggests farther grounds of encouragement to them.

1. He promises to visit them again shortly. *A little while and ye shall not see me*, he should be hid in the grave; *and again, a little while, and ye shall see me*, after my resurrection, *because I go to the Father;* to enter upon his glory, to appear in the presence of God as his people's advocate, to take possession of the purchased inheritance for them, and at last to bring them to be with him where he is.

2. Some of the disciples, blinded with their natural prejudices, and stupid with sorrow, were at a loss to comprehend his meaning: and repeating his words, inquired of one another, what they understood by them, and all confessed they knew not what he meant by *a little while*.

3. Christ, who knew the secrets of their hearts, and what was the subject of their whispers, prevented their inquiries by explaining the meaning of *the little while* he spoke of. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall lament and weep* at his sufferings and death, with all the circumstances of ignominy wherewith it would be attended; *but the world shall rejoice*, the wicked world; the scribes and rulers would triumph, as if they had obtained a complete victory over him; *and ye shall be sorrowful;* sunk in deep dejection, their hopes swallowed up in despair; *but your sorrow shall be turned into joy;* when seeing him arisen from the dead they would triumph, fully assured of his being the Messiah: and with joy still more unspeakable and full of glory would they be filled, when, after beholding his ascension into heaven, the Holy Ghost should from on high be shed abroad in their hearts. Then all their pangs, like those of a woman in travail, when her son is born, would be swallowed up and forgotten in the comfort which should succeed, ver. 21. *Ye now therefore have sorrow*, because I am leaving you; *but I will see you again*, certainly and shortly, *and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you;* it will never again be interrupted by any more distress and fears, but continue permanent as the source from whence it flows. *Note*, (1.) Though we may sometimes be in heaviness, through manifold temptations, it is our comfort that we know our sorrows will be momentary; but our joys, which shall succeed, eternal. (2.) The triumphing of the wicked is but for a moment, and must end in eternal disappointment and misery. (3.) Though children are certain cares, uncertain comforts, we naturally rejoice at their birth; but when we see what a world of sin they are come into, and what snares are before them, we need tremble for them and pray, lest it should be *better for them they had never been born*. (4.) In heaven all our sorrows will be forgotten, and every tear wiped away from our eyes. Then shall we lament no more the absence of Jesus, but without interruption behold the beatific vision. (5.) Christ hath spiritual joys to bestow on his people, of which a malicious persecuting world can never rob them.

23. And in that day ye shall [k] ask me nothing. [l] Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you. 24. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: [m] ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. 25. These things have I spoken unto you in † proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in [n] proverbs, but [o] I shall shew you plainly of the Father. 26. At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, [p] that I will pray the Father for you; 27. [q] For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. 28. [r] I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, [s] I leave the world, and go to the Father. 29. ¶ His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou [t] plainly, and speakest [u] no proverb. 30. [x] Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: [y] by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. 31. Jesus answered them, [z] Do ye now believe? 32. [a] Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to ‡ his own, and shall leave me alone: and [b] yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. 33. [c] These things I have spoken unto you, that [d] in me ye might have peace. [e] In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; [f] I have overcome the world.

k As ch. 14. 5, 8, 22. ver. 17.
l Mat. 7. 7, 11. & vi. 22. Luke 11. 9. ch. 14. 13, 14. Is. 58. 9. & 65. 24. Job 22. 27.
m Mat. 7. 7, 11. Jam. 1. 5. & 5. 16. Is. 45. 11. ch. 15. 11. 1 John 1. 1—4. & 5. 13—15.
† Or *parables.*
n Or *parables.* Ver. 12, 16—18.
o Acts 2. 34, 36. & 4. 20, 26, 27.
p Mat. 6. 7, 8. ver. 27.
q Ch. 14. 21, 23. & 17. 6, 8, 23. with 1 John 4. 10, 19. ver. 28.
r Ch. 1. 9. & 3. 19. & 6. 14. & 7. 29. & 8. 42. & 17. 18. & 9. 39. & 11. 27. & 12. 46. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. 1 Tim. 1. 15.
s Ch. 7. 33. & 8. 14, 21. & 13. 1, 3. & 14. 28. & 17. 11, 13. ver. 5, 16.
t Acts 1. 3. Mat. 13. 11.
u Or *parable.* V r. 25. Mat. xiii. Luke xv, xvi, &c.
x Ver. 19. ch. 21. 17. Heb. 4. 13. Col. 2. 3. Rev. 1. 14.
y Ver. 27. ch. 17. 8, 14. & 2. 11. & 1. 14.
z Luke 8. 25. ch. 11. 26. & 13. 38. ver. 32.
a Zech. 13. 7. Mat. 26. 31, 56. Mark 14. 27, 50. ch. 20. 10.
‡ Or *his own home.*
b Ch. 8. 16. & 14. 10, 29. Is. 42. 1, 6. & 50. 7, 9. & 49. 2, 8.
c Ch. 15. 11. & 14. 30. ver. 4.
d See ch. 14. 27.
Mic. 5. 5. Is. 9. 6, 7. Rom. 5. 1, 10. Eph. 2. 14. Col. 1. 20. e Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Heb. 12. 6. Col. 1. 24. Rev. 3. 19. f Is. 49. 24, 25. 1 Cor. 15. 57. 1 John 4. 4. & 5. 4. Gal. 6. 14.

Verses 23—33. An answer to all their inquiries and prayers is promised them *in that day*, when, under the Spirit's mighty influences, they should in all things be taught and directed.

1. *In that day ye shall ask nothing*, shall not need to make any farther inquiries about *these things*, concerning which you are now at a loss, and which *I have spoken unto you in proverbs;* under similitudes, in parables, and short sentences; and though sufficiently plain, you, through your present prejudices and sorrow, have not understood. *The time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father*, make such clear discoveries to your minds by my Spirit, of the whole system of gospel truths; of the divine perfections and personality of the Father; of his gracious designs towards his people; of the nature and end of all my sufferings; and of the glory thence accruing to God, as will be perfectly satisfactory. *Note*, All the great and glorious truths of God's word are dark and unintelligible, till he is pleased by his Spirit to shine into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory, and make us acquainted with the great mysteries of godliness.

2. All their prayers shall be answered. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name*, as your exalted Saviour and great high priest, entered for you into heaven itself, and ever living to make intercession for you, *he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name*, nothing so great as they were now invited to do; or rather had not in their addresses to the Father made use of his mediation, or pleaded his blood and righteousness as the ground of their hope: *ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full;* all that you can wish or desire shall be granted, till the abundant joys of present grace and divine consolations shall reach their perfection in eternal glory. *At that day*, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon you, *ye shall ask in my name*, with entire dependence on my atonement, and all-prevailing advocacy; *and I say not unto you, I will pray the Father for you;* not that he would ever cease to intercede for them, but that the Father would be ready

of himself to grant all their petitions: *for the Father himself loveth you*, is your friend and Father, and reconciled God, *because ye have loved me*; this blessed effect produced on their hearts might assure them of their Father's love, which was the cause of it: *and have believed that I came out from God*, as the true Messiah, executing the divine commission received from him. *Note*, (1.) What an encouragement have we to pray, when the promise is so full? All the blessings which, in humble dependence on our Jesus, we can ask, believing, we are sure to receive. (2.) Nothing so directly tends to increase our spiritual comforts, as the abiding prayer of faith. (3.) God delights in those whom Jesus has redeemed; and as he hath loved them with an everlasting love, he will never cease heaping upon them the constant gracious tokens of his regard, when they approach him as their reconciled God and Father in Jesus Christ. (4.) True faith always works by fervent love; they who know Jesus as their Saviour, cannot but feel their hearts drawn out towards him with enlarged affection, and shortly they shall be made perfect in love.

3. He sums up plainly for their comfort all he had been saying to them. *I came forth from the Father*, where from everlasting I am, and voluntarily submitted to my present state of humiliation; *again*, having finished the work which was given me to do, and obtained the eternal redemption of my people, *I leave the world, and go to my Father*, to that eternal glory which I had with him before the worlds were. This therefore should be matter of their joy, not sorrow.

4. The disciples now enlightened to understand his discourse, with delight express their satisfaction in what he had said, and their entire faith in him as the true Messiah. *Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb*; the meaning is no longer dark or doubtful. *Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee*; we perceive that thou art acquainted with our inmost thoughts, and canst answer us, even before we have proposed our questions: *by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Note*, Truths, though plain, affect us not, till Christ speaks to the soul: and then we wonder how we could have overlooked before what now we see so clearly.

5. Jesus, who saw that their faith was less established than they apprehended, warns them how soon it would be shaken. *Do ye now believe? Behold*, as a farther proof of my omniscience, *the hour cometh, yea, now is*, the moment is at hand *that* I shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners, *and ye shall be scattered every man to his own*, flying for safety to any friend's house that will conceal you, *and shall leave me alone*, in the power of my enemies; *and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me*; not only as one in nature, and in the inseparable union of the Godhead, but his gracious presence would be with him, as Mediator, supporting him under all his sufferings. *Note*, (1.) In trying times, many are apt to desert the profession they have made, unwilling to suffer for Christ and his cause. (2.) They who think that they do believe, must not be self-confident: he that thinketh he standeth, must take heed lest he fall. (3.) God never forsakes his afflicted people; when all the world, yea, their nearest and dearest friends desert them, a sense of his love, the light of his countenance, and his supporting presence, will make them an abundant recompense for the loss of all besides.

6. For their comfort, he assures them, the issue of all their trials and his would be peace. *These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace*; whatever happened unto them, what he had spoken would afford them a sufficient ground for their support and comfort. *In him*, by faith in his person, and all-sufficient sacrifice and righteousness, they would find such a peace as the world never knew: beholding their sins pardoned, and God reconciled to them; enjoying delightful communion with him; and, amidst all their trials, their souls kept serene and calm in the confidence of his power and grace to carry them through, and in the prospect of the glory which should be revealed in them. *In the world ye shall have tribulation*, you must expect and prepare for it; *but be of good cheer*, be confident of my power and grace, and courageously stand in the evil day; *I have overcome the world*; I have vanquished the god of this world with all his wicked instruments, and have triumphed over every difficulty which stood in the way of your salvation; and you may be comfortably assured, through my grace and love, you also shall be made more than conquerors. *Note*, (1.) Every real Christian must expect his cross, and prepare for tribulation: it is inseparable from his profession. (2.) No outward or inward troubles should deject or dishearten us; our Redeemer is mighty, yea, almighty, to save. (3.) Peace in our consciences is our privilege and portion if we do indeed belong to Christ; and usually as our tribulations for Christ abound, our consolations which are by him, abound also. (4.) The world, and the things of it, are great enemies to our souls, and the means which the devil employs to insnare and destroy us; but Christ hath overcome for us, and he will, by his grace overcome in us, till all our foes shall be made our footstool.

CHAP. XVII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

This chapter is a prayer, the departing prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. Observe, 1. *The circumstances of the prayer*, ver. 1. 2. *The prayer itself*, (1.) *He prays for himself*, ver. 4, 5. (2.) *He prays for those that are his. And there see*, [1.] *The general pleas with which he introduceth his petitions for them*, ver. 6—10. [2.] *The particular petitions he puts up for them*, 1. *That they might be kept*, ver. 11—16. 2. *That they might be sanctified*, ver. 17—19. 3. *That they might be united*, ver. 11. *and* ver. 20—23. 4. *That they might be glorified*, ver. 24—26.

1. THESE [a] words spake Jesus, and [b] lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, [c] the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2. [d] As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should [e] give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3. And this is life eternal, [f] that they might know thee [g] the only true God, and Jesus Christ, [h] whom thou hast sent. 4. [i] I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5. And now, O Father, [k] glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee [l] before the world was.

[a] Ch. xiv—xvi.
[b] Ps. 121. 1. & 123. 1. & 25. 1.
[c] Ch. 7. 30. & 8. 20. & 12. 23, 27, 28. & 13. 1, 31. & 16. 4, 32. with Mark 14. 35, 41. Luke 22. 53. Mat. 26. 45, 46, 51—53.
[d] Dan. 7. 13, 14. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. ch. 3. 31, 35. & 5. 22, 27. Heb. 1. 2. & 2. 8, 9. Eph. 1. 20—23. Phil. 2. 9—11. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Ps. 110. 1.
[e] Ch. 10. 27, 28. & 1. 14, 16. 1 Cor. 3. 22. Acts 5. 31 Is. 53. 10—12. Col. 3. 3.
[f] Is. 53. 11. Jer. 9. 24. 1 John 5. 20. 1 Cor. 2. 2. Phil. 3. 7—11.
[g] Deut. 6. 4. ch. 10. 30. & 14. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 8. 6. 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. 1 Thes. 1. 9.
[h] Is. 48. 16. & 61. 1. Mark 9. 37. Luke 4. 18, 43. & 9. 48. ch. 3. 16, 34. & 5. 36. & 6. 27, 29, 57. & 7. 29. & 8. 42. & 10. 36. & 11. 42. ver. 8, 18. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. 1 John 4. 10.
[i] Mat. 9. 8. & 15. 31. Mark 2. 12. Luke 5. 26. & 18. 43. ch. 4. 34. & 13. 32. & 19. 30. & 5. 36. & 9. 3. & 11. 4, 40. & 12. 28. & 14. 11. & 8. 29. & 15. 10. Is. 42. 21. Mat. 3. 15.
[k] Ver. 24. Phil. 2. 9—11. Ps. 110. 1. ch. 13. 32. Eph. 1. 20—23. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Rev. 3. 21. & 5. 9, 12. Prov. 6. 31.
[l] 1 Ch. 1. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Rev. 13. 8. Mat. 25. 34.

Verses 1—5. Our Lord having finished his farewell discourse, closes it with a prayer: for those whom we preach to, we should pray for. He here recommends his redeemed to the care and keeping of the Father of mercies, and the blessed effects of it we continue to reap to this hour, and so shall all his church to the end of time.

1. He addresses his prayer to the *Father*, whom, as mediator and head of his church, he regarded as his superior, and in whose love he herein expresses his confidence. He approaches him as a son with reverence and godly fear, *lifting up his eyes to*

heaven, the place where he peculiarly manifests his transcendent glory. *Note*, (1.) The object of prayer is God only; and when we approach him, it must be as to our reconciled God and Father in Jesus Christ. (2.) Christ lifted up his eyes to heaven to sanctify this gesture to us, and to justify it against the ridicule of scoffers. (3.) None can possibly belong to Christ who do not show, in a course of habitual and constant prayer, their dependence upon the Father of mercies.

2. He prays for himself; that he may be glorified, and enabled, in the completion of the work he had undertaken, most eminently to exalt his Father's glory. *Father, the hour is come*, fixed in the eternal counsels for his death; and though it approached with horrors unspeakable, he welcomed its arrival, because he saw that the salvation of his people would be the happy fruit thereof; *glorify thy Son*; as man and Mediator, he looked for support under his sufferings, that some beams of glory might gild that gloomy scene; that, triumphant over death and hell, he might rise on the third day, ascend into heaven, and sit on the throne prepared for him; where angels, principalities, and powers, should be made subject unto him: and from thence he should send down his Spirit effectually, to establish his kingdom in the earth, and his judgments upon the Jewish people, destroying their city and nation; *that thy Son also may glorify thee*; by suffering in the stead of sinners, and thereby bringing the highest glory to all the divine perfections; as also by the discharge of his mediatorial office when exalted to the throne of glory, by the mission of his Spirit, and the ministry of his servants, his gospel should be spread abroad, and God's name made great among the heathen. *Note*, God's glory should always be the great end we propose, in all our prayers and services.

3. He pleads the covenant subsisting between them, and the power with which, in consequence thereof, he was invested as the argument to enforce his request. *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him*; all the concerns of fallen man were put into the Redeemer's hand; and in that peculiar remnant, who were to be the travail of his soul, was God peculiarly to be glorified. *Note*, (1.) Man in his fallen state, is become flesh and not spirit, brutish in his appetites, passions, and pursuits. (2.) Christ hath all human affairs under his mediatorial government, and as such is not only a King of saints, but a King of kings, and Lord of lords. He orders all the temporal affairs of men as shall be most subservient to the salvation of his elect, and shall at last be the judge of quick and dead. (3.) Eternal life is the gift of Jesus Christ; he hath purchased for his people the title to it; and hath, in virtue of his obedience unto death, a right to bestow this inestimable privilege on the many sons whom he will bring unto glory. May I be of that blessed number!

4. He explains wherein this eternal life consists, *and* what is the way to it. *This is life eternal*, the earnest, foretaste, and assurance, of it, *to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*: not a speculative knowledge merely, but such as engages fiducial confidence in God, as the only worthy object of our trust and worship, in opposition to all idols; and such a full persuasion of the divine mission of Jesus, as leads us to him as the only Mediator between God and man, and satisfies the soul in the clear views of his fulness and all-sufficiency to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him.

5. He pleads what he had done to glorify God upon earth, as the reason and ground of his prayer and confidence, that the Father would glorify him with himself in heaven. *I have glorified thee upon earth*, in my doctrines, miracles, and life; *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*, of perfect sinless obedience to death, even the death of the cross, for the redemption of sinners. He was now on the very point of concluding his undertaking, and being fully purposed to go through with it, he speaks of it as already accomplished. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* Having finished his mediatorial work, he became entitled to the promised reward, and confidently expects to be exalted to the mediatorial throne; and to return to heaven again, there to make a display of his own eternal and uncreated glory, which, during his humiliation, he suffered to be obscured by the veil of flesh. *Note*, (1.) The Redeemer's work is a *finished work*; he hath left nothing for us to do: pardon, comfort, grace, glory, are effectually purchased, and his free gift to the miserable and desperate. (2.) They who by grace, through faith, are interested in this eternal redemption, having the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, desire to live only to glorify God upon earth.

6. ¶ [m] I have manifested thy name unto [n] the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and [o] they have kept thy word. 7. [p] Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. 8. For [q] I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. 9. [r] I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10. [s] And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

[m] Ver. 7, 14, 26. ch. 1. 18. Heb. 2. 12. Is. 61. 1.
[n] Ver. 9—12, 14, 16, 24. ch. 10. 27, 29. & 15. 19. & 18. 9. & 6. 37. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Rom. 11. 2. Acts 13. 48.
[o] Ps. 119. 11. Prov. 23. 23. 2 Tim. 1. 13. Jude 3. Rev. 2. 13. & 3. 3, 8, 10.
[p] Ch. 15. 15. & 16. 27, 28. & 8. 28. & 12. 49. & 14. 10. see ch. 16. 27, 30.
[q] See ver. 6, 7, 13, 15.
[r] Ver. 11—24. Heb. 7. 25, 26. & 9. 24. Rom. 8. 30, 33, 34.
[s] Ch. 16. 15. & 10. 10, 11. Acts 13. 48. Rom. 8. 30.

Verses 6—10. Having offered up his prayer for himself, he proceeds to enlarge on the behalf of his apostles in particular, and the disciples in general, who had heard and believed his word. *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world*; have particularly revealed to them thy glorious perfections, and the eternal designs of grace displayed in my gospel, forasmuch as they were given to me in a distinguishing way from the rest of mankind: *thine they were*, not only by creation as men, but by election, as chosen vessels; *and thou gavest them me*, as the fruit of my travail, to be a peculiar people to me, favoured with my love, and under my especial care; *and they have kept my word*, embracing faithfully the doctrines which I have delivered unto them, publicly professing, and zealously propagating the gospel of the kingdom. *Now*, of late their minds have been more clearly enlightened, and *they have known that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee*; that what I have taught them hath the seal of heaven upon it, and that I have acted in all things in perfect conformity, as Mediator, to the commission I have received. *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me*; all the doctrines of gospel grace relative to men's everlasting peace; how pardon, peace, righteousness, and salvation may be attained by me, *and they have received them*, in the light and love of them, *and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me*, as the promised and true Messiah, invested with divine authority to seek and save lost souls, and to accomplish the redemption of his people. *I pray for them*, that they may be preserved and kept, and the begun work perfected in them; *I pray not for the world*, in general, *but for them which thou hast given me*; that remnant, according to the election of grace, for whose sake particularly I became incarnate; *for they are thine* by eternal designation, and now by their own voluntary choice and surrender. *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine*; our

interests are inseparably the same, as we are one in nature, essence, and operation, and the redeemed are alike indebted to both for all the blessings of the covenant of grace; *and I am glorified in them,* in their complete redemption; and by their faith, love, worship, and obedience here below, as I shall be the object of their eternal praises in glory everlasting. From whence we learn, (1.) That the redemption which is by Christ Jesus, extends not universally to every particular individual of mankind, but is confined to those whom the Father hath given him out of the world. (2.) Those for whom Christ doth not pray are called *the world,* as all their joys, desires, pursuits, and aims, centre in worldly things. They live after the fashion of the world, and will be condemned with the world. (3.) Christ's undertaking was not uncertain respecting its success: he knew that those whom the Father had given him would come to him; and they can never perish whose interests are lodged in his hands. (4.) Keeping Christ's word, holding fast his doctrine, and adorning it by a good conversation, is the substantial evidence of our belonging to him. (5.) The study and delight of every redeemed soul is to exalt the name of Jesus, and to ascribe entirely to him the glory of that rich, full, and free salvation of which he hath made them partakers.

t See ch. 16. 28. Acts 1. 9.
u Gal. 1. 4. Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 16. Rom. 12. 2.
x Ps. 16. 1. & 121. 3—8. Is. 27. 3. & 49. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude.
y Ver. 21—23. Eph. 4. 4, 5, 13. Rom. 12. 16. & 15. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 2. 2.
z Heb. 2. 13. ch. 10. 28. & 18. 9. & 6. 39, 70, 71. & 13. 18. Jude 1.
a Ch. 6. 70. & 13. 18. 1 John 2. 19. 2 Thes. 2. 3. Ps. 109. 8. Acts 1. 20.
b Ver. 6—8, 11, 12. ch. 15. 11. & 16. 4, 33. & xiv—xvi. 1 John 1. 4. Phil. 4. 4. Ps. 1. 2.
c See ver. 8, 12.
d Ver. 16. ch. 15. 18—21. 1 John 3. 13. ch. 8. 23. Mat. 10. 24, 25. Gen. 3. 15. Prov. 29. 27. Heb. 11. 13. 1 Pet. 4. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 49.
e See ver. 11. Mat. 6. 13. 1 John 2. 16. & 5. 18, 19. 2 Thes. 3. 2. Gal. 1. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5, 12, 13.
f See ver. 14.

11. [t] And now I am no more in the world, but these are in [u] the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, [x] keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, [y] that they may be one, as we *are.* 12. While I was with them in the world, [z] I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but [a] the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13. [b] And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14. [c] I have given them thy word; and [d] the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15. ¶ I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest [e] keep them from the evil. 16. [f] They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Verses 11—16. Our Lord proceeds in his prayer for his dear disciples, whom he was going to leave, and therefore, as man and Mediator, commends them to his Father's care and keeping. *And now I am no more in the world,* ready to depart, and return to my radiant throne in glory; *but these are in the world,* left to conflict a while with temptations, corruptions, afflictions, persecutions; *and* I am going from them, so that they will be deprived of the comfort of my bodily presence, *when I come to thee. Holy Father,* essentially holy in thyself, and the author and source of all holiness to thy creatures; *keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me;* by thy almighty power, and for thy own glory, preserve them from sinking under their trials, strengthen them against their spiritual foes, Satan, the world, and sin; keep them by thy grace, till thou shalt bring them to thy glory; *that they may be one, as we are,* united in affection and labours, and having the same interests and designs. *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name* from apostasy, according to the commission with which I was invested, and by the influences of thy grace: *those that thou gavest me* to be my apostles, *I have kept* in the faith and hope of the gospel, unmoved; *and none of them is lost,* and left to perish, *but the son of perdition,* that traitor Judas, who was from the beginning a child of the devil; *that the Scripture might be fulfilled,* Psal. xli. 9. cix. 8. *And now come I to thee,* having finished my work, and returning to my glorious rest: *and these things I speak in the world,* and offer these requests in my behalf, *that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves,* happy in the present experience of my love: in the quickening, guiding, and comforting influences of my Spirit; and in the hope inspired by the great and precious promises that are in me; so that their joys on earth may increase, and be growing up to perfection in heaven. *I have given them thy word,* have put them in trust with thy gospel, and furnished them with gifts to publish it through the world; *and,* because they have embraced the truth, and boldly confessed it, *the world hath hated them,* unable to bear the reproofs of their preaching and practice; *because they are not of the world;* in their principles, tempers, and conduct, opposite to the carnal minds and conversation of natural and sensual men, who mind earthly things; *as I am not of the world;* and my example and doctrine have they faithfully observed. *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world,* deliver them at once from all the power of their enemies, and put an immediate period to all their trials and troubles; *but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil,* supporting them under all their sufferings, preserving them from falling into sin, and bruising *the wicked one,* Satan under their feet; thus causing them to triumph over all opposition. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world;* therefore they will be sore thrust at, as I have been: and, as thou hast supported me, let them experience the like protection, and share thy care and love. *Note,* (1.) The prospect of going to be with God in glory, cannot but make it pleasing to quit a world of wretchedness: the hour of our dismission will be the beginning of our endless felicity. (2.) It is a pleasing, comforting, consideration, that our stability depends not upon ourselves, but is secured by the divine grace and faithfulness: they must needs be safe kept, whom God keeps. (3.) The world is the Christian's grand enemy; and the victory that overcometh it is *our faith;* and this is the gift of God. (4.) Christ's people have work to do for him in the world: and, however desirable it is to be with him, they must not be in haste to go before his time; but patiently take up their cross, fight the good fight, and hope unto the end. (5.) No man's profession, privileges, gifts, or apparent attainments, where *the heart is not right with God,* will stand him in any stead: when the hour of trial comes, he will be proved like Judas, *a son of perdition.* (6.) The Lord will have his disciples walk joyfully, not mournfully, before him; and he hath for this end left us the exceeding great and precious promises, and ever lives to make intercession for us. (7.) The faithful servants of Jesus, who keep his word, and refuse to be conformed to the ways and manners of this wicked world, may expect to be hated by those, against whom their words and works cannot but testify that their deeds are evil.

17. [g] ¶ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18. [h] As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19. [i] And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be * sanctified through the truth.

g Ch. 15. 3. Acts 10. 9. Eph. 5. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 22. ver. 19. 2 Cor. 3. 18. ch. 8. 31, 32, 51. Ps. 119. 5, 6, 9, 11, 104, 151.
h Is. 61. 1—3. ch. 10. 36. & 20. 21—23. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Eph. 3. 8. & 6. 20.
i Heb. 13. 12. & 9. 14. & 10. 7, 9, 10. Eph. 5. 25, 26, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 2. 24. & 3. 18. 1 Cor. 1. 2, 30. 1 Thes. 4, 7.
* Or *truly sanctified.*

Verses 17—19. Our Lord had before prayed for his disciples' preservation; here he prays for their sanctification.

Sanctify them through thy truth: consecrate them for their sacred office, and let them be under the powerful influences of thy word and Spirit, that in their own souls they may experience increasing purity, and be enabled for the propagation of the truth of the gospel through the world: *thy word is truth;* infallibly certain in itself, and the great means of purifying the heart. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so I send them,* with the same gospel, and on the same errand, to advance thy glory, and promote the salvation of immortal souls. *And for their sakes I sanctify myself,* am now ready to offer up myself a sacrifice, and to enter on my mediatorial office in glory, as their great High Priest, to be their eternal advocate; *that they also,* in virtue of my intercession for them, and by the mission of the Holy Ghost into their hearts, *might be sanctified through thy truth,* enabled for the practice of all true godliness, and, possessed of the knowledge of the glorious gospel, may be strengthened and made successful in propagating the glad tidings to the ends of the earth. *Note,* (1.) All Christ's people are made partakers of true holiness: he saves none whom he does not sanctify. (2.) What was his prayer for us, must be ours daily for ourselves, that God would carry on the blessed work of his grace upon our hearts, and perfect that which he hath begun. (3.) The word of God is the great means of our sanctification, and by it, through the quickening influences of the Holy Ghost, are we enabled to grow up into him in all things who is our head, even Christ. (4.) The ministers of Jesus are his peculiar concern, and they who are truly his, prove it by the practical influence his word hath on their own hearts, and the zeal with which they preach the truth to others. (5.) They who go into the ministry under a divine mission and call, may confidently expect the divine assistance and blessing. (6.) All that Christ did and suffered was for our benefit and advantage; and as the merit is transferred to us, if we are by faith united to him, we may confidently expect the reward, in present grace and future glory.

20. ¶ Neither pray I for [k] these alone, but for [l] them also who shall believe on me through their word; 21. That they all [m] may be one; [n] as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: [o] that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22. [p] And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23. [q] I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made [r] perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and [s] hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

k Ver. 6—11. Acts 1. 13. & ii—xix. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 28.
l Acts 2. 41. & 4. 4, &c.
m Ver. 11, 22, 23. Acts 2. 46. & 4. 32. Rom. 12. 5. Eph. 4. 3—6. 1 Cor. 1. 10.
n Ch. 1. 18. & 5. 19, 23. & 10. 30, 38. & 14. 9, 10, 22. ver. 11, 12. Phil. 2. 6. 1 John 5. 7.
o Ch. 13. 35. & 14. 10. Mat. 5. 16. Acts 4. 13. 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25.
p Ch. 1. 16. & 16. 14. & 14. 10, 12, & 20. 21—23. Mark 6. 7. & 16. 17, 18. Rom. 6. 4, 6.
q Ch. 14. 23. 1 John 4. 12—16. Gal. 2. 20. Rom. 8. 11. Col. 2. 9, 10. ch. 14. 10, 20. & 6. 57. Is. 42. 1. r Ver. 21. Heb. 11. 40. & 12. 23. Col. 2. 2. Phil. 3. 15. Eph. 4. 12, 13, 16. s 1 John 3. 1. & 4. 19. Jer. 31. 3. Eph. 1. 6. with ver. 24. Col. 1. 13. Mat. 3. 17.

Verses 20—23. Christ's prayer terminates not merely in requests for his disciples of that day, but includes all his redeemed to the latest ages.

Neither pray I for these alone, my first ministers and apostles, *but for them also which shall believe on me through their word,* in all succeeding generations; *that they all may be one* in faith and love, by the preaching of the gospel collected together, and united in one body under the same living head; *as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us,* animated by the same spirit; one in judgment, disposition, designs, desires, and admitted into the nearest fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; *that the world may believe that thou has sent me,* beholding the powerful effects of my grace upon them: *and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them;* either the gospel with all its inestimable blessings; or the grace and glory which he, as the great covenant-head of his people, hath obtained in order to bestow upon them; *that they may be one, even as we are one,* in strictest and most inseparable union with us and with each other, through the same Spirit: *I in them,* as the head of vital influence to them; *and thou in me,* by thy Spirit given without measure unto me: *that they may be made perfect in one,* attaining to the highest perfection of which their nature is capable in eternal glory; *and that the world may know that thou hast sent me,* convinced by the present power of thy grace, displayed in their concord, unity, and mutual love; or beyond doubt assured of my divine character, when they shall be glorified together with me. *And* it shall then appear that thou *hast loved them, as thou hast loved me,* when they are made kings and priests, and shall reign with us for ever and ever. *Note,* (1.) The ministry of the word is the great instrument Christ is pleased to make use of, in order to beget faith in the souls of his redeemed people; and to as many as he will call, and for whom he prays, it will be certainly effectual. (2.) All true Christians are one in Christ Jesus: he is their living Head: they are by faith and love united to him, and joined in one spirit to each other; and what is now begun in grace, shall be shortly completed in glory. (3.) They who are one with Christ, sprinkled with his blood, clothed with his righteousness, and joined to him in one spirit, are complete in him, and as such cannot but be the objects of the same love as God the Father showed to him the Mediator. (4.) They who despise, insult, and ridicule the followers of Jesus, will shortly be convinced, to their confusion, how highly they are, and shall be to eternity, the objects of his love.

24. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me [t] be with me where I am; [u] that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. 25. O righteous Father, the world [x] hath not known thee: [y] but I have known thee, and [z] these have known that thou hast sent me. 26. [a] And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it:* that the love wherewith thou hast loved me [b] may be in them, and I [c] in them.

t Ch. 12. 26. & 14. 3. Phil. 1. 23. Rev. 3. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 17.
u 1 John 3. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 38. 1 Cor. 13. 12.
x Ch. 8. 19, 55. & 15. 21. & 16. 3. Mat. 11. 25, 26.
y Ch. 1. 18. & 7. 29. & 8. 55. & 10. 15. & 5. 19, 20. Mat. 11. 27.
z Ch. 16. 27. ver. 8, 21. ch. 6. 69. Mat. 16. 16.
a Ch. 15. 15. ver. 6, 8, 14. Ps. 22. 22. Heb. 2. 12.
b 1 John 4. 16. Rom. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 6. ch. 15. 9.
c Col. 1. 27. Eph. 3. 17. Gal. 2. 20. Col. 3. 3. see ver. 23.

Verses 24—26. Our Lord here concludes his prayer for his dear people, with the most comfortable assurance of their everlasting blessedness being secured to them.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, all my redeemed, *be with me where I am.* It is my demand, and I claim it as my right, *that they* be brought to my eternal kingdom, and *may behold my glory which thou hast given me,* transformed into the same image, adoring and rejoicing; *for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world,* and therefore wilt grant all my requests. *O righteous Father,* whose decrees are just, and whose promises are all faithful and true; *the world hath not known thee,* thy perfections, counsels, or designs; *but I have known thee* most intimately and perfectly: *and these* my present apostles and disciples *have known that thou hast sent me,* the promised Messiah. *And I have declared unto them thy name,* thy nature, attributes, and designs of grace according to the everlasting covenant; *and will declare it,* by farther discoveries to them of thy mind and will, after my resurrection, and by the mission of the Spirit; *that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them,* and they, knowing it, may, by experience of the same love, be made unutterably blessed and happy; *and I in them,* taking up my

residence in their hearts, and thus preparing them for, and bringing them to, the fruition of the eternal felicity provided for them before the foundation of the world. *Note*, (1.) Christ's intercession is not uncertain in its effect; but what he asks must be granted, since he claims only what he is entitled to. *Father, I will.* (2.) All Christ's people must be with him where he is; and in his presence is the fulness of joy. (3.) The world lieth in ignorance and wickedness: happy are they who are enlightened by Jesus, and called out of the world. (4.) God loves his people with an everlasting love; and a sense of this shed abroad in the heart is heaven begun. (5.) Where Christ now dwelleth in the hearts of his people by faith and love, they have an earnest of the eternal glory which shall be revealed in them when they come to dwell with them in heaven.

CHAP. XVIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

This chapter relates, 1. *How Christ was arrested in the garden, and surrendered himself a prisoner,* ver. 1—12. 2. *How he was abused in the high priest's court, and how Peter in the mean time denied him,* ver. 13—27. 3. *How he was prosecuted before Pilate,* ver. 28—40.

1. WHEN Jesus had spoken these words, [a] he went forth with his disciples over [b] the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. 2. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for [c] Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples. 3. [d] Judas then, having received a band *of men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons. 4. Jesus therefore, [e] knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5. They answered him, [f] Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, [g] stood with them. 6. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they [h] went backward, and fell to the ground. 7. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *he*: [i] if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way. 9. That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, [k] Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. 10. ¶ [l] Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword* into the sheath: [m] the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? 12. ¶ [n] Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews, took Jesus and [o] bound him, 13. And led him away to [p] Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. [q] 14. [r] Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

[a] Mat. 26. 36. Mark 14. 32. Luke 22. 39.
[b] Rather, *Kidron.* 2 Sam. 15. 23. 2 Chr. 15. 16. 2 Kin. 23. 11.
[c] Luke 21. 37. & 22. 39.
[d] Mat. 26. 47. Mark 14. 43. Luke 22. 47. Acts 1. 16. Ps. 3. 1, 2. & 22. 12, 16.
[e] Mat. 16. 21. & 17. 22, 23. & 20. 18, 19. & 26. 2, 21—24, 31, 32.
[f] Luke 18. 37. & 1. 26. & 2. 4, 39, 51. Mat. 2. 23.
[g] Is. 3. 9. Jer. 8. 12.
[h] Ps. 129. 4. & 40. 14. Eccl. 8. 4. This showed that he could easily have killed them.
[i] Mat. 26. 56. & 20. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
[k] Ch. 17. 12. & 10. 28. Jude 1.
[l] Mat. 26. 33, 35, 51. Mark 14. 47. Luke 22. 50. ver. 18, 26.
* Rather, *Put up the sword.*
[m] Ps. 75. 8. Mat. 20. 22, 23. & 26. 39, 42, 51. Mark 10. 38. & 14. 36, 47. Luke 12. 50. & 22. 42, 50.
[n] Mat. 26. 57. Mark 14. 53. Luke 22. 54. Acts 2. 23. Lam. 4. 20.
[o] Gen. 22. 9. Ps. 105. 18. & 118. 27. Judg. 16. 21.
[p] Luke 3. 2. ver. 24. Acts 4. 6.
[q] *And Annas sent Christ bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.* Ver. 24.
[r] Ch. 11. 49, 50.

Verses 1—14. His hour being come, the Son of man surrenders himself into the hands of his enemies, having first given them a demonstration both of his power and his grace.

1. Having finished his discourse, he retired over the brook Cedron, to the garden whither he was wont to resort with his disciples, a place the traitor Judas well knew, and which he judged the most convenient to betray him. A garden was the scene of the first man's rebellion and apostasy; and in a garden the atoning sufferings of the second Man, the Lord from heaven, began.

2. Judas, having laid the plot with the chief priests and Pharisees, now got a band of soldiers, together with the servants and officers of these inveterate enemies of Jesus, with whom also some of their masters went themselves, to make sure of their prey; and, as it was night, they took lanterns and torches, as well as weapons, that they might search him out; and, if any resistance was made, overpower his few disciples. Jews and Gentiles concur in bringing him to the accursed tree, who was ordained to reconcile both to God by the blood of his cross.

3. Jesus, far from declining to meet them, or seeking to escape the danger, goes forth to meet them. He knew what was coming upon him; he had undertaken to suffer; and therefore having asked their business, and being informed by them that they sought Jesus of Nazareth, not ashamed of that reproachful name, he saith, *I am he*, readily offering himself to them, Judas the traitor being at their head. *Note*, (1.) When duty calls, no danger must deter us from appearing boldly and openly for Christ. (2.) We must not be ashamed of any reproachful name which for the sake of Jesus we are called to bear. His reproach is our real honour. (3.) It is a dreadful change to see the man who was once numbered among the disciples, herding with the enemies and persecutors.

4. Wonderfully powerful was the word of Jesus. No sooner had he uttered it than, struck by an unseen hand, *they went backward, and fell to the ground.* He that laid them thus low, could in an instant have laid them lower in the belly of hell; but this was the day of his patience, and therefore, though he would give them an evidence of his power, he will yet give them space to repent.

5. Once more he asks them whom they sought, if they dared persist in their atrocious designs; and they with hardened obstinacy, answered, Jesus of Nazareth. He mildly replied, *I have told you that I am he*, ready to yield up himself, but desirous to secure his disciples from danger: *if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way*, do them no harm: and this he said with reference to a late declaration he had made, *Of them whom thou gavest me I have lost none*, and by his present protection of them gave them an earnest of the fulfilment of all the other promises which he had made to them. *Note*, (1.) Hearts hardened in sin will be restrained by no warnings, nor checked by any providences, but rush madly on to ruin. (2.) Christ knows how to suit our trials to our strength, and will not suffer his disciples to be tempted above what he knows they are able to bear. (3.) He who gave himself to bear our sins, hath by his bonds obtained our discharge. The justice of God hath no more demands; nor need we fear the penalty of a broken law. He hath purchased, by the offering of his own body, eternal redemption for us. (4.) None can be finally lost whom Christ hath undertaken to save.

6. Peter, fired at what he saw, immediately drew his sword,

and in the heat of inconsiderate rashness, smote a domestic of the high priest, whose name was Malchus, and cut off his ear. But Jesus, displeased at this unseasonable zeal, bids him sheath the sword, and urges as a reason, *the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* His resolution was fixed, his sufferings necessary, and, whatever power he was possessed of to rescue himself from his enemies, he freely resigned himself into their hands, to do with him according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. *Note*, (1.) They who are most hasty in their zeal, are not always most steady in their service. Of this, Peter's desertion and conduct afford a sufficient proof. (2.) Christ's cause is not to be maintained by the sword. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual; and by our meekness we should seek to disarm the madness of our foes.

7. The soldiers, with the officers of the Jews, therefore now seized and bound the voluntary prisoner, and, as a criminal, shamefully dragged him through the streets to the palace of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas the high priest that year; such sad and frequent changes were now made in that high office. This Caiaphas it was, who, in a former debate, had showed his inveterate enmity against Christ, and determined, right or wrong, that it was better to put him to death than provoke the Romans to destroy the nation, as he apprehended would be the consequence, if Jesus were suffered to set up himself as the Messiah. *Note*, (1.) The bonds of Christ are significant. He was bound with cords, that we might be loosed from the chains of our sins, and that henceforth his constraining love might effectually bind our hearts to him in cords of gratitude which never should be broken. (2.) If we are in bonds for Christ, it will reconcile us to suffer joyfully when we reflect that he was first bound for us. (3.) If one man, Christ Jesus, had not died for the sins of his people they must have perished everlastingly.

15. ¶ [s] And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. 16. [t] But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. 17. Then said the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. 18. [u] And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold; and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. 19. ¶ [x] The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. 20. Jesus answered him, [y] I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always * resort; and in secret have I said nothing. 21. Why askest thou me? [z] ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. 22. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by [a] struck Jesus * with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? 23. Jesus answered him, [b] If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? 24. [c] Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. 25. ¶ And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. [d] They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied *it*, and said, I am not. 26. [e] One of the servants of the high priest, being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? 27. [f] Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

s Mat. 26. 58. Mark 14. 54. Luke 22. 54.

t Mat. 26. 69, 70. Mark 14. 54. Luke 22. 55—57.

u Mark 14. 54. Luke 22. 55, 56. Ps. 1. 1. Prov. 9. 6. & 13. 20.

x Luke 11. 53, 54. & 22. 20.

y Luke 2. 46. & 4. 15, 16. ch. 5. 14—47. & 7. 14, 26. & 8. 2. & 10. 23. Luke 21. 37. Ps. 22. 22. & 40. 9, 10.

* Better, *constantly resort.*

z Ch. 7. 46. Is. 45. 19. & 48. 16. ch. 3. 21.

a Jer. 20. 2. Acts 23. 3. Mic. 5. 1. Is. 50. 6.

* Or *with a rod.*

b Mat. 11. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23.

c Mat. 26. 57. ver. 13. Luke 3. 2.

d Mat. 26. 71, 72. Mark 14. 69, 70. Luke 22. 58.

e Luke 22. 59, 60. Mark 14. 70, 71. Mat. 26. 73, 74.

f Mat. 26. 74, 75. Mark 14. 71, 72. Luke 22. 60, 61. ch. 13. 38. Mark 14. 30. & 15. 1. Luke 23. 1.

Verses 15—27. Annas, highly approving the deed, and confirming them in their purpose, soon despatched the innocent prisoner to Caiaphas to be condemned. Perhaps his age prevented him from attending in the council; but he wished them to proceed, and would give his sanction to their prosecution. We have an account of what passed in the high priest's palace.

1. Peter denies his Master the first time.

(1.) He followed at a distance to the door of the palace, his courage having somewhat revived, and his curiosity being strong to see what would be the issue of the matter. Thus unnecessarily he ran into temptation, and no good can then be expected from him. We have no promise of protection when we wilfully thrust ourselves into danger.

(2.) A disciple, who was known to the high priest, seeing Peter at the gate, let him in. Some have supposed this was John, who in some other parts of this gospel thus modestly suppresses his own name: but it rather seems improbable that a poor fisherman of Galilee should have such an acquaintance as Caiaphas; and with much more probability the person spoken of was of those chief rulers who believed on Jesus, but dared not confess him for fear of the Jews. But what was intended as a kindness really proved a snare; so often are we hurt by the misguided affection of our real friends.

(3.) The first and feeblest attack quite disconcerted the self-confident disciple. A servant girl that kept the door, observing, probably, his dejected looks, and recollecting his countenance among the followers of Jesus, charged him as *this man's disciple*, which he instantly denied; and, as if to avoid every suspicion of belonging to Christ, he joined the servants and officers, who, it being cold, and at night, had kindled a fire in the hall, and warmed themselves. *Note*, (1.) We know not how weak we are till we are tried. (2.) They who mix with vain and worldly company to avoid the imputation of being over-righteous, will usually, if there be any sensibility remaining in their consciences, pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

2. Whilst Peter, instead of appearing in behalf of his Master, was basely denying him, the high priest began to interrogate Jesus concerning his disciples and his doctrine, hoping to find some charge of sedition or blasphemy whereon to ground an accusation against him.

3. Christ appeals to all who had heard him preach for an answer to his interrogatories. If he had done or taught any thing criminal, there could be no want of witness, when many then present had often heard him, and knew the doctrines which he taught. He ever spoke freely, boldly, and openly, preaching in the synagogues, the places of chief resort; and he advanced

nothing in private different from what he avowed publicly, nor wished to conceal his sentiments from the world, but to make all men know the truth. *Note*, Truth neither needs nor seeks the covert; and God's ministers must boldly, openly, and uniformly declare their message to the world, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear.

4. Just and mild as Christ's answer was to a question so malicious and captious, an insolent officer, who stood by, struck the innocent prisoner with his hand or his staff, and haughtily suggests as if his answer to the high priest was unbecoming. He knew, however infamous such behaviour was, his master would countenance it, and that his insolence would recommend him. When rulers are wicked, their servants will readily imitate their ill examples; and the insults of such abjects are peculiarly bitter. But to this, for our sakes, the Son of God submitted, and thus fulfilled the Scriptures, Isa. l. 6. Mic. v. 1.

5. Christ with astonishing patience, instead of striking him dead, meekly replied, *If I have spoken evil*, now or at any other time, *bear witness of the evil* before the court, *but if well*, and I have spoken nothing justly blameable, *why smitest thou me? Note*, (1.) When we are suffering, however unjustly, we must in our patience possess our souls, and neither entertain undue resentment nor fly into a rage. (2.) Mild remonstrances, not railing accusations, become the children of God.

6. A second time Peter is beset, and falls. As he stood at the fire, some who stood by challenged him again as a follower of Jesus; and now sunk under temptation, he repeats the shameful lie, *I am not*. *Note*, (1.) They who are fallen under one temptation, feel themselves less able to resist the next. (2.) Many who make confident profession when the cause of Christ flourishes, soon disown and renounce it when called to suffer shame for his sake.

7. One of the by-standers, a relation of him whose ear Peter had cut off, hearing him so stoutly deny all connexion with Jesus, on observing him attentively recollected his face, and urged the question stronger upon him, *Did not I see thee in the garden with him?* So close an attack more sadly disconcerted the unhappy disciple, and urged him the more solemnly to repeat his denial: *and immediately the cock crew*. *Note*, (1.) Every sin hardens the heart, and naturally paves the way for a greater. (2.) The slightest incident of providence, which others disregard, God can make to us a most alarming call.

28. ¶ [g] Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the † hall of judgment: and it was [h] early; [i] and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the [k] passover. 29. Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? 30. They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. 31. Then said Pilate unto them, [l] Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, [m] It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: 32. [n] That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die. 33. [o] Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? 34. Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? 35. Pilate answered, [p] Am I a Jew? [q] Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? 36. [r] Jesus answered, [s] My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then?‡ Jesus answered, [t] Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should [u] bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is [x] of the truth heareth my voice. 38. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, [y] I find in him no fault *at all*. 39. [z] But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 40. [a] Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

g Mat. 27. 2.

†Or *Pilate's house.*

h Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. Mic. 2. 1. Ps. 140. 2.

i Acts 10. 28. & 11. 3. Mat. 23. 23, 24.

k *Feast offering.* Deut. 16. 2. 2 Chr. 30. 17. & 35. 8, 9, 13.

l Acts 25. 27. ch. 7. 51.

m With Gen. 49. 10 Ezek. 21. 26, 27. ch. 19. 15.

n Mat. 20. 19. & 26. 2. ch. 12. 32, 33. For the Jews did not crucify any.

o Mat. 27. 11. Mark 15. 2. Luke 23. 3.

p Ps. 147. 19, 20. Rom. 3. 1, 2. with Neh. 4. 2. Ezra 4. 12.

q Ver. 28. Mat. 27. 2. Mark 15. 1. Luke 23. 1.

r Rev. 1. 5. & 3. 14. 1 Tim. 6. 13.

s Is. 9. 6, 7. Dan. 7. 13, 14. & 2. 44. ch. 6. 15. & 8. 15. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Luke 12. 14. & 17. 20, 21.

‡ Rather, *Thou art the king then?*

t (*i. e.*) Yes. Mat. 26. 64. with Mark 14. 62.

u 1 Tim. 6. 13. Rev. 1. 5. & 3. 14. Is. 55. 4.

x 1 Pet. 1. 23. Gal. 4. 28. ch. 17. 17. & 8. 32, 47. & 7. 17. 1 John 4. 6. & 3. 19.

y Mat 27. 24. Luke 23. 4, 14, 15. ch. 19. 4, 6.

z Mat. 27. 15—17. Mark 15. 6. Luke 23. 17.

a Acts 3. 14. Luke 23. 18, 19. Mark 15. 7—11.

Verses 28—40. His envenomed enemies, determined on his ruin, dragged the innocent Jesus very early in the morning, after suffering during the night the greatest insults and indignities, to Pilate, the Roman governor, in order to get him legally condemned and crucified, desirous that he should suffer in the most ignominious way. And we are told,

1. The hypocritical scrupulosity of these pretended pietists. They would not enter the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled by the touch and company of heathens, and thereby, being rendered ceremonially unclean according to their traditions, should be disabled from partaking of the passover feast, and the sacrifices which were offered the day after the passover. Thus strictly devout would they appear, with innocent blood upon their heads. Well was it said of them, *Ye strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.*

2. Pilate, at whose bar Jesus was placed as a criminal, came forth to them in great complaisance, desiring to know their accusation against the prisoner. In answer to so reasonable a question, they haughtily reply, *If he were not a malefactor*, a person notoriously infamous, *we would not have delivered him up unto thee;* as if from persons of their eminent sanctity a general charge was a sufficient proof of the prisoner's crimes. Pilate, justly offended at so insolent a reply, and so unreasonable a procedure, bid them take him and judge him according to their law, desirous to rid himself of so disagreeable a cause. They replied, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death;* either they had been deprived of the power of capital punishments, or they dared not exercise it through the frequency of the people's crimes: but there was a farther view which they undesignedly answered hereby, even the fulfilling of the prophecy of Jesus, who had signified *by what death he should die*, Matt. xx. 19. and crucifixion being not a Jewish, but a Roman punishment, it was necessary he should be delivered to the Romans, and executed by them.

Note, (1.) Many of the best of men, like Jesus, have been branded as the vilest of malefactors, without one real crime proved against them. (2.) God can overrule the wickedness of the most envenomed persecutors to his own glory, and make them, when they mean only to gratify their own malice, the means of fulfilling the prophecies of his word.

3. Pilate, having heard the treasonable accusations lodged against Jesus by his accusers, ordered the prisoner to be brought, and examined him as touching the things laid to his charge, the chief of which was setting up in opposition to Cesar; and therefore he demands if it were true that he assumed the character of *King of the Jews?* Jesus answered, *Sayest thou this thing of thyself?* under any real suspicion of the truth of the fact? *or did others tell it thee of me?* by whose falsehood and malice thou art influenced. Pilate, in a kind of derision at the expectation the Jewish people formed of their Messiah, answered, *Am I a Jew?* no: I concern myself about none of these matters; *thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me,* as a traitor and seditious person, setting up for a king in opposition to Cesar. *What hast thou done?* It is to be supposed persons of so respectable a character would not without cause lodge such an accusation. *Note,* Many think there must be something wrong, when those who are esteemed the most learned and pious condemn and persecute: but we must not take our opinions from the judgment of men, but from the word of God; otherwise, like Pilate, we shall be in danger of condemning the innocent.

4. Christ informs Pilate of the nature of that kingdom which he came to erect. *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world,* promising no earthly honours nor emoluments, nor interfering with any secular affair; but is purely spiritual, consisting in a dominion over the souls of men. *If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews;* but there never had been the least attempt to rescue him, nor any sedition or tumult excited by him, which must have been the case had he affected temporal authority: *but now is my kingdom not from hence,* it takes not its rise from earth, is not supported by the arm of flesh, nor governed by worldly maxims and human policy.

5. Pilate, beholding his mean, wretched, and low estate, could not help exclaiming, at the pretensions which Jesus seemed here to advance, *Art thou a king then?* Yes, saith Jesus, *thou sayest that I am a king,* and so it is; for *to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth* of the gospel word in general, and to this truth in particular, that I am that King Messiah who should come into the world. *Every one that is of the truth,* effectually wrought upon by the Spirit of truth; *heareth my voice,* receives my word, acknowledges my mission, and bows to that sceptre of grace which I stretch forth to the miserable and the desperate. *Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?* either he spoke it contemptuously, deriding his pretensions, who set himself up as the voice of truth itself; or if he put the question curiously, seriously, or judicially, he seems not to have waited for an answer; or Jesus vouchsafed not to return one. *Note,* (1.) Is Christ born a King? then should we yield our hearts willing subjects to his blessed government. (2.) They only know that truth which makes wise unto salvation, who hear and spiritually understand the voice of Jesus speaking in his gospel.

6. Pilate, in his conscience now satisfied of the innocence of Jesus, led him forth, and declared before them all that *he found no fault in him.* Willing therefore to obtain his discharge, he proposed it to them, as it was an established custom at that feast to release some prisoner unto them, whether it should not be this miserable object, whom, in derision of his pretensions, he calls *the King of the Jews.* But they, instigated by their malicious priests, rejected the proposition, and demanded Barabbas, a noted murderer and robber, preferring him before the Lord of life and glory. *Note,* (1.) He who suffered for sins not his own, even by his judge was acknowledged to be innocent. (2.) They who under the dictates of worldly wisdom seek to please men, and maintain a good conscience withal, will find the impracticability of the attempt. (3.) The cry is ever against the cause of truth; but, though it be oppressed for a while, it shall finally prevail.

CHAP. XIX.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The remainder of Christ's trial before Pilate, which was tumultuous and confused,* ver. 1—15. 2. *Sentence given, and execution done upon it,* ver. 16—18. 3. *The title over his head,* ver. 19—22. 4. *The parting of his garments,* ver. 23, 24. 5. *The care he took of his mother,* ver. 25—27. 6. *The giving him vinegar to drink,* ver. 28, 29. 7. *His dying words,* ver. 30. 8. *The piercing of his side,* ver. 31—37. 9. *The burial of his body,* ver. 38—42. *O that in meditating on these things we may experimentally know the power of Christ's death, and the fellowship of his sufferings!*

1. THEN [a] Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged *him.* 2. And the soldiers platted [b] a crown of thorns, and put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, 3. And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands. 4. ¶ Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that [c] I find no fault in him. 5. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man! 6. [d] When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him,* crucify *him.* Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him:* for I find no fault in him. 7. The Jews answered him, [e] We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.* 8. ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; 9. And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? [f] But Jesus gave him no answer. 10. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? [g] knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? 11. Jesus answered, [h] Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore [i] he that delivered me unto thee hath the [k] greater sin. 12. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, [l] If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend. Whosoever mak-

[a] Is. 50. 6. Mat. 20. 19. & 27. 26. Mark 10. 34. & 15. 15. Luke 18. 33.

[b] Mat. 27. 29, 30. Mark 15. 16—19. Is. 50. 6. Ps. 22. 6.

[c] See ch. 18. 38. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22. & 3. 18. 1 John 3. 5. Heb. 7. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 19.

[d] Ver. 15. Acts 3. 13, 14. & 2. 22, 23. & 13. 27, 28. 1 Thes. 2. 15

[e] Lev. 24. 16. Deut. 18. 20. with ch. 1. 50. & 5. 18. & 10. 30, 33. Mat. 26. 65.

* The sense is, "By our law he has been found guilty of blasphemy, and condemned; but, on account of the feast, we could not inflict the punishment, and therefore we had recourse to thee." — *Bloomfield.*

[f] Ch. 18. 38. ver. 4. Luke 22. 67. Is. 53. 7. Acts 8. 32.

[g] Ch. 18. 39.

[h] Acts 2. 23. & 4. 27, 28. Rom. 8. 32. Luke 22. 53.

[i] Mat. 26. 24. & 27. 1, 2.

[k] Luke 12. 47, 48. ch. 15. 22, 24.

[l] Luke 23. 2, 5. Acts 17. 7. with ch. 18. 36. & 6. 15. Luke 20. 25.

eth himself a king speaketh against Cesar. 13. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement,* but in the Hebrew † Gabbatha. 14. And it was [m] the preparation of the passover, and about the [n] sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! 15. [o] But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, [p] We have no king but Cesar. 16. [q] Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away. 17. ¶ And he, bearing his cross, went [r] forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: 18. [s] Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

* A tesselated pavement, formed of small pieces of marble and coloured stones, was an ornamental luxury in use among the Romans.

† i. e. *raised pavement.*

m Lev. 23. 5—8. Num. 28. 16, 17. Mark 15. 42. Mat. 27. 62. ver. 31, 42. Luke 23. 54.

n Noon tide. Mark 15. 25, 33.

o Mat. 27. 22—25. Mark 15. 11—15. Luke 23. 21—26. Acts 3. 13, 14. & 13. 28. ver. 6.

p Ch. 18. 31. Gen. 49. 10. Ezek. 21. 26, 27.

q Mat. 27. 26, 31, 33. Mark 15. 15, 20, 22. Luke 23. 24—26.

r Lev. 24. 14. Num. 15. 35. 1 Kin. 21. 13. Acts 7. 58. Heb. 13. 11, 12.

s Gal. 3. 13. Is. 53. 12. Mat. 27. 35, 38, 44. Mark 15. 25—28, 32. Luke 23. 32, 33, 39.

Verses 1—18. Having failed in his first attempt to release the innocent prisoner, he bethought him of another, to move the people's compassion.

1. He delivered him up to the officers to be publicly scourged, hoping probably, that after this ignominy and punishment their fury might be appeased. The soldiers to whose custody Jesus had been committed, added the most cruel mockery to his sufferings; and, in derision of the dignity to which he pretended, *platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head*, arrayed him in robes of mock majesty, and bowing the knee, saluted him king of the Jews, whilst with their hands they smote him, and offered him the vilest indignities. *Note*, (1.) By these stripes he fulfilled the prophetic word, and procured the healing of our guilty souls. (2.) Many make a jest of things sacred now, who will shortly prove them, to their cost, serious realities. (3.) He who endured such pain and shame for us, hath left us his example of patient suffering: how dare we at any time complain, when we see what he endured.

2. Thus arrayed, Pilate once more ordered him to be led forth, hoping this would satisfy his persecutors, and that they might be prevailed upon to let him go; when he adds withal his solemn testimony, that he found *no fault in him*, and that he therefore regarded him as an object rather to be pitied than feared; and, pointing to him as he stood, wearing the crown of thorns and purple robe, his face black with buffeting and smeared with blood, he said, *Behold the man!* and let such an object of misery plead with you for mercy. *Note*, (1.) That Man once treated with such insult and contempt, should be for ever in our eyes the object of our admiration, love, and praise; for, as he humbled himself thus low, the more we see of his abasement, the more the riches of his grace should rise in our esteem. (2.) If we are hooted at, and made a gazing-stock by wicked men, we are only called to a fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and should therein rejoice.

3. Far from being softened and melted by the misery of the innocent sufferer, the chief priests and their officers, more exasperated through the fear of losing their prey, instigated the people, and in a most tumultuous manner headed the mob, and led the cry, *Crucify him, crucify him.* Pilate, shocked at their cruelty and injustice, or ironically reproaching them, who pretended to so much sanctity with so wicked a deed, replies, *Take ye him and crucify him*, if ye are so madly set upon it; I choose to have nothing to do with so base an action, for *I find no fault in him.* Fearing that Jesus should yet escape them, they produce a new accusation of a capital nature. Before they charged him as a traitor against the government; now, as a blasphemer against God; pretending, that according to their law he ought to die, *because he made himself the Son of God*, and pretended to the incommunicable honours of the Godhead.

4. Pilate, more terrified at that saying, lest he should bring the divine vengeance more fearfully on his head, determined to examine farther into the matter; and therefore taking Jesus into the judgment-hall, demanded whence he came, whether of human or divine extraction. But Jesus, knowing it was useless to reply, gave him no answer. Pilate, resenting his silence as a contempt of his authority, with haughtiness adds, *Speakest thou not unto me? art thou mute, though a prisoner at my bar? knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?* He boasts of his authority as absolute, as able to save or to destroy: so apt are proud worms in office to magnify themselves, and to affect a display of their power.

5. Christ nobly checks his arrogance, and exposes the vanity of his boasts. *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above;* as a magistrate, it was from Heaven he received his authority, and should rule with justice; and, in this particular case, had he not been delivered by the determinate counsel of God, not all the Roman powers combined could have prevailed, in the minutest particular, against him. *Therefore he that delivered me unto thee*, Judas the traitor, or Caiaphas the high priest, *hath the greater sin. Note*, There is a difference in sins; some transgress with much more aggravated guilt than others, as they act against greater light, and offend with more deliberate malice.

6. Pilate, now more deeply stung in his conscience, sought earnestly to obtain the release of Jesus, but in vain. Had he acted as an upright magistrate, and according to the convictions of his conscience, he would have feared no popular resentment; but his corruptions overcame his convictions; and the fear of offending the people, and perhaps endangering himself, at last prevailed. The Jews perceiving how he was disposed, in order to compel him to consent, clamoured loud, and urged, that if he *let this man go*, he could not be *Cesar's friend;* since whoever made himself *a king*, spoke against Cesar, and was a rebel against his government; though the fact was notoriously false, Christ having never assumed the least temporal authority; he commanded, on the contrary, the tribute to be paid to Cesar; and when the people would have made him a king by force, he left them, and disappointed their designs. But this they craftily urge, as what must most powerfully influence Pilate who might now be liable to an accusation before the emperor for betraying his trust, if he should let one go whom they accused as a traitor. Thus they who in heart abhorred the Roman government, now would appear the most zealous subjects of Cesar. Wicked men, to effect their purposes, can transform themselves into every shape.

7. Pilate, terrified into compliance with their request by this suggestion, and well apprised of the cruel and suspicious temper of Tiberius, the Roman emperor, sat down on the judgment-seat, in a place called *Gabbatha*, or *the pavement*, in order to pronounce sentence upon the prisoner. *And it was the preparation* day *of the passover* sabbath, a solemn season, when very different subjects should have engaged their time and thoughts; *and about the sixth hour.* Once more to try if any thing would work upon them, Pilate bids them *behold* their *king*, and think a moment if such a miserable object could afford any real cause to fear his pretensions, even if he had affected royalty. But they, impatient for his execution, shouted, *Away with him, crucify him;* they will hear nothing in his favour, and are determined in their

bloody purpose. Pilate remonstrates with them hereupon, *Shall I crucify your king?* either meaning to excite their compassions, or ridiculing their hopes of the Messiah. They who at other times ever testified their abhorrence of the Roman yoke, now eagerly embrace it, and with deep professions of loyalty, cry, *We have no king but Cesar.* Pilate then, seeing it in vain to contend, pronounced sentence, and delivered up the innocent prisoner to them to be crucified. Thus was he arraigned and condemned for us, for a pretended crime, that the condemnation due to us for our real rebellions against God might be removed.

8. The sentence is immediately put in execution by his bloodthirsty persecutors, with every circumstance of ignominy. They drag him to the place where malefactors were executed without the city, bearing his own cross, and there nail him to the accursed tree, between two infamous criminals, who were executed with him, to make him appear the vilest of the vile; thus fulfilling the Scriptures, which foretold he should be *numbered with the transgressors*, Isa. liii. 12. We cannot too frequently in our meditations come and see this great sight. Calvary offers the noblest subject to our view; God incarnate dying for our iniquities: with what anguish for our guilt, which brought the Saviour to the cross; with what love to him, who so freely consented to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, should we then look up to a crucified Jesus!

19. ¶ [t] And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, † JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. 20. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written [u] in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin. 21. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. 22. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. 23. ¶ [x] Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat: now the coat was without seam, ‡woven from the top throughout. 24. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, [y] They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. 25. ¶ [z] Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of [a] Cleophas,§ and Mary Magdalene.‖ 26. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the [b] disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27. Then saith he to the disciple, [c] Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*.

t Mat. 27. 37. Mark 15. 26. Luke 23. 38.

† A public notification of his Messiahship, instead of a charge against him.

u 1 John 4. 14. Mark 16. 15. Rev. 5. 9. This presaged his being preached through all the world in the different languages of mankind.

x Mat. 27. 35. Mark 15. 24. Luke 23. 34. Ps. 22. 18.

‡ Or *wrought.*

y Ps. 22. 18.

z Mat. 27. 55, 56. Mark 15. 40, 41. Luke 2. 35. & 23. 49.

a Or *Alpheus.* Luke 24. 18. & 6. 15. Mark 3. 18. Mat. 10. 3.

§ The wife of Cleophas was the same as the mother of James the Less, and of Joses, Mark 15. 40.

‖ There are four women named Mary mentioned in the gospels among the followers of Jesus: 1, Mary, his mother; 2, Mary of Magdala; 3, Mary, the sister of Lazarus; 4, Mary, the wife of Cleophas.

b *i. e.* John. Ch. 13. 23. & 21. 7, 20, 24. with 2. 4.

c Ps. 68. 5. & 146. 9. 1 Tim. 5. 3. Gen. 47. 12.

28. ¶ After this Jesus, knowing [d] that all things were now accomplished, [e] that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. 29. [f] Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth. 30. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, [g] It is finished: and [h] he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

d Luke 24. 27, 24. Gen. 3. 15. Ps. 2. 1—3. & 22. 1—21. & 69. 1—21. Is. 50. 6. & 52. 13. & liii.

e Ps. 69. 21.

f Ps. 69. 21. Mat. 27. 48. Mark 15. 36.

g Ch. 17. 4. Mat. 3. 15. Dan. 9. 24. Is. 42. 21. Rom. 10. 4. Heb. 9. 11, 12. & 10. 1—14. Eccl. 12. 7.

h Mat. 27. 50. Mark 15. 37. Luke 23. 46. ch. 10. 11, 15, 17, 18. 1 Thes. 5. 10.

Verses 19—30. The circumstances of Christ's death are here somewhat more fully related than by the other evangelists.

1. On a tablet at the top of his cross Pilate wrote a superscription in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, containing the accusation laid against him, *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.* Multitudes of the Jews then, who came from the city to the place of execution, read the superscription: and the chief priests, offended at the title given him, regarded it as a brand of infamy upon their nation, and therefore wished him to alter the writing into another form, and not to call him absolutely *King of the Jews*, but *that he said, I am the King of the Jews;* desiring to fix upon his memory this infamy of an impostor. But Pilate, indignant at the injustice they had driven him to commit, with displeasure rejects their request, saying, *What I have written, I have written*, and will not alter it. *Note*, (1.) The innocence of Jesus this very superscription proved. No crime was charged upon him, but his asserting his real character as the King Messiah. (2.) God holds the hands and lips of wicked men, and can, when he pleases, make them write and speak in such a way as shall bear testimony to his truth.

2. The soldiers who crucified him, as he hung on the tree, sat down to part his garments among them; and, unwilling to rend his seamless coat, determined rather to cast lots which of them should have it, fulfilling literally the Scripture which had said, *They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots*, (Psal. xxii. 18.) *These things therefore the soldiers did*, being under the secret influence of his power, whom they knew not.

3. In the midst of his agonies Jesus showed the tenderest concern for his afflicted mother, who stood by his cross with the disciple whom he loved; and kindly addressing her, he recommends her to the care of his beloved John, desiring her to regard him henceforward as a son, and directing him to pay her the duty and affection due to a mother; *and from that hour that disciple took her to his own home*, glad to obey the commands of his dying Master, and well pleased to have an opportunity of testifying his unfeigned love towards him. *Note*, (1.) Christ on the cross hath taught all children an eminent instance of filial duty towards their parents, whose wants to the utmost they are bound to provide for. (2.) When one friend fails, the Lord can raise us up another, if we trust him, we shall not be destitute. (3.) They who love the adored Jesus, will be happy to embrace every opportunity of testifying their regard for him.

4. Christ knowing *that all things were now accomplished*, and his work of redemption nearly complete, *that the Scripture might be fulfilled*, (Psal. xxii. 15. lxix. 21.) *saith, I thirst;* and a vessel of vinegar being near, which was probably mixed with water as drink for the Roman soldiers, they dipped a spunge in the liquor, and on a stalk of hyssop lifted it to his lips. Jesus felt the wrath of God, and thirsted, which had he not endured, we must for ever have lain down in everlasting burnings, without one drop of water to cool our tongues.

5. Jesus having received the vinegar saith, *It is finished;* the victory is obtained over death and hell; the work of redemption completed; the full atonement made; all the types and prophe-

cies fulfilled; the law magnified, by a perfect obedience unto death; the justice of God satisfied; the salvation of sinners secured; and therefore now his sufferings end. *He bowed his head and gave up the ghost;* freely resigning his soul into his Father's hands, and surrendering that life which otherwise none could have taken from him, *a ransom for many.*

31. ¶ The Jews therefore, because it
[i] Deut. 21. 22, 23. was the preparation, [i] that the bodies
[k] The sabbath and first day of unleavened bread meeting together, Exod. 20. 8. & 12. 18. Num. 28. 17, 18. Is. 1. 13. should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was [k] an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. 32. Then came
[*] Passages from the classic writers, show that it was not unusual to break the legs of criminals just above the ancle. the soldiers, and brake the legs* of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead
[l] 1 John 5. 6, 8. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Is. 45. 24. already, they brake not his legs: 34. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came
[m] Ch. 21. 24. 1 John 1. 1—3. John 12. 14. Acts 10. 39—41. thereout [l] blood and water. 35. [m] And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record
[n] Ch 17. 21, 23. & 20. 31. Rom. 15. 4. is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, [n] that ye might believe. 36. For these things were done, [o] that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him
[o] Exod. 12. 46. Num. 9. 12. Ps. 34. 20. shall not be broken. 37. And again
[p] Zech. 12. 10. Ps. 22. 16. Acts 2. 32. Rev. 1. 7. another scripture saith, [p] They shall look on him whom they pierced.

Verses 31—37. This last indignity shown to our Lord's body is only recorded by this evangelist.

1. The Jews, superstitiously observant of the sabbath, and hypocritically pretending reverence for that sacred institution, whilst their hands were red with the blood of him who was Lord of the sabbath, that the bodies might not hang on the trees till evening, when the sabbath began, which was a high day, and kept with great solemnity, they desired Pilate that *their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away;* to kill them outright, if they were not dead before, and to bury them immediately. *Note,* Hypocrites often appear very scrupulous about the ceremonials of religion, whilst they are living in open violation of its most essential precepts.

2. Pilate granted their request; and the two malefactors not being yet dead, had the dreadful operation performed on them; but when the soldiers came to Jesus, perceiving him already dead, they broke not his legs: but one of the soldiers, to put the matter past dispute, *thrust his spear into his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water;* either the pericardium being pierced, and thus the water it contained rushed out with the blood, or this separate discharge was miraculous, and typical of the great blessings of justification and sanctification obtained by Christ's blood shed for us. And John, who was standing by, adds his attestation, as an eye-witness to this fact, as most indubitably true, that we *might believe* the certainty of Christ's death, and receive the inestimable blessings which this blood and water signified. *Note,* (1.) We are polluted with guilt, and defiled with corruption, but this is the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Jesus came *by blood* to make the atonement; *by water,* to purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God: whosoever therefore cometh to him, shall find the mighty efficacy of his blood to pardon the most guilty, and of his grace, to purify the most polluted soul. (2.) We have not followed cunningly devised fables in the gospel of our salvation, but believe on the evidence of facts supported by the most unshaken authority, and attested by the most competent witnesses.

3. In this transaction particular notice is taken of the fulfilment of two Scriptures: [1.] *A bone of him shall not be broken,* (Exod. xii. 46.) which, though spoken of the paschal lamb, yet especially regarded him, who in the fulness of time, as *our passover,* should be sacrificed for us, (1 Cor. v. 7.) Another Scripture had said, (Zech. xii. 10.) *They shall look on him whom they pierced.* Thus were the prophecies accomplished by those who thought of nothing less in what they did, than the confirmation of our faith in Jesus as the true Messiah.

38. ¶ [q] And after this Joseph of Ari-
[q] Mat. 27. 57—60. Mark 15. 42—46. Luke 23. 50—54. mathea, (being a disciple of Jesus, but [r] secretly for fear of the Jews,) besought
[r] Ch. 3. 2. & 12. 42. & 9. 22. Prov. 29. 25. Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He
[s] Ch. 3. 1, 2 & 7. 50. came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. 39. And there came also Nico-
[t] 2 Chr. 16. 14. Luke 24. 56. demus, which at the first came to Jesus [s] by night, and brought [t] a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight.*† 40. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in [u] linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41. Now in the
[u] Acts 5. 6. ch. 20. 6. place where he was crucified there was a
[x] Ch. 18. 1. Gen. 3. 1—23. [x] garden; and in the garden [y] a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.
[y] Is. 53. 9. Luke 23. 53. Mat. 27. 60. Mark 15. 46. 42. [z] There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews' preparation *day;* for
[z] Acts 13. 29. 1 Cor. 15. 4. Mat. 12. 40. Ps. 22. 15. the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

† The quantity of spices used by the Jews at funerals was very great. At the funeral of Herod, 500 servants followed bearing spices and aromatics.

Verses 38—42. Though now Jesus seemed deserted of all, and his corpse ready to be laid with malefactors in a common grave, God raises up one who is appointed to give it a more honourable interment.

1. Joseph of Arimathea, who through fear of the Jews had concealed his sentiments, and, though secretly a disciple of Jesus, dared not to profess it, now boldly appears, and begs of the governor the body of Jesus, which was granted. *Note,* (1.) The higher men are in the world, the greater temptation they are under to shun the reproach of the cross; and though persuaded of the truth of the gospel, not to make bold and open profession of it. (2.) When the more courageous disciples are foiled, God can say to the fearful heart, Be strong, and enable them to appear boldly in the cause of God and truth.

2. Nicodemus, who at the first appearing of Jesus came to him by night, now joined Joseph in this pious work, and provided a large quantity of myrrh and aloes in order to embalm the body of Jesus, as was often done to men of eminent reputation and dignity. No expense to serve him will be grudged by those who truly love the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. They took down the body and wrapped it in linen clothes, with the spices, as was the manner of the Jews to bury their great men: and as Joseph had a garden near the place where Jesus was crucified, in which he had prepared for himself a new tomb, hewn out of a rock, where never man had lain before, there laid they the body of Jesus, it being very convenient, as they were straitened for time, the preparation-day being far advanced, and the sabbath approaching. Thus was our great surety laid under the arrest of death, and consigned to the silent grave, that he might make the clods of the valley sweet to us, prepare our bed of dust perfumed with his own glorious body

and comfort us in the reviving hope of following him through the grave, the gate of death, unto a joyful immortality.

CHAP. XX.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

The proofs of Christ's resurrection which we have in this chapter are, 1. *Such as occurred immediately at the sepulchre,* (1.) *The sepulchre found empty, and the grave clothes in good order,* ver. 1—10. (2.) *Two angels appearing to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre,* ver. 11—13. (3.) *Christ himself appearing to her,* ver. 14—18. 2. *Such as occurred afterwards, at the meetings of the apostles.* (1.) *At one the same day at evening that Christ rose, when Thomas was absent,* ver. 19—25. (2.) *At another that day sevennight, when Thomas was with them,* ver. 26—31.

1. THE [a] first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away* from the sepulchre. 2. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the [b] other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, [c] They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. 3. [d] Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. 4. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. 5. And he, stooping down, *and looking in,* [e] saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. 6. [f] Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the [g] linen clothes lie, 7. And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. 8. Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.† 9. [h] For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. 10. [i] Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.‡

a Mat. 28. 1, 2. Mark 16. 1, 2—4. Luke 24. 1, 10.

* Rather, *saw that the stone had been removed.*

b Ch. 13. 23. & 19. 26. & 21. 7, 20, 24.

c Ver. 9, 13, 15. Luke 24. 10.

d Luke 24. 12. ver. 6, 10, 11.

e Luke 24. 12. ver. 6. 7. ch. 19. 40. & 11. 44.

f Ch. 18. 15—27. & 21. 7. Mat. 16. 15, 16. John 6. 67—69.

g He left his grave clothes as he never more would need them. Ch. 11. 44.

† Believed what? the report.—*Campbell.*

h Luke 9. 44. & 24. 25, 26. ch. 12. 16. Ps. 16. 10. Acts 2. 25, 31. & 13. 35. Mat. 16. 21.

i Mark 16. 13. Luke 24. 9.

‡ Or, *to their companions.*

Verses 1—10. The reconciling the accounts of the several evangelists, with regard to the circumstances attending the resurrection, hath exercised the ingenuity of many learned expositors. The fact itself is proved by a great cloud of witnesses.

1. Mary Magdalene very early, while it was yet dark, set out for the sepulchre, where she arrived about sun-rising, and, to her surprise, found the stone removed from the door. Hereupon looking in, and missing the body of Jesus, she, with the other women, ran to Peter and John, and with great concern informed them of the removal of the body of Jesus, they knew not whither. *Note,* (1.) They who truly love Christ will delight to meet him early. (2.) It is a bitter grief to a gracious soul to feel the absence of Jesus, and not to know where he may be found. (3.) We often make that matter of our mourning, which should afford us real cause for joy. (4.) The communication of our sorrows is often the nearest way to recover our lost comforts.

2. Peter and John immediately went forth, desirous to inform themselves how matters stood; and running together, John outran Peter, and came first to the sepulchre, where, stooping down and looking in, he saw the linen clothes lying, yet went not in. Peter, more courageous, no sooner reached the place than he went in, to gain the fullest satisfaction possible, and observed the grave-clothes, not carelessly thrown down, but each part separately folded up and laid by itself; a certain proof, that whoever removed the body did it deliberately, and not in haste. Hereupon John also now ventured in after Peter, *and he saw and believed,* either that the body was removed, or that Christ was really risen from the dead; for hitherto none of the disciples had entertained any right notions of the Messiah, nor, after all the Scripture prophecies and their Master's predictions, seem at all to have expected his resurrection from the dead.

3. Hereupon the disciples return to their companions, to communicate to them the state of the matter as it appeared to them and to wait the event.

11. ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre, 12. And seeth [k] two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. 14. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw [l] Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. 15. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom [l] seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where [m] thou hast laid him, and I will take him [n] away. 16. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. [m] She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, [n] Master. 17. Jesus saith unto her, [o] Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father:‖ but go to [p] my brethren, and say unto them, [q] I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and *to* my God, and your God. 18. [r] Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her.

k Luke 24. 4. Mat. 28. 3, 5. Mark 16. 5, 6. It is generally supposed that the angels mentioned by Matthew and by Mark were different. The two mentioned by Luke and John were seen afterwards, and it cannot be ascertained whether they were the same as those mentioned by the other evangelists or not. As to the appearances they assumed, we ought not to be surprised that we cannot comprehend the laws of angelic life. See *Townsend.*

l Ver. 15, 16. Mark 16. 9. Mat. 28. 9. Song 3. 3, 4. with ch. 21. 4. Mark 16. 12. Luke 24. 16, 31.

m Ch. 10. 4. Song 2. 8.

n Mat. 23. 8, 10. ch. 11. 28. & 13. 13.

o Luke 10. 4. 2 Cor. 5. 16. with Mat. 28. 9.

‖ I do not yet ascend, therefore do not lose time in satisfying thyself as to my bodily identity now, for I shall not yet ascend to my Father. Lose not a moment in conveying the joyful news to my disciples.—*Valpy.*

p Ps. 22. 22. Rom. 8. 29. Heb. 2. 11, 12. Mat. 28. 10.

q Ch. 13. 3. & 14. 3. & 16. 5, 7, 16, 28. & 17. 5, 11, 13. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 3, 17. Ps. 89. 26.

r Mark 16. 10, 14.

Verses 11—18. Christ's first appearance was to Mary Magdalene. Much had been forgiven her, and she loved much. Her past conduct was all forgotten, and her unfeigned present attachment to Jesus made her now justly dear to him, and she is favoured with this distinguished token of his regard.

1. She stood without at the sepulchre weeping, being returned the second time to seek farther after her dear Lord: and they who wait constantly upon him, though he withdraw for a while, yet shall they find him at the last; and what they sow in tears they shall reap in joy.

2. As she wept she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and saw two angels in human form (the same, as some suppose, which appeared to her before,) Luke xxiv. 3—6.

They were clothed in white, the emblem of their spotless purity, and sat one at the head, and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain, to pay him honour, and to be the messengers of his resurrection.

3. They kindly addressed her, *Woman, why weepest thou?* She, whose heart overflowed with sorrow, as her eyes with tears, replied, *Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him:* and this she thought a sufficient reason for her grief; but our vexations, like hers, are often imaginary, and of our own making: had we but faith, the clouds would immediately disappear.

4. Christ manifests himself to her; for they who can rest in nothing short of Christ and his love, shall not be disappointed. As she turned herself, *she saw Jesus standing, and,* because either her eyes were holden, or they were so filled with tears, she *knew not that it was Jesus:* so much nearer is he to his mourning saints, than they oftentimes are aware. He kindly addressed her in the words of his angelic ministers, *Woman, why weepest thou?* and she, not attending to him closely, and supposing him probably the gardener, begged to be informed if he had borne the body away, or could give her any intelligence concerning it, that she might give it an honourable interment elsewhere, if it might not lie there. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary!* his altered tone of voice, and calling her by her name, assured her instantly who spoke; and turning to him, she cast herself at his feet with reverence and rapturous joy, crying, *Rabboni!* my Master! how welcome, unutterably welcome to her longing heart! *Note,* When Christ returns after a season of darkness and weeping, then, as the sun shining after rain, the beams of his love are more delightful than ever to the soul.

5. He sends her with the kindest message to his disciples. *Touch me not;* stay not to express your affectionate regard; the moment is precious: *for I am not yet ascended to my Father;* you will therefore have other opportunities of seeing and conversing with me. *But go to my brethren* without delay; in such affectionate terms doth he address those who had so lately shamefully fled and left him; *and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.* Christ owns them in the endeared relation of brethren; assures them he was now entering into his glory, as the covenant-head of his redeemed people; returning to his Father, by eternal generation, and theirs by adoption and grace; to his God, whom, as the man Christ Jesus, the head of his redeemed people, he loved, obeyed, and worshipped; and their God, in a covenant of everlasting love, to *bless them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ.* Blessed and happy are they who can say, The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is *my* Father and *my* God.

6. Mary hastens to carry the glad news to the disconsolate disciples, and with a transport of joy declares she has seen him, and reports the kind message which he had delivered to her. They who have seen Christ by faith, and tasted of his consolations, cannot but delight to tell of him, and to spread the knowledge of his grace.

19. ¶ [s] Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, [t] Peace *be* unto you. 20. And when he had so said, [u] he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. [x] Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. 21. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: [y] as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you. 22. And when he had said this, he breathed on *them,* and saith unto them, [z] Receive ye the Holy Ghost: 23. [a] Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.* 24. ¶ [b] But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25. The other disciples therefore said unto him, [c] We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, [d] Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

s Mark 16. 14. Luke 24. 36—48. 1 Cor. 15. 5.
t Ch. 14. 27. & 16. 33.
u Ver. 27. 1 John 1. 1. Luke 24. 37—40.
x Ch. 16. 22. Luke 24. 41—43. 1 John 1. 1, 2.
y Ch. 10. 36. & 17. 18. Is. 61. 1—3. & 11. 2—4. with Mark 16. 15—18. Mat. 28. 18—20. Luke 24. 49. 2 Tim. 2. 2.
z Acts 2. 4. & 4. 8.
a Mat. 18. 19. & 16. 19. Luke 24. 47. Acts 2. 38. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 2. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 20.
* Here our Lord is clearly declared to be 'the master of the house' of the whole Gospel economy, proceeding on his own sovereign authority.—*J. P. Smith.*
b Ch. 11. 16. & 14. 5. & 21. 2. Mat. 10. 3.
c Ch. 1. 41, 45. ver. 2. 13, 18. ch. 21. 7.
d Ps. 78. 8—41. Luke 24. 30. ver. 20. Job 9. 16. Luke 24. 25.

Verses 19—25. The reports of Mary and the women produced little conviction in the minds of the disciples; such fools, and slow of heart were they to believe; Jesus therefore appears to them himself, to put the matter out of doubt.

1. The apostles were all assembled, Thomas excepted, on the evening of the day in which Christ rose from the dead, which was the first day of the week. For fear of the Jews they had shut and barred the doors, when on a sudden, probably whilst they were considering over the strange reports which they had heard, and examining into their credibility, or praying for farther light and direction, Jesus appears in the midst of them, and with the kindest salutation addresses them, *Peace be unto you.* He upbraids them not with any thing that had passed; it was forgiven and forgotten; and now he is come to put them in possession of that peace which before his death he had so solemnly bequeathed to them. *Note,* (1.) Where the disciples of Jesus assemble in his name, there will he be in the midst of them. (2.) The peace which our Redeemer bestows, lifts us superior to all our fears.

2. To give them undoubted assurance of the identity of his person, and the certainty of his resurrection, he showed them his hands and his side, which still bore the glorious scars gotten in that conflict he had endured for their sakes, when all their foes were vanquished; and, fully satisfied that it was indeed their adored Master himself, joy and gladness were diffused through every heart, and sat on every countenance. *Note,* These love-prints in the Saviour's flesh should still be gazed upon by us with faith, delight, and wonder. Whilst they are pleading before the throne, who shall lay aught to our charge?

3. He solemnly invests them anew with their commission from him. *Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you:* he would remove every remaining fear, and recover them from their astonishment, that they might hear and receive the commission he delivered to them. *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you;* giving you full authority to go and preach my gospel, engaging to qualify you for the work, and to give you to see the most abundant success of your labours. *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost;* by this emblem signifying to them, that the Spirit which proceedeth from him, as the breath from the body, should rest upon them, as a quickening Spirit, like that which God breathed at first into the lifeless clay, (Gen. ii. 7.) and should enable them with the abundance of his gifts and graces to discharge that high office to which they were ordained. And as one branch of their divinely delegated authority, he saith, *Whose soever sins ye remit,* according to the gospel which they preached, and as possessed of that discernment of spirits, whereby they were enabled to distinguish the truly faithful, *they are remitted*

unto them; the absolution which they pronounce on earth he engages to ratify in heaven: *and whose soever sins ye retain,* because of their impenitence and unbelief, *they are retained;* and if they die in their sins, the wrath of God, according to their denunciations, must for ever abide upon them. *Note,* (1.) Though men may give an outward mission, it is the office of the Holy Ghost to call and qualify every true minister of Christ, and, without his inspiration, they who run unsent, will be accounted as thieves and robbers. (2.) Though ministers have no power of their own to pardon sins, or bind them upon the soul, yet, where they speak according to Christ's word, he will confirm their sentence.

4. Thomas, called Didymus, one of the twelve apostles who were first ordained, though now reduced to eleven by the apostasy of Judas, happened not to be present when Jesus showed himself to the rest. By what he was detained, is not said: perhaps the fear which made them lock the doors, kept him away; and if so, for his cowardice and neglect he is justly punished with the loss of that blessed sight which his brethren enjoyed. But whether he was before in the fault or not, his incredulity was justly blameable, when his brethren, in a transport of joy, assured him they had *seen the Lord.* Resolute in unbelief, he declares nothing shall convince him, but the evidence of his own senses: *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe;* a very criminal incredulity, yet was it so over-ruled by divine providence, as to add additional evidence to the certainty of Jesus' resurrection. So far were his own apostles from easily satisfying themselves about the fact, that nothing but the most infallible evidence could have convinced them: and indeed, when they looked forward to what they must expect to meet with on account of their testimony, they needed the fullest conviction of the truth in their own souls, to bear them out in their sufferings.

e Ver. 19. Mic. 5. 5. Is. 9. 7. Col. 1. 20. Ch. 14. 27. & 16. 33.
f Ps. 103. 13, 14. 1 John 1. 1, 2. Ver. 25.
g Ps. 118. 28. & 91. 2. & 73. 25, 26. & 18. 1—3. Phil. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Luke 1. 46, 47.
* The combination of the two sacred names forms the strongest representation of Divine Majesty. Nor may we forget that it was spoken under the direction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. — *J. P. Smith.*
h 2 Cor. 5. 7. Heb. 11. 1, 27. 1 Pet. 1. 8.
i Ch. 21. 25.
k Rom. 15. 4. Luke 1. 4.
l Mat. 16. 16. John 6. 69. & 9. 35, 38. Acts 8. 37.
m Ch. 3. 15, 16, 18, 36. & 5. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 9. 1 John 5. 10—13.

26. ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, [e] Peace *be* unto you. 27. Then saith he to Thomas, [f] Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. 28. And Thomas answered and said unto him, [g] My Lord and my God!* 29. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: [h] blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed. 30. ¶ [i] And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31. [k] But these are written, that ye might [l] believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that [m] believing ye might have life through his name.

Verses 26—31. Our Lord by his resurrection consecrated the first day of the week: then his disciples assembled, and he appeared to them. A week after he repeated his visit, to put a farther honour on the day, which was henceforward to be observed as the Christian sabbath.

1. Christ appears to them, where they were met together, and Thomas with them, having shut the doors for fear of the Jews. Seven days Thomas was left to his unbelieving doubts, and in a miserable state of suspense; whilst the other disciples rejoiced in their risen Redeemer. But now having punished him for his former neglect and absence, and being joined again in communion with his fellow-apostles, he is favoured with the sight of Jesus, who graciously condescends to give him all that satisfaction which he perversely required. *He stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you,* according to his former gracious salutation: then, particularly addressing himself to Thomas, to rebuke his infidelity, and satisfy his doubts, he bids him, since nothing else would convince him, put his finger upon the scars in his hands, and examine with his hand the wound in his side, and feel and see the certainty of that resurrection he would not credit, *and be not faithless,* or *incredulous, but believing. Note,* Unbelief is the injurious bar which robs us of our comfort, and God of his glory; most justly therefore does it deserve rebuke from Christ, and call for deep humiliation from us.

2. Thomas, quite overcome with the evidence, and confounded and ashamed at his own incredulity, cries out, *My Lord and my God,* in the fullest assurance of faith, and with the deepest reverence and adoration of his glorious Master. He acknowledges his divinity, and worships him as the object of highest honour, as very God. *Note,* (1.) True faith regards Jesus not only as God and Lord, but as *my* God, and *my* Lord, in whose favour and love we have an assured interest. (2.) We are then disciples indeed, when Jesus is exalted in our hearts, and in our lips and life we confess him our Lord and Master.

3. For a reproof to Thomas, and an encouragement to those who should come after, Jesus replies, *Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed;* refusing every proof but the evidence of his own senses; and, though convinced at last, yet was he culpable in rejecting the testimony which his brethren had borne, in which way the rest of the world must be converted to the faith. And therefore Christ adds, *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed,* as the Old Testament saints had done, and, as must be the case with those who afterwards should believe the gospel, on the testimony of the inspired witnesses; their faith is more noble, spiritual, and honourable to God, and will procure the most transcendent blessings upon their own souls.

4. The evangelist observes, that many other signs were given of the resurrection of Jesus, during the forty days he was seen of them, than those recorded in the sacred writings; but the evidence contained in the book of God is fully satisfactory to those who humbly desire information, and who search the scriptures to be made wise unto salvation through them; they will be convinced from these sacred records, *that Jesus is the Christ,* the promised Messiah, *the Son of God,* possessed of the same divine nature and perfections, and declared to be so *by his resurrection from the dead,* Rom. i. 4. and they who believe on him may be assured *of life through his name;* the life of grace with all its comforts here, and the life of glory with all its unutterable blessedness hereafter, both being effectually obtained by the death and resurrection of Jesus, who hath *opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.*

CHAP. XXI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

We have here another appearance of Christ. We are told, 1. *How he discovered himself to them as they were fishing, filled their net, and then very familiarly came and dined with them upon what they had caught,* ver. 1—14. 2. *What discourse he had with Peter after dinner.* (1.) *Concerning himself,* ver. 15—20. (2.) *Concerning John,* ver 21—23. (3.) *The solemn conclusion of this gospel,* ver. 24, 25.

1. AFTER [a] these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea

a Mat. 26. 32. & 28. 7. ch. 6. 1.

of Tiberias: and on this wise shewed he *himself.* 2. [b] There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. 3. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night [c] they caught nothing. 4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: [d] but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. 5. Then Jesus saith unto them, * Children, [e] have ye any meat? They answered him, No. 6. And he said unto them, [f] Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore; and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. 7. Therefore [g] that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is [h] the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him,* (for he was naked,†) and [i] did cast himself into the sea. 8. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were ‡ two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. 9. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw [k] a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.§ 10. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. 11. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, ‖ an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. 12. ¶ Jesus saith unto them, Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. 13. [l] Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. 14. This is now the [m] third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead.

b Ch. 1. 41, 45. & 11. 16. Mat. 4. 21. & 10. 2, 3.

c Luke 5. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

d Luke 24. 16. ch. 20. 14.

* Or *Sirs.*

e Luke 24. 4.

f Luke 5. 6, 7. Ps. 37. 3. & 128. 2.

g Ch. 13. 23. & 20. 2. & 19. 26. ver. 20, 24.

h Acts 2. 36. & 10. 36. ch. 20. 2, 13, 20, 25, 28. & 11. 21, 27, 28.

† The word here used does not, in the original, signify having no clothes whatever on, but not having all the clothes usually worn, particularly not having his mantle.—*Campbell.*

i Song 8. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 14. Ps. 42. 1. & 84. 2. Mat. 14. 28, 29.

‡ 120 yards.

k 1 Kin. 19. 6.

§ There is no doubt the fire and food was provided miraculously by Christ, as he had just before caused the miraculous draught of fishes.—*Bloomfield.*

‖ This presaged their being instrumental in converting multitudes to Christ.

l Acts 1. 4. & 10. 41. Luke 24. 35, 42, 43.

m Ch. 20. 19, 26.

Verses 1—14. The disciples being appointed to meet their Lord in Galilee, returned thither, and, till the time came, employed themselves in their former occupations. Christ's servants must never be idlers.

1. Christ appears to them at the sea of Tiberias, where Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were fishing. They were unsuccessful all night and toiled in vain: in the morning Jesus stood on the shore, and, at the distance they were, the disciples knew him not. *Note,* (1.) God's ministers sometimes labour long, and see little fruit: but they must not be weary nor faint in their minds: patient perseverance shall at last be crowned with success. (2.) They who are diligent in their honest calling, are in Christ's way, and may expect his blessing.

2. Christ addresses them in his familiar manner. *Children, have ye any meat? They answered, No. He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship.* Rather than return empty, they resolved to make the trial, and to their astonishment found the net so full, *that they were not able to draw it up into the boat for the multitude of fishes. Note,* (1.) Christ takes cognizance of his disciples' wants, he will see that they have meat to eat. (2.) Our success depends not on our own labours, but on Christ's blessing. (3.) They who go under a divine call, shall find at last, that their labour is not in vain in the Lord.

3. John hereupon suggests this must needs be the Lord. Peter instantly caught the hint, and, fired with zeal and love, girt up his coat, and plunged into the sea, impatient to be at his dear Master's feet: whilst the other disciples, who were but a little way from shore, about a hundred yards, hasted to land, dragging the net with them. Simon joined them, and assisted them in their labour, and to their astonishment counted one hundred and fifty-three large fishes, and yet the net remained unbroken, which still increased the miracle. *Note,* (1.) Different disciples excel in different gifts and graces: some are more quick to discern, others are more intrepid to execute: some move slowly, but steadily: others blaze with zeal, though not equally uniform: and each especially serviceable in their places. (2.) God's people will all be brought safe to the shores of everlasting rest through every tribulation: and when they are counted over, not one will be lacking of those which gospel grace effectually drew to Jesus.

4. Their Master, who had given them this miraculous draught of fishes, had provided also for their refreshment on shore. They found a *fire and fish laid thereon, and bread,* to which he bids them add some of those they had caught, and then kindly and familiarly, as formerly, invites them to come and refresh themselves; whilst they in sacred awe at his presence and miracles, kept at a respectable distance, *nor durst ask him, Who art thou?* which would have implied unbelief, when indeed they were fully satisfied that it was the Lord. *Note,* (1.) They who act under the command of Jesus, and go forth in his name, shall not want a provision. *Verily they shall be fed.* (2.) In the ordinances a rich repast is provided for the faithful, and the Master in them will break the bread of life to our souls. (3.) The gospel word is, *Come;* Christ's arms are open to his people; they will be welcome to all the rich provision of his grace.

5. Christ, as the master of the feast, distributes the bread and fish to them, and did eat and drink with them, to show himself truly alive, and to confirm them in the certainty of his resurrection, Acts x. 41. And still he is the same gracious Lord; they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall be filled, and all the cravings of their souls relieved by the abundance of his grace.

6. The Evangelist remarks, that this was the third public appearance of Jesus to any considerable number of his disciples together, whose faith would hereby be more confirmed. Or this was the third day that he appeared to them: the first day of his resurrection he appeared five several times, once the week after, and now again for the third time; and every repeated visit brought new tokens of his love.

15. ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, [n] Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me [o] more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; [p] thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto

n Mat. 16. 17 ch. 1. 42.

o With Mat. 26. 33. ver. 7.

p Ps. 139. 1—4. & 17. 3. 2 Sam. 7. 20. 2 Kin. 20. 3.

him, [q] Feed my lambs. 16. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17. He saith unto him [r] the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was [s] grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, [t] thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, [u] Feed my sheep. 18. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt [x] stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. 19. This spake he, signifying [y] by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, [z] Follow me.

q Is. 40. 11. Heb. 13. 20. ch. 10. 11, 14. 1 Tim. 4. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 2—4. Acts 20. 28. Eph. 4. 11—13.
r Tim. 4. 2. By lambs is here meant less-advanced disciples.
r With ch. 13. 38. & 18. 17, 25, 27. Peter having thrice denied his Master, Christ puts his love to him thrice to the trial, and thrice repeats his commission to be a faithful and diligent apostle.
s Mat. 26. 75. Mark 14. 72. Luke 22. 61, 62.
t Ch. 2. 24, 25. & 16. 30. & 18. 4. Mat. 9. 4. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23. Jer. 17. 10.
u Ver. 15, 16. Is. 40. 11. Heb. 13. 20. ch. 10. 11, 14. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 2—4. Acts 20. 28. Mat. 28. 20. Mark 16. 15.
x Acts 12. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 1. 14. ch. 13. 37. Acts 21. 13.
y 1 Pet. 4. 11. 2 Pet. 1. 14. Phil. 1. 20.
z Mat. 10. 38. & 16. 24.

Verses 15—19. When dinner was ended, Christ addressed himself to Peter. He knew Peter's conscious heart upbraided him bitterly for his past conduct, and now, to silence his fears, whilst he tacitly reproves his unfaithfulness, confirms him in his office, as fully restored to his favour and love.

We have,

1. The question thrice put to him, *Lovest thou me?* and the first time Christ adds, *more than these?* more than he loved his dearest relatives who were present; or more than the ship, and nets, and fish, and all earthly comforts and gain; or rather, more than these love me; because he had once so boldly and forwardly intimated his superior attachment to him, that *though all men should be offended, yet will not I;* and then it implied a tacit rebuke for his vain-glorious boast. But now that he was restored to favour again, this new obligation conferred upon him required an especial return of love. *Note,* (1.) Nothing begets genuine repentance, but a sense of Christ's love engaging ours. (2.) When we do amiss, we must not be displeased to have our sincerity questioned. (3.) True love to Christ will make us count every thing trivial in comparison with him. (4.) It is commendable ambition to desire to love Christ more than others, whilst we feel how peculiar our obligations to him are.

2. Three times Peter makes the same reply: *Thou knowest that I love thee:* he will not pretend any more to a superiority over his brethren, though conscious of the sincerity of his love. The third time, grieved at the repeated question, which seemed to intimate a suspicion of his sincerity, and reminded him of his threefold denial, he adds, *Thou knowest all things, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee;* and for this he can appeal to him, as the searcher of hearts. *Note,* (1.) They who are sincere in their attachment to Christ, can appeal for their simplicity to the searcher of their hearts. (2.) Every remembrance of past unfaithfulness should grieve us, though it be forgiven of our Lord, and forgotten.

3. Thrice Jesus bids him prove the sincerity of his love by his diligence and labour in the ministry. *Feed my lambs; feed my sheep.* Since his iniquity is pardoned, his commission is renewed, and with more abundant diligence he is called upon to discharge his awful trust. He must feed *the lambs,* the young disciples, and those who are most weak and feeble, considering their weakness, and having compassion on their infirmities as remembering his own. He must feed *the sheep,* the strong of the flock, willing to expose himself to any dangers for their sake, and, faithfully ministering to them the rich food of the gospel word, for their nourishment and growth in grace.

4. Christ foretells the suffering which awaited him in the discharge of his ministry. He must seal the truth he preached by enduring martyrdom. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself,* full of vigour, *and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old,* after a long life of labour, *thou shalt stretch forth thine hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not,* even to prison; *and this he spoke, signifying by what death he should die;* and the concurring testimony of antiquity reports, that he was crucified at Rome. *Note,* (1.) Nature starts at death, as reluctant to go: but grace can enable us to meet it in its most tremendous forms. (2.) Every saint of God desires to die, as he lived, to God's glory; patiently resigned to his will; commending with his dying breath the good ways of the Lord; and rejoicing in hope of the glory ready to be revealed in him.

5. He gives Peter a significant sign of what he required of him. Rising from table, he saith unto him, *Follow me;* copy my example: follow my instruction; and if he was called to the cross, he must remember, it would be no more than his Master, for his sake, had endured before. Whatsoever we suffer, we should never forget how much more our Master endured, and that this is the way to come to be with him in his glory. We must bear the cross before we wear the crown.

20. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple [a] whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21. Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and [b] what *shall* this man *do?* 22. Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry [c] till I come, [d] what *is that* to thee? Follow thou me. 23. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? 24. ¶ This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: * and [e] we know that his testimony is true. 25. [f] And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.* Amen.

a Ch. 13. 23. & 19. 26. & 20. 2. ver. 7, 24.
b Mat. 24. 3. ch. 14. 22. Acts 1. 6. Deut. 29. 29. Job 33. 13. Dan. 4. 35.
c Mat. 16. 28 & 26. 64. & 25. 31. 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8.
d Dan. 12. 9, 13. Deut. 29. 29. Luke 10. 41, 42. ver. 19. Mat. 16. 24.
e Ch. 19. 35. 1 John 1. 1—3. 3 John 12.
f Ch. 20. 30, 31. Acts 10. 38. Mat. 11. 5.
* I agree perfectly, says Campbell, with those interpreters who think that the hyperbole contained in this verse is much more tolerable than the torture to which some critics have put the words, in order to make them speak a different sense.

Verses 20—25. Peter, rising up to follow his Master, on looking back, beheld John the blessed disciple just behind him. Hereupon,

1. He begs Jesus to say, what should be John's lot and labour. Either he was curious to know, or tenderly concerned, lest the same sufferings awaited his dear fellow-labourer. True Christian charity will make us feel for our brethren as for ourselves.

2. Christ checks his curiosity, whilst he answers his question. *If I will that he tarry till I come,* in some peculiarly glorious dis-

play of my power, such as the destruction of the Jewish nation would be, *what is that to thee? follow thou me. Note,* (1.) It is the will of Jesus, that we should follow steadily the path of duty, without curiously desiring to pry into futurity, content to leave all our concerns in his hands. (2.) Our Lord directs all things according to the counsels of his own will, and that should at all times satisfy us, and make us humbly say, *The will of the Lord be done.*

3. From a mistake of Christ's meaning, a report spread among the brethren, as if that disciple *should not die;* whereas Christ said no such thing, but, *If I will that he tarry till I come,* meaning that he should live to see the destruction of the Jewish state and polity, and afterwards die not a violent but a natural death. From whence we may observe, the uncertainty of all *human traditions,* and the great danger of submitting implicitly to human expositions of Scripture, however supported by numbers, authority, or antiquity. We have the book of God before us; we have the Spirit of God promised to teach us; let us therefore, after all that others say, read, hear, and judge for ourselves.

4. The Evangelist now drawing to a conclusion, solemnly attests the truth of all he had recorded, being an eye and ear witness of what he writes; and as he was himself absolutely certain of what he said, so were all his brethren; and the truths contained in this gospel are attended with such evidence as must convince every impartial inquirer. They who reject the Scripture testimony, wilfully shut their eyes against the light, and, whatever they may pretend, have no cloak for their obstinate infidelity.

5. He closes with a declaration, that innumerable other miracles were performed by Jesus, besides those here recorded, which, if they were all related with the circumstances severally attending them, not all the scribes in the world could have written them, nor the most retentive memory contain them. Nor would the unbelieving world, who reject the present evidence, have received the truth, though innumerable volumes of Christ's miracles had been written for their conviction. Hereto the Evangelist sets his *Amen!* What he wrote was infallibly certain; let us add our *Amen* to his, perfectly satisfied in his testimony, by faith embracing the glorious truths he records, and fervently praying for the accomplishment of all the inestimable blessings which are promised. Amen! Amen!

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

Introduction.

THE Author of this volume is usually supposed to be Luke the beloved physician, who wrote the third of the four gospels, which bears his name: and who was very probably one of the seventy disciples, whose commission, Luke x. 1. &c. was little inferior to that of the twelve apostles. This Luke was very much a companion of Paul's in his services and sufferings. *Only Luke is with me,* 2 Tim. iv. 11. We may know by his style in the latter part of this book when and where he was with him, for then he writes we did so and so, as chap. xvi. 10. xx. 6. and from thenceforward to the end of the book. He was with Paul in his dangerous voyage to Rome, when he was carried thither a prisoner; was with him when from his prison there he wrote his epistles to the Colossians and Philemon, in both which he is named. And it should seem that St Luke wrote this history when he was with St Paul at Rome during his imprisonment there, and was assistant to him; for the history concludes with St Paul's preaching there in his *own hired house.* It is called *The Acts of the Apostles; of the holy Apostles,* so the Greek copies generally read it, and so they are called, Rev. xviii. 20. *Rejoice over her, ye holy Apostles.* One copy inscribes it, *The Acts of the Apostles, by Luke the Evangelist.* 1. It is the history of the apostles; yet here is in it the history of Stephen, Barnabas, and some other apostolical men, who, though not of the twelve, yet were endued with the same Spirit, and employed in the same work. And of those that were apostles, it is the history of Peter and Paul only that is here recorded; and Paul was not of the twelve: but this sufficeth as a specimen of what the rest did in other places, pursuant to their commission, for there were none of them idle. And as we are to think what is related in the gospels concerning Christ sufficient, because infinite wisdom thought so, the same we are to think here concerning what is related of the apostles and their labours; for what more is told us from tradition of the labours and sufferings of the apostles, and the churches they planted, is altogether doubtful and uncertain, and what I think we cannot build upon with any satisfaction at all; this is *gold, silver, and precious stones,* built upon the *foundation;* that is *wood, hay, and stubble.* 2. It is called their acts, or *doings,* giving an account of their preaching, sufferings, miracles, success, the planting of the Christian churches by their means, and the vast progress of the gospel through their indefatigable labours. The history ends with the first imprisonment of Paul at Rome, about thirty years after our Lord's ascension.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

The inspired historian begins his narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, 1. *With a review of the gospel history from the resurrection to the ascension of our Lord,* ver. 1—11. 2. *With a general idea of the embryo of the Christian church, and its state from Christ's ascension to the pouring out of the Spirit,* ver. 12—14. 3. *With a particular account of the filling up of the vacancy that was made in the sacred college by the death of Judas, by the electing of Matthias in his room,* ver. 15—26.

1. THE [a] former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, [b] of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2. Until the day in which he was [c] taken up, after that he [d] through the Holy Ghost [e] had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: 3. [f] To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them [g] forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the [h] kingdom of God: 4. And, * being assembled together with *them,* commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for [i] the promise of the Father, which, *saith he,* ye have heard of me. 5. [k] For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

a Gospel of Luke. Luke 1. 3.
b Luke i—xxiv. Rom. 15. 8. ch. 10. 38.
c Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51. ver. 9. Heb. 1. 3. 1 Tim. 3. 16.
d John 3. 34. Mat. 3. 16. Is. 11. 2—4. & 61. 1—3.
e Mat. 28. 19, 20. Mark 16. 15—18. Luke 24. 45—49. John 20. 21—23. & 21. 15—17. ch. 10. 41, 42.
f Mat. xxviii. Mark xvi. Luke xxiv. John xx, xxi. ch. 10, 40—42. 1 Cor. 15. 5—8.
g Deut. 9. 9, 18. 1 Kin. 19. 8. Mat. 4. 2.
h Mat. 3. 2. & 4. 17. & 13. 24, 31, 33, 41—49.
* Or *eating together with them.*
i Luke 24. 49. John 14. 16, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 7. & 20. 22. Acts 2. 4, 33. & 4. 8.
k Mat. 3. 11. ch. 2. 4. & 11. 15, 16. & 19. 4.

Verses 1—5. St Luke, the supposed penman of this book, addresses it, as he had done his gospel, to Theophilus his noble catechumen.

1. He reminds him of the former treatise which he had written for his edification and instruction, containing an account *of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,* laying the foundation of that Christian church on which they were to build, *until the day in which he was taken up,* continuing to instruct them in the nature of his kingdom, *after that he, through the Holy Ghost,* which the Father gave without measure unto him, *had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen,* commissioning them to preach his gospel, and, according to the plenitude of his power, enabling them for the arduous work. *Note,* They who *teach* must *do:* a minister's practice must be correspondent with his precepts.

2. He mentions some of those many infallible signs which Jesus gave of his resurrection. He showed himself to his disciples alive, convinced them fully of the identity of his person, was seen of them several times, in different places, during the forty days that he continued on earth; ate, drank, and conversed freely with them, instructing them in *the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,* informing them of the nature of his kingdom, the powers they should be endued with, the success of their ministry, and the glory which was prepared for them.

3. Christ ordered them, at one of their solemn meetings, not to depart from Jerusalem, whither they had probably come from Galilee, after they had seen him on the mountain where he appointed them to meet him; *but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me,* fully and confidently expecting that Spirit whom the ancient prophecies had foretold should be abundantly poured out in the days of the Messiah, and of whom he had so often spoken to them before his departure, as the Comforter that he would send unto them from the Father, to enable them for the glorious work which was before them. *For John truly baptized with water,* and that was all he pretended to do; *but ye,* according to his declarations, *shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence,* receiving such abundant measures of light, grace, wisdom, courage, and utterance, as effectually to carry them through every temptation, and make them successful in spreading the gospel, in defiance of all opposition. *Note,* We must patiently wait, and then we shall assuredly see the salvation of God.

6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time [l] restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7. And he said unto them, [m] It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father [n] hath put in his own power. 8. [n] But ye shall receive † power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be [o] witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9. [p] And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10. ¶ And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in [q] white apparel; 11. Which also said, Ye [r] men of Galilee, [s] why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, [t] shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

l Dan. 7. 29. Amos 9. 11. Mat. 18. 1. & 24. 21. Luke 17. 20. & 22. 30.
m Deut. 29. 29. Mat. 24. 36. & 13. 32. Luke 17. 20. See John 2. 21. 1 Thes. 5. 1.
n Ch. 2. 1—4, 33, Luke 24. 49. & 3. 16. Joel 2. 28.
† Or *the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you.*
o Luke 24. 47, 48. Mark 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. ver. 22. ch. 2. 32. & 3. 15. & 4. 33. & 10. 39, 41. John 15. 27. Rom. 10. 18. & 15. 19. ch. ii—xiii.
p Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 50, 51. John 6. 62. Mat. 17. 5.
q Mat. 17. 2. & 28. 3. Luke 24. 4. John 20. 12.
r Ch. 2. 7. & 13. 31.
s Mat. 20. 6. Luke 24. 5.
t Dan. 7. 13. Ps. 47. 5. with Mat. 25. 31. 1 Thes. 4. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8, 10. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Rev. 1. 7.

Verses 6—11. The apostles had not yet quite dropped their apprehensions of the Messiah's temporal kingdom, and the resurrection of Jesus probably flattered them with new hopes.

1. They put the question therefore to him, whether, *at this time,* he would *restore again the kingdom to Israel,* raising the Jewish people to the highest pitch of grandeur, and bringing all the kingdoms of the earth in subjection to them; so hard is it to eradicate early prejudices. And even good men are apt to look for a church triumphant, instead of a church militant upon earth: but, when the Spirit is poured out more abundantly, we shall learn to expect nothing here but reproach and the cross, and wait for another world to sit down in the kingdom.

2. Christ checks their vain curiosity. And, as the Spirit, which should be given them, would shortly rectify these mistakes, he tells them it was not for them *to know the times and seasons* when those great expected revolutions should be brought about, *which the Father hath put in his own power,* and which are secrets concealed in the divine mind. *Note,* (1.) Secret things belong unto God. Curiosity to be wise above what is written, is foolish as well as fruitless. (2.) The uncertainty in which it hath pleased God to leave us concerning future events is graciously ordered, to the intent we might be always prepared for that which God hath prepared for us.

3. He assures them that, poor, illiterate, and despicable instruments as they appeared, they should be endued with the most astonishing spiritual powers, through the mighty influence of the Holy Ghost, which should come upon them, when filled

with zeal, courage, and wisdom, which none of their adversaries could gainsay or resist, they should be witnesses unto him; asserting his character as the divine Messiah, bearing testimony to his resurrection, publishing the glad tidings of salvation through his name, and confirming the truth of their words by the attestation of the most amazing miracles; beginning at Jerusalem, then going to the Samaritans, among whom before they had been withheld from preaching, and afterwards spreading the glorious gospel to the ends of the earth, not only among the dispersed Jews, but among the Gentiles also. *Note*, Gospel ministers must preach Jesus Christ, bearing witness to his grace and glory, and publishing to all, the free and full redemption which is obtained for lost sinners through his blood and righteousness.

4. *When he had spoken these things, while they beheld*, earnestly regarding him, and duly attentive to the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, *he was taken up, and* with eager looks they followed him, till *a cloud received him out of their sight;* and, amidst congratulating angels, he ascended to the throne of his glory. May I follow thee, Lord, with the eyes of faith *now*, and when it shall please thee, ascend to behold thee face to face!

5. An angelic vision appears to them, as they stood gazing towards heaven after their dear Lord, *as he went up*, willing to catch the least possible glimpse of him, and keeping still their eyes fixed on the place where he became invisible to them. Two celestial spirits in human forms, arrayed in white apparel, the emblem of their purity and grandeur, stood by them, and kindly addressed them, saying, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?* as if ye expected your Lord and Master to return quickly unto you; *this same Jesus, which* was delivered for your offences, and died on a tree, *is now taken up from you into heaven*, exalted to the Mediatorial throne, as having finished the redemption of his people, and is gone to prepare a place for them; *shall so come in like manner*, at the last day of his appearing and glory, in the clouds of heaven, attended by his angelic host, *as ye have seen him go into heaven.* O that we may be ready to meet him in that great day! O that the expectation of it might be deep upon our minds continually!

12. ¶ Then returned they unto Jerusalem from [u] the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem [x] a sabbath-day's journey. 13. And when they were come in, they went up into an [y] upper room, where abode both [z] Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James. 14. [a] These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

u Mat. 24. 3. & 26. 30. Zech. 14. 4. Luke 21. 37. & 24. 52.

x 2000 cubits; about a mile or more. Luke 24. 50. John 11. 18.

y Ch. 20. 8. & 9. 37, 39. Luke 22. 12. & 24. 53. John 20. 19, 26.

z Mat. 10. 2—4. Mark 6. 16—19. Luke 6. 14—16. Jude 1.

a Luke 5. 35. & 24. 53. & 23. 49. John 20. 25. Mat. 13. 55. & 27. 55, 56. ch. 2. 1, 42, 46.

Verses 12—14. We have here,

1. The place from whence our Lord ascended, *the mount Olivet*, about a mile from Jerusalem. There his sufferings began in the garden, and thence he entered into his glory as a triumphant conqueror, (Zech. xiv. 4.) in full view of that devoted city, for which judgment was now prepared.

2. The return of the disciples. They came back to the city, according to their Master's orders, *and when they were come in*, either into a private house, or, as some suppose, into the temple itself, see Luke xxiv. 53. *they went into an upper room*, for greater secrecy. If this was in the temple, they might be accommodated by some priest or Levite, who was a hidden disciple, with a room there; or, if it was in the city, though they constantly attended the temple service, they met in private there, and spent their time, *with one accord*, in prayer and supplications for the coming of that Comforter who was promised. The eleven apostles are particularly mentioned, all of whom kept close together, with the women, who had approved their fidelity, love and zeal, in a very distinguished manner, and *Mary the mother of Jesus*, concerning whom we hear no more mention ever after; and *his brethren*, those of Christ's kinsmen, who now believed on him, see Mat. xiii. 55. with many others. *Note*, (1.) It is good for the disciples of Jesus to unite together: the world is closely leagued against them. They need therefore maintain the closest fellowship with each other. (2.) Prayer is the blessed and constant employment of God's people; and especially in all seasons of particular trial, when their faith and patience are called into exercise, they have need to redouble their supplications. (2.) Nothing can be denied to the united prayers of the faithful, who with one accord surround a throne of grace in the name of Jesus.

15. ¶ And in those days [b] Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of the [c] names together were about an hundred and twenty,*) 16. Men *and* brethren, [d] this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. 17. For he was [e] numbered with us, and had obtained part of this [f] ministry. 18. [g] Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and, [h] falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. 19. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem: insomuch as that field is called, in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. 20. For it is written in the book of Psalms, [i] Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his [k] bishoprick let another take. 21. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us [l] all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22. Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a [m] witness with us of his resurrection. 23. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, [n] which knowest the hearts of all *men*, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, 25. That he may take part of [o] this ministry and apostleship, from which [p] Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. 26. [q] And

b John 18. 27. & 21. 15—17.

c Persons. Rev. 3. 4. & 11. 13.

* Probably it is meant that 120 were then assembled. The whole number of disciples is supposed to have been at this time nearly 600.

d Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12—14. John 13. 18. & 18. 2—12. with ch. 2. 23. & 4. 27, 28. & 13. 27.

e John 6. 70, 71. Mat. 10. 4. Luke 6. 16. ver. 25.

f Ch. 12. 25. & 20. 24. & 21. 19.

g Mat. 27. 5—10. & 26. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 15.

h Mat. 27. 5. Ps. 55. 15, 23. These particulars are supplementary to those in Matthew.

i Ps. 69. 25. & 109. 8.

k Or *Office*, or *charge* of overseeing. Ch. 20. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 2.

l Mat. iii—xxviii. Mark i—xvi. Luke ii—xxiv. John i—xxi. ver. 9.

m Ver. 8. ch. 2. 32. & 10. 39, 41. & 13. 31. Heb. 2. 3.

n Deut. 31. 21. 1 Sam. 16. 7. Ps. 7. 9. & 44. 21. & 94. 9—11. Prov. 15. 11. Jer. 11. 20. & 17. 10. & 20. 12. ch. 15. 8. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23. John 2. 24, 25.

o Ver. 17, 20. Ps. 109. 8.

p Ver. 16—21. Mat. 26. 14—16. 24. & 27. 3—5.

q Prov. 16. 33. 1 Chr. 24. 5. Lev. 16. 8.

they gave forth their lots: and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Verses 15—26. At one of these solemn meetings, where about a hundred and twenty of the disciples were assembled, Peter, the zealous servant of his Lord, *stood up* in the midst of them; not affecting to *sit*, as their master or superior, but proposing a matter to them as his equals. We have,

1. His speech. He addresses them as his friends, companions and brethren in Christ; and having an important proposal to make to them, he reminds them of the fulfilment of the Scripture, in the wickedness and miserable end of Judas the traitor, whose treachery the Holy Ghost having foreseen and foretold, it could not but come to pass, and none ought to be offended thereat. As an aggravation of his guilt, Peter observes,

(1.) The high dignity to which he was advanced. *He was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry;* and this but the more aggravated his sin and ruin. *Note*, Many are numbered *with us* who are not *of us;* but *a name to live*, whilst persons are really *dead in trespasses and sins*, will avail nothing.

(2.) His sin was treachery. He was *guide to them that took Jesus;* a ringleader in iniquity, as apostates usually prove.

(3.) His end was notorious. His money, the wages of unrighteousness, served only to buy a field to bury strangers; and driven *by* the devil and a despairing conscience, he went and hanged himself, when the rope, or the place on which he hung, giving way, he fell, and his belly bursting asunder, his bowels gushed out; a fearful exit! of which great notice was deservedly taken; the fact being publicly known in Jerusalem, and noised abroad, insomuch that the people called the field purchased by this money, Aceldama, or *The field of blood*, with respect to the innocent blood of which it was the price; perpetuating thereby the infamy, not only of the traitor, who sold his master, but of the rulers who tempted him to this atrocious deed.

(4.) He cites the book of Psalms, in which the prophecy relating to Judas was found. *Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein*, Psal. lxix. 25. *and his bishoprick let another take*, Psal. cix. 8.

(5.) He proposes to them, according to this prophetic word, that the sacred college should be filled up by the addition of one to their number, out of those who had approved themselves from the beginning faithful, and had been among the first who followed Jesus, and privy to all the transactions concerning him, from the time he was baptized of John in Jordan, till his ascension to glory, that he might with them be *a witness of his resurrection*, of that grand article of faith, as well as of all the other glorious things relative to Christ's divine mission and character. *Note*, (1.) None should be admitted into the ministry, but such as for a season have proved their fidelity to Christ, in a course of holy walking with him. (2.) They who have known Christ, and the power of his resurrection in their souls, cannot but make him the subject of all their discourses.

2. The church approving the proposal, nominated two, Joseph and Matthias; and not knowing which to prefer, they applied to God, the searcher of hearts, by prayer, for direction, that he would be pleased to show them which of these he had chosen *to take part of that ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place*, the dire abode prepared for fallen angels and rebellious sinners. *Note*, (1.) In our emergencies we should never fail to look up to God for direction. (2.) Apostates from Christ necessarily plunge themselves into perdition and destruction.

3. Having commended the matter to God's determination, they solemnly cast lots; when the Lord, at whose disposal the lot is, Prov. xvi. 33. appointed Matthias, who was thenceforward numbered with the eleven apostles.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

Here is, 1. *The descent of the Spirit upon the apostles, and those that were with them on the day of Pentecost,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The various speculations which this occasioned among the people that were now met in Jerusalem from all parts,* ver. 5—13. 3. *The sermon which Peter preached to them hereupon,* ver. 14—36. 4. *The good effects of this sermon in the conversion of many to the faith of Christ, and their addition to the church,* ver. 37—41 5. *The eminent piety and charity of those primitive Christians, and the manifest tokens of God's presence with them, and power in them,* ver. 42—47.

1. AND [a] when the day of Pentecost was fully come, [b] they were all with one accord in one place. 2. [c] And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3. And there appeared unto them [d] cloven tongues, like as of [e] fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4. [f] And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

[a] Deut. 16. 19. Lev. 23. 15, 26. Num. 28. 26.
[b] Ch. 1. 13, 15. ver. 46. Zeph. 3. 9. Luke 24. 53. Neh. 4. 9. & 6. 3.
[c] Ch. 4. 31. & 1. 8. Luke 24. 49. John 3. 8. Ezek. 37. 9.
[d] Ver. 4, 6, 8. ch. 10. 46. & 15. 8. Not cloven, but distributed.
[e] Mat. 3. 11. Jer. 23. 29.
[f] Joel 2. 28. Is. 44. 3—5. ch. 1. 5. & 11. 15. John 14. 16, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 7. & 20. 22. Mark 16. 17.
Ps. 8. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 21. ch. 10. 45, 46. & 19. 6. 1 Cor. xii, xiv.

Verses 1—4. The great promise here receives its accomplishment in the mission of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples. We have,

1. The time: *When the day of Pentecost*, the fiftieth from the passover, *was fully come*, in the morning, *they were all with one accord in one place;* it being the first day of the week, which they observed in memory of their Lord's resurrection, and consecrated also now by the pouring out of the Spirit upon them. No longer strifes or discord divided them; united in fervent charity, they waited the fulfilment of their Master's promise. *Note*, (1.) They who wait upon God in the assembly of his saints, shall find him by his Spirit still present in the midst of them. (2.) God will delight to dwell with those whose hearts by fervent charity are united in his service.

2. The manner in which the Holy Ghost descended. *Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind*, an emblem of the freedom of the Spirit's operations, and of his irresistible energy on the minds of men; *and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire*, signifying the illuminating, warming, and purifying influences of the Spirit upon their souls, and the amazing gift of tongues bestowed upon them with that freedom of utterance, whereby they were enabled to preach the gospel among all nations; and *it*, or *he, sat upon each of them;* the Holy Ghost, in all the fulness of his miraculous operations, now taking up his constant residence in them, to qualify them for the arduous service to which they were ordained. *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost;* not only the apostles, but all the disciples; and probably the women, as well as the men, ver. 17, 18. experiencing such divine joys and consolations as they had never experienced before: *and began to speak with other tongues*, in all the variety of languages *as the Spirit gave them utterance*, suggesting both the matter and words, and enabling them with the greatest copiousness and most forcible energy, to declare the wonderful works of God, ver. 11. in the gospel of his dear Son.

5. [g] And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every

[g] Exod. 23. 16, 17. & 34. 23. Lev. 23. 15—21. 1 Pet.

nation under heaven. 6. Now * when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were [h] confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7. And they were all [i] amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak [k] Galileans? 8. And [l] how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9. Parthians, and [m] Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in [n] Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and [o] Cappadocia, in Pontus, and [p] Asia, 10. [q] Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in [r] Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of [s] Rome, [t] Jews and proselytes, 11. [u] Cretes and [x] Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the [y] wonderful works of God. 12. [z] And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? 13. [a] Others, mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.

* Gr. *when this voice was made.*
h Or *troubled in mind.* Ver. 7, 12. Mat. 2. 3.
i Ver. 12. ch. 3. 10. & 4. 13. & 1. 10, 11.
k Mat. 4. 18—22. Mark 2. 13, 14. John 1. 43—46. & 7. 52. Luke 13. 1, 2. ch. 1. 11.
l Ver. 7. Luke 1. 34.
m Is. 21. 2. Dan. 5. 28.
n Ch. 7. 2. Judg. 3. 8.
o 1 Pet. 1. 1.
p Ch. 16. 6. Rev. 1. 11.
q Ch. 16. 6. & 18. 13.
r Exod. 1. 1. Ezek. 38. 5. Mark 15. 21. ch. 6. 9.
s Ch. 18. 2. & 22. 11.
t Exod. 12. 47—49. Is. 56. 6, 8.
u Ch. 27. 7. Tit. 1. 5, 12.
x Gal. 4. 25. & 1. 17.
y Ch. 10. 38—48. & 1. 1—3, 22. & 3. 13. ver. 22—24.
z Ver. 6, 7. Luke 5. 9, 26.
a Or, sweet wine. 1 Sam. 1. 14. Mat. 11. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Verses 5—13. Such an extraordinary occurrence was soon spread abroad, and brought a vast concourse together. We have,

1. The persons. *Devout men, who dwelt at Jerusalem, out of every nation under heaven;* both Jews and proselytes, who were now assembled at the feast of Pentecost, or, as some suppose, had taken up their residence there, in expectation of the speedy appearing of the Messiah.

2. The amazement which filled them at hearing these men, that were poor illiterate Galileans, speak with such fluency and propriety, all the various languages and dialects of their respective countries, *Parthians, Medes,* &c. They could not, therefore, but with wonder and surprise, observe to each other, how astonishing was this miracle, and question what could be the meaning of it, and whether it ushered in the long expected kingdom of the Messiah? for they heard them speak in their several native tongues *the great things of God,* respecting the redemption which was in Jesus Christ, and the glorious privileges obtained, by his death, resurrection, and ascension, for all believers.

3. Some, *mocking, said, These men are full of new wine:* a cavil most wicked, absurd, and blasphemous. Probably these were inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Scribes and Pharisees, who, not understanding the languages which the inspired disciples spoke, thought it nonsense, and would fain have branded them as drunkards, that they might prejudice the people against them, by this most malicious falsehood. *Note,* There are still too many to whom the great things of God appear unintelligible: and because they are themselves destitute of spiritual understanding, they brand the preachers of them as enthusiasts, *speaking evil of the things they know not.*

14. ¶ But [b] Peter, standing up with the eleven, [c] lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all *ye* that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the † third hour of the day. 16. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;‡ 17. [d] And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy: 19. [e] And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21. [f] And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. 22. Ye men of Israel, hear these words; [g] Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23. [h] Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: 24. [i] Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. 25. For David speaketh concerning him, [k] I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: 26. [l] Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover, also, my flesh shall rest in hope: 27. Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer [m] thine Holy One to see corruption. 28. [n] Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. 29. Men *and* brethren, ‖ let me freely speak unto you [o] of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. 30. Therefore being a prophet, [p] and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: 31. [q] He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not

† Nine o'clock, forenoon.
‡ The traditions of the Jews applied this prophecy of Joel to the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit which should take place in the days of the Messiah. And Peter calls upon them to admit the present application of an event they had been accustomed to expect.
‖ Or *I may.*

b John 18. 27. ch. 1. 15. ver. 38. & 3. 12. & 4. 8.
c Is. 58. 1. Hos. 8. 1.
d Is. 44. 3—5. Joel 2. 28—32. Ps. 72. 6. Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 27. Zech. 12. 10. John 7. 38. ch. 10. 45. & 21. 9, 10. & 11. 28. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6. 2 Pet. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 1.
e Joel 2. 30, 31. Mat. 24. 29. Luke 21. 25. Mal. 4. 1, 5, 6. Zeph. 1. 14—17.
f Joel 2. 32. Rom. 10. 13. ch. 9. 14, 15. & 13. 46—48. Mat. 24. 14. & 26. 13. & 28. 19.
g Mat. 11. 4, 5. Luke 7. 16. & 2. 19—21. John 3. 2. & 5. 19, 26, 30. Heb. 2. 4. John 10. 25, 38. & 14. 10, 11. & 15. 22—24. ch. 10. 38.
h Mat. 26. 24, 53. Luke 22. 22, 53. John 7. 30. & 8. 20. & 18. 11. & 19. 11. ch. 4. 27, 28. & 3. 13—15, 18. & 5. 30. Rom. 4. 25. & 8. 32. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Mat. 20. 19. & 26. 45, 47.
i Ver. 32. ch. 3. 15. & 4. 10. & 10. 40. & 13. 30, 34. & 17. 31. Rom. 4. 24, 25. & 8. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 14. & 15. 15. Heb. 13. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 14. Eph. 1. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 21. 1 Thes. 1. 10.
k Ps. 16. 8—11. & 109. 31. & 121. 5
l Ps. 16. 9, 10. Rom. 8. 31.
m Dan. 9. 24. Luke 1. 35.
n Ps. 16. 11. & 17. 15. & 21. 4—6.
o Ch. 13. 36. 1 Kin. 2. 10.
p 2 Sam. 7. 12. 1 Chr. 22. 10. Ps. 132. 11. Is. 9. 7. Luke 1. 32, 33. John 18. 36, 37. Rom. 1. 3, 4. & 9. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Rev. 17. 14. & 19. 16.
q Ps. 16. 10. ch. 3. 31. ver. 27.

left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. 32. [r] This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof [s] we are all witnesses. 33. Therefore [t] being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. 34. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, [u] The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, 35. Until I make thy foes thy footstool. 36. Therefore let all the house of Israel [x] know assuredly, that [y] God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

r See ver. 24, 27. ch. 3. 15, 26. Mat. xxviii. Mark xvi. Luke xxiv. John xx, xxi.

s See ch. 1. 8, 22. & 3. 15. & 5. 32. & 10. 39. 41.

t Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 49. John 14. 16, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 7—13. ch. 1. 4, 8. & 10. 45. & 5. 31. Phil. 2. 9.

u Ps. 110. 1. & 8. 1. Mat. 22. 44. Heb. 1. 3, 13. 1 Cor. 15. 25. Rev. 3. 21. Eph. 1. 20.

x John 17. 3. & 6. 69.

y Mat. 28. 18. Eph. 1. 20—23. Phil. 2. 9—11. ch. 5. 31. & 10. 36.

Verses 14—36. In answer to the malicious cavil of these enemies to the truth, Peter, the zealous speaker, and now inspired by peculiar influences from on high, arose and boldly addressed to these mockers this awakening discourse.

1. *He stood up with the eleven*, to show the falsehood of the charge, and vindicate themselves from so malicious an accusation: and, aloud directing his discourse to the Jews who were present, begs attention to the words of truth and soberness, which he was about to utter. *Note*, We must not return a sharp answer to a reviling accusation, but *with meekness answer those who oppose themselves* against us.

2. He denies the calumny, and shows it to be as absurd as malicious. *These men are not drunken as ye suppose*, and would insinuate, *seeing it is but the third hour of the day*, but nine o'clock in the morning: and till then, on the sabbaths and festivals, the Jews usually did neither eat nor drink, nor was it at all probable, that so many as they were, they should have been guilty of such a debauch, or dare appear intoxicated in the house of God.

3. He explains to them an affair which they counted so strange, which some admired and others ridiculed. This was the accomplishment of the prophecy of Joel, chap. ii. 28—32. which he cites at large; for, though himself inspired, the Spirit was not given to supersede the Scriptures, but to enable us to understand them. God had promised *in the last days*, the days of the Messiah, which ushered in the last dispensation of grace, *I will pour out my Spirit*, in a more extraordinary measure than ever before, *upon all flesh*; on some of all ranks and conditions, or upon the Gentiles as well as Jews: *and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*, foretelling future events, ch. xx. 9, 10. *and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams*; God, in these ways, revealing to them his mind and will; *and on my servants, and my handmaidens*, on persons of all conditions, women as well as men, without distinction of rank or sex, *I will pour out in those days my Spirit*, as from an inexhaustible fountain, *and they shall prophesy: and I will show wonders in heaven above*, dreadful prodigies in the air, which were the prelude to the approaching ruin of the Jewish nation, for their obstinate infidelity and rejection of the Messiah; *and signs in the earth beneath*, dire presages of impending woes: *blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke*, the blood of the people shed by the invading foe, whose devastations should spread through the country, and the smoke of their cities consumed in flames, which should obscure the sky. *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood*, suffering unusual eclipses, or looking red through the dusky clouds of smoke: or this may signify the approaching total dissolution of their government, *before the great and terrible day of the Lord come*, when he shall execute such condign vengeance on his murderers, as no nation, since the burning of Sodom, ever suffered, and when he shall be glorified in his judgments. *And it shall come to pass*, that *whosoever*, discerning the signs of these times, *shall call on the name of the Lord*, the Almighty Jehovah-Jesus, spoken of in this prophecy, placing their dependence on him alone for salvation, and in fervent prayer making their application to him for help, they *shall be saved* by his power and grace from all the evils they fear, in time or eternity, and be made partakers of his eternal glory. Lord, pour out a spirit of prayer and supplication upon me, that I may be of this blessed number!

4. He improves this occasion, in order to preach to them Jesus, whose gift and purchase this Spirit was, which now was shed abroad so abundantly upon them, entreating their attention to the important truths he was about to deliver.

[1.] He reminds them of his well-known life and character, *Jesus of Nazareth*, a name they gave him by way of reproach, but *a man approved of God among you*; evidently signalized with his peculiar favour, *by miracles, and wonders, and signs*, which he was enabled to work in proof of his divine mission, *which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know*; bearing his attestation to the character he assumed, and they themselves had been eye-witnesses of these wonderful works.

[2.] They had, notwithstanding, rejected his credentials, and hung him on a tree. *Him*, this glorious Messiah, *delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*, ordained as a sacrifice to divine justice, *ye have taken* and seized as a criminal, *and by wicked hands have crucified and slain*; engaging the Gentile governor to bring him to this ignominious death; and his innocent blood is now upon your heads.

[3.] *God had raised him*, notwithstanding all their enmity, rage, and malice; *having loosed the pains of death*, judicially discharging him from the grave, and from all the sorrows of death, which, as the substitute of his people, he consented to endure, *because it was not possible he should be holden of them*. The dignity of his person, the perfection of his sacrifice, and the prophecies concerning him, rendered it impossible that he should remain longer the prisoner of death; whom, by dying, he had destroyed, and as a triumphant conqueror, rose to lead his captivity captive.

[4.] He shows that this was foretold by the royal Psalmist, who, personating Jesus, the true Messiah, thus *speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face*; he walked under the constant sense of his Father's presence, and with an eye to his glory; *for he is on my right hand*, to support and carry me through my arduous undertaking, *that I should not be moved* with any of the sufferings of life, or the terrors of death. *Therefore did my heart rejoice*, in his power, faithfulness, and love, *and my tongue was glad*: praising him for the experience of his almighty grace, and the assured salvation of his people, which he had promised him as the travail of his soul: *my flesh also shall rest in hope*, entirely satisfied of a glorious issue, and entering the grave in the fullest assurance of a speedy resurrection; *because*, or that *thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, to abide, like other departed spirits in the invisible world, nor his body in the dust, *neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption*, and putrefy in the tomb, being *the Holy One* of God, and having, by a perfect obedience to death, even the death of the cross, completed the redemption of his people, he had a right to a speedy discharge from that lowest step of his humiliation. *Thou hast made known to me the ways of life*, which lie through the gates of death; and Christ, the first-fruits of those that slept, is gone before; having raised himself to an endless life, and leading his people after him to a glorious immortality; *thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance*, in that state of bliss and blessedness to which, as Mediator he should be exalted; and what is here primarily spoken concerning the great head of the church, is true of every member of his body mystical. (1.) They live for God, designing his glory as their end, and resting upon his

promises, his power, and grace, as their abiding support, comfort, and joy. (2.) They *die in hope*, committing their souls into the hands of a faithful Creator, and rejoicing in the prospect of eternal life and glory which the gospel sets before them, and of which faith assures them.

[5.] He comments on the text he had quoted. Great and respectable as *the patriarch David* was, the head of the royal race of Judah, yet he saw corruption; and they, as reasonable men, and his countrymen, if they dispassionately considered these words, must needs be convinced that the Psalmist spoke not this of himself, he dying, and being buried as other men, and his tomb being extant to that day; but *being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him*, Ps. cxxxii. 11. *that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne*, as Israel's king in the most exalted sense, reigning in the hearts of his redeemed people: *he seeing this before* by the spirit of prophecy, *spoke of the resurrection of Christ*, whom he personates when he saith, *that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus*, who lately lay in the grave, the Son of David after the flesh, the person of whom he, as a prophet, speaks, *God hath raised up, whereof we are all witnesses;* having been his constant followers before his death, and having often seen, conversed, and ate and drank with him since his resurrection, till the day that we beheld him ascend up to heaven.

[6.] The gifts of the Spirit were the fruit of his exaltation. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted* to the Mediatorial throne, and possessed of the most transcendent dignity and glory, *and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost*, the purchase of his obedience to death in the behalf of his people, *he hath shed forth this which you now see and hear;* the flames of fire, and gift of tongues, which appeared to them so strange. And his ascension also David had foretold, Psal. cx. 1. *For David is not ascended into the heavens* as the person, in whose name he speaks, evidently was; *but* the Lord Jesus is gone thither, *as he saith himself, The Lord* Jehovah, *said unto my Lord*, the Messiah, *Sit thou at my right hand:* in the highest dignity, and possessed of universal dominion and authority, *until I make thy foes thy footstool;* until sin, Satan, death, and every enemy of the Redeemer and his people, shall be finally and for ever destroyed.

[7.] He warmly applies the matter to their consciences. *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly*, as a truth most infallible and certain, *that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ;* and there could not be a greater aggravation of their wickedness than this, that whom the Lord had glorified, they had crucified; nor a more tremendous consideration than that he was now exalted to a throne of glory to execute vengeance on all his murderers who obstinately persisted in their impenitence.

z Zech. 12. 10. Luke 3. 10. Jer. 6. 16. ch. 9. 6. & 16. 30. John 16. 8—11. Rom. 7. 9.
a Mat. 3. 6, 8. Mark 1. 4, 15. ch. 3. 19. & 22. 16. 1 John 1. 7. Tit. 3. 5. Is. 1. 18. & 55. 7. Luke 24. 47.
b Ver. 16—18. ch. 8. 15—17. & 10. 44, 45. & 19. 6.
c Gal. 3. 16. Rom. 9. 8. Gen. 17. 7. Joel 2. 28. Jer. 31. 34. Zech. 13. 1. ch. 3. 25, 26. & 9. 15. & 10. 34, 44. & 11. 1, 18. & 13. 31, 46—48. xiv—xix. & 22. 21. & 28. 28. Eph. 3. 3—8. & 2. 13.
d Ch. 20. 21. 2 Cor. 6. 17. Mat. 15. 14. Luke 21. 36.

37. ¶ Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? 38. Then Peter said unto them, [a] Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and [b] ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39. For [c] the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40. And with many other words did he [d] testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41. ¶ [e] Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

e Ps. 110. 3. Mat. 13. 23. ch. 1. 15. & 4. 4. & 5. 14. Ps. 72. 16, 17. Mat. 16. 18.

Verses 37—41. The power of the Spirit upon the apostles themselves appeared gloriously evident in the boldness wherewith he inspired them, as well as in the miraculous gifts with which he endued them: here we have also a proof of his energetic influence on the consciences of the hearers, accompanying his own word in the mouths of his servants.

1. Many of the hearers, struck with conscious guilt at what they heard, *were pricked in their heart* with sharp and deep convictions of their sin and danger, and in great distress of conscience, *said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles*, whom just before they had mocked at, *Men and brethren, what shall we do*, to avert the dire vengeance we have provoked, and to obtain pardon for a deed so atrocious? *Note*, (1.) When the Spirit of God opens the sinner's conscience to discern his hell-deserving guilt, his hard heart then is broken with the most fearful apprehensions of his danger. (2.) Ministers are the physicians to whom convinced sinners should apply, and they have balm to cure the mortal wound which sin hath made in their souls. (3.) They who truly feel their lost estate cannot but desire above all things, to know if yet there may be hope.

2. *Peter*, in the name of his brethren, *said unto them*, your case, however dangerous, is not desperate; *Repent*, under a sense of redeeming love, be deeply humbled for your guilt and ingratitude; and with deep self-abhorrence, and a thorough change of temper and conduct, turn unto the Lord, *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ;* professing your faith in him as the true Messiah, and sincerely yielding up yourselves to him as his willing subjects; *for the remission of sins*, purchased by him and freely bestowed on the chief of sinners; *and* herewith also *ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*, of his comforting and sanctifying influences; as also, it is probable, of his miraculous powers. *For the promise*, ver. 38. of pardon and the Holy Ghost, or the great promise made to Abraham and his seed, *is to you, and to your children*, his descendants: *and to all that are afar off*, dispersed Jews or Gentiles, yet more distant from the covenant of promise, *even as many as the Lord our God shall call* to the knowledge of his Son, and to faith in him, who shall be blessed with faithful Abraham. *Note* (1.) No sinner need despair; the gospel holds forth, through the blood of Jesus, a free pardon to the most guilty of the sons of Adam, and he that believes shall be saved. (2.) Where the Lord gives remission of sins, he sends the Holy Ghost effectually to produce that repentance which he enjoins. (3.) None can come to God but those whom he calls; not merely by the outward voice of his word, but by the internal power of his Spirit.

3. The apostle enlarged on this subject. *And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation:* come out from among them, and be ye separate; renounce the false tenets and corrupt practices of the Scribes and Pharisees, that ye may escape the plagues ready to descend upon this sinful people, abandoned to their infidelity and destruction. *Note*, They who would be saved among Christ's people, must be separated from the ways of this wicked world, and from the familiar society of careless sinners, shunning their assemblies as a man dreads the house infected by the plague.

4. Great was the effect produced by this discourse, through the Spirit's mighty energy. No less than three thousand souls immediately embraced, and *gladly received*, the word of gospel grace; and believing in a crucified Redeemer now risen from the dead, made open profession of their faith, and were baptized

in his name. *Note*, (1.) The salvation which is by Jesus Christ, is glad news to the sinner who is pricked to the heart with a sense of his guilt and danger. (2.) They who are truly turned to the Lord will boldly make profession of his name, and join themselves to the society of the faithful, whatever danger of reproach they may be exposed to thereby.

42. [f] And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43. [g] And fear came upon every soul: and [h] many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44. [i] And all that believed were together, and had all things common, 45. [k] And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. 46. [l] And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread || from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47. [m] Praising God, and having favour with all the people. [n] And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

f Ch. 1. 14. & 4. 32. & 5. 12. & 6. 4. & 20. 7. ver. 46. Rom. 12. 12. Eph. 6. 18. Col. 4. 2. Heb. 10. 25. Jude 19.
g Esth. 8. 17. ch. 5. 5, 11. Luke 7. 16. Mark 7. 37.
h John 14. 12. ch. 3. 6. & 4. 30. & 5. 12, 15. & 8. 7, 13. & 9. 34, 40. & 13. 11. & 14. 10. & 16. 18. & 19. 11, 12. & 28. 8. Mark 16. 17.
i Phil. 2. 2, 4. ch. 4. 32. & 5. 4. Phil. 5. 6, 7. ver. 45.
k Ch. 4. 34, 37. & 5. 1, 2. Is. 58. 7. Mat. 19. 21. & 6. 19, 20. Luke 12 33. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 19.
l Luke 24. 53. ch. 1. 14. & 3. 1. & 6. 4. & 5. 42. & 20. 7.
|| Or *at home*.
m Luke 2. 52. ch. 14. 33. Rom. 14. 8.
n Ch. 5. 14. & 11. 24. & 13. 48. Rom. 8. 30. Is. 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 56. 8.

Verses 42—47. We have here the practice of the primitive church.

1. They were united in holy ordinances. *They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine*, professing their faith in Christ and his gospel, and attending on the apostles' ministry *and fellowship*, maintaining the closest communion with them; *and in breaking of bread*, celebrating the Lord's supper, *and in prayers*, social and public, *continuing daily with one accord in the temple* at the stated hours of service, *and praising God* for all the inestimable blessings bestowed, through Jesus Christ, upon them. *Note*, They who have tasted of the blessings of communion with God, will delight to maintain it in the diligent use of all holy ordinances.

2. A solemn awe restrained their enemies from molesting them. *Fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles*, so that it evidently appeared that God was with them. *Note*, God can put his bridle in the jaws of persecutors, and say, Touch not my prophets, and do my anointed no harm.

3. A spirit of most noble and disinterested charity appeared among them. *All that believed were together;* they were of one heart and mind, and assembled in several companies, as many as conveniently could meet in one place, *and had all things common*, each casting his all into the common stock; *and* as the necessity of the times was urgent, and they knew the sure and near approach of Jerusalem's overthrow, they *sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man* of their society *had need;* and as they assembled daily with one accord in the temple, so did they *break bread from house to house*, provided out of the common stock, eating their meat together *with gladness and singleness of heart;* fervent in love to each other, thankful to God, and conscious of their own undissembled simplicity and sincerity before him. *Note*, Who should rejoice, if the children do not?

4. They were highly esteemed, and their numbers daily increased. They had *favour with the people;* their undissembled piety commanded respect; and the miraculous powers with which they were invested excited reverence. *And the Lord* so eminently blessed their ministrations, that there were *added unto the church daily such as should be saved*. *Note*, (1.) Those whom the Lord will save, he will take care so effectually to call as that they *shall* come to him. (2.) It is the Lord's work to add converts to his church: in dependence on his power and promise we labour with comfort and confidence.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have a miracle and a sermon. 1. *The miracle was the healing of a man that was lame from his birth, with a word speaking*, ver. 1—8. *and the impression which this made upon the people*, ver. 9—11. 2. *The scope of the sermon which was preached hereupon was to bring people to Christ, to repent of their sin in crucifying him*, ver. 12—19. *and to believe in him now he was glorified*, ver. 20—26.

1. NOW [a] Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* [b] the ninth *hour*. 2. And a certain man, [c] lame from his mother's womb, was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful,* to [d] ask alms of them that entered into the temple; 3. Who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. 4. And [e] Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. 5. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. 6. Then Peter said, [f] Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. 7. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and [g] immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength. 8. And [h] he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. 9. [i] And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 10. And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and [k] they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. 11. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in [l] the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

a Luke 24. 53. ch. 5. 21, 25.
b Three o'clock afternoon. Ps. 55. 17.
c Ch. 4. 22. & 14. 8.
* On account of its extraordinary splendour and magnificence.
d John 9. 8. ver. 10.
e Ch. 14. 9.
f Mat. 10. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. Mat. 7. 22. Mark 16. 17. ch. 4. 7, 10.
g Mat. 8. 3, 13, 15. & 9. 22. & 12. 13. & 15. 28.
h Is. 35. 6. Mark 2. 11, 12. John 5. 8, 9.
i Ch. 4. 16, 21, 22.
k Ch. 2. 7, 12. & 8. 13. Mat. 9. 33. & 12. 23.
l Ch. 5. 12. John 10. 23.

Verses 1—11. Among the many miracles performed by the apostles, one notable one is here recorded.

1. The apostles by whom it was done were Peter and John, they were going up to the temple together at the stated hour of prayer, probably the same day in which Peter had preached in the morning, being *the ninth hour*, or three o'clock in the afternoon. *Note*, They who love the temple service, will be glad to be there twice a day.

2. The poor object on whom this miracle was performed was

a beggar, a cripple from his mother's womb, who lay *at the Beautiful gate of the temple*, which was made of Corinthian brass, more precious than gold, and asked *alms of them that entered into the temple;* seeing Peter and John, therefore, about to enter, he asked of them *an alms*. *Note*, (1.) Those that are poor and incapable of working, are the true objects of charity. (2.) They who are drawn to the temple by the love of God, will have their hearts enlarged in tenderest compassion towards the wants of the necessitous.

3. Peter and John looking earnestly at him, bid him attend unto them, as about to show him a singular favour; and the poor man, expecting an alms, looked attentively at them. When Peter, the forward speaker, addressed him, saying, *Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have*, and what silver and gold never could procure, *give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk;* by his authority I speak, and his power shall enable thee for what I command. Then *taking him by the right hand he lifted him up, and immediately* the astonishing cure was wrought, *his feet and ancle-bones received strength*. *Note*, (1.) The riches of grace are infinitely more valuable than the treasures of both the Indies. (2.) According to our abilities we must be ready to communicate of the gifts of God with which he hath intrusted us, whether temporal or spiritual. (3.) In this impotent man every sinner may read his own case and cure. 1. By nature, from our birth, thus spiritually paralytic are we, and utterly unable to walk one step in God's ways. 2. The temple is the place where the poor impotent sinner shall be found, for there the Lord usually dispenses the alms of his grace. (4.) The ministers of Christ say not in vain, *arise and walk*, to those who have no power of themselves to help themselves; for he, in whose name they speak, doth, by his Spirit accompanying their word, enable the helpless soul for that which they enjoin. 3. Christ first lays hold of us by the hand of his grace, and then we lay hold of him by the hand of faith, and feel an unusual power communicated to our paralytic souls.

4. The lame man, transported with joy at the strange alteration he instantly felt, *leaped* up with astonishing agility, and *stood* firm on his feet, and *walked* about before all present, in token of his perfect cure, and entered with his benefactors into the temple, *walking, and leaping, and praising God*. *Note*, (1.) If our souls have received a spiritual cure, then will our hearts and lips be filled with praise and thanksgiving to the God of all grace, and we shall be happy in employing the strength he hath given us, in walking in his holy ways. (2.) They who have found a blessing from the ministry of Christ's servants, will not fail to accompany them into the temple, that they may reap farther benefit from their company and discourse.

5. The people who beheld him were struck with wonder and surprise, at seeing him thus walking and praising God, knowing that it was the same cripple who had lain at the gate of the temple; and whilst, as in an ecstasy, he hung about Peter and John, expressing his unutterable gratitude for this mercy received by their means, the people gathered round them in the part of the temple called Solomon's porch, *greatly wondering* at this amazing miracle, and at those who wrought it. *Note*, They who have been made the instruments of good to our souls, cannot but be dear to us, and embraced with peculiar affection.

12. ¶ And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, [m] as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? 13. [n] The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath [o] glorified his Son Jesus; whom [p] ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go. 14. [q] But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15. And killed the * Prince of life, [r] whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 16. And his [s] name, through [t] faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17. And now, brethren, I wot that [u] through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers. 18. [x] But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. 19. [y] Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when [z] the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20. And he shall [a] send Jesus Christ, which [b] before was preached unto you: 21. [c] Whom the heaven must receive until the times of [d] restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. 22. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, [e] A Prophet shall the Lord your God [f] raise up unto you of your brethren, [g] like unto me; him shall ye [h] hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. 23. And it shall come to pass, [i] *that* every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24. [k] Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 25. [l] Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, [m] And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. 26. [n] Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to [o] bless you, in [p] turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

m Ps. 115. 1. John 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

u Ch. 5. 30 Exod. 3. 6, 15, 16. & 4. 5. Luke 20 37, 38.

o John 7. 39. & 12. 16. & 13. 31, 32. & 17. 1, 5. ch. 2. 33. & 5. 31. Eph. 1. 20. to Phil. 2. 3—11. Ps. 110. 1—7.

p Mat. 27. 2, 18, 20. Mark 15. 1, 9. John 18. 40. & 19 15. Luke 23. 1, 14. & 18. 30. & 19. 12, 15. ch. 2. 23. & 4. 26—28 & 5. 30.

q Mat. 27. 20. Mark 15. 11 Luke 23. 18, 25. John 18. 40. ch. 13. 28. & 7. 52. & 22. 14. with Rev. 3. 7. Heb. 7. 26. John 1. 4. & 3. 15, 16, 36. & 5. 21, 26. & 6. 40. & 10. 10, 28. & 11. 25. & 14. 6, 19. & 17. 2. Col. 3. 3, 4. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 1 John 5. 11, 20.

* Or *author*.

r Ch. 1. 3. & 2. 24, 27, 31, 32. & 10. 39, 40. & 13. 30—37. & 17. 31. Rom. 1. 4. & 4. 25. & 6. 4. & 8. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 21.

s Power and authority. Ver. 6. ch. 4. 7, 10.

t Ver. 6. ch. 14. 9. Luke 7. 50. 1 Pet. 1. 21. Mat. 15. 28.

u Luke 23. 34. John 7. 26. 48. & 16. 3. ch. 13. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 13. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 2 Cor. 3. 14.

x Luke 24. 44. ch. 26 22. John 1. 45. Ps. xxii, lxix. Is. l, liii, &c.

y Mat. 3. 2. & 14. 17. Is. 43 25. & 44. 22. & 55. 7. ch. 2. 38. Neh. 1. 4. Ps. 51. 1, 2, 9. & 103. 14.

z 2 Tim. 1. 18. Ps. 17. 15. Luke 16. 25. Rev. 17. 14, 15. Rom. 11. 25. 2 Thes. 1. 7, 10.

a Ch. 1. 11. & 17. 31.

b Ver. 22, 24. ch. 10. 43. Col. 2. 17.

c Ch. 1. 11. Heb. 1. 3. & 4. 14. & 8. 1. & 10. 12, 13.

d Rom. 8. 21. 2 Pet. 3. 13. with 1. 21. Luke 1. 70.

e Deut. 18. 15—18. ch. 7. 37.

f Jer. 23. 5, 6. Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 8. 3. Heb. 2. 11, 12.

g John 1. 17, 18. Heb. 3. 2—5.

h Mat. 17. 5. Heb 12. 25.

i Deut. 18. 19. Heb. 2. 2, 3. & 10. 29. & 12. 25. Exod. 23. 21. 1 Sam. 2. 25.

k Luke 24. 25, 27, 44. John 1. 45. ch. 10. 43. & 13. 27. & 26. 22, 23 & 28. 25. Rom. 3. 21. 1 Pet. 1. 10—12.

l Ps. 50. 7. & 81. 8—10. ch. 2. 39. & 13. 26.

m Gen. 12. 3. & 18. 18. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 28. 14. Gal. 3. 8, 16. ch. 2. 39. Rom. 15. 8—12, 16, 19.

n Mat. 10. 5, 6. & 15. 24. Luke 24. 47. ch. 13. 23, 26, 38, 46. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

o Ps. 72. 17. Eph 1. 3. Gal. 3. 9, 13, 14, 22.

p Dan. 9. 24. Mal. 3. 1—3. Mat. 1. 21. 1 John 3. 5, 8. ver. 19.

Verses 12—26. Peter, beholding the concourse of people assembled on this occasion, improves so happy an opportunity to preach the gospel to those who seemed so affected with the miracle before them. A word in season, how good is it!

1. He humbly disclaims all the honour of the miracle, which

was due to his Master alone. *Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this?* when so much greater cures have been before performed among you by the Lord Jesus; *or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man walk? Note,* (1.) The most successful ministers must be the most humble; the more they are admired of others, the lower they must lie down at the feet of Jesus, ascribing to him alone the praise. (2.) We are too apt to idolize the men and ministers who have been made signal instruments of good to us; but we should look farther, even to him alone who *giveth the increase.*

2. He preaches to them that Jesus whom they crucified, by whose power alone this miracle was wrought. *The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob,* that covenant-keeping God, *the God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus,* owning him in this high character; not only by all the miracles which he had wrought, but by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven; *whom ye delivered up* as a malefactor into the hands of the Roman governor, *and denied him in the presence of Pilate,* as your King Messiah, requiring his crucifixion; *when he,* convinced of his innocency, *was determined to let him go. But ye,* instigated by the priests and rulers, with savage barbarity, *denied the Holy One, and the Just,* whom none could ever convince of sin, or impeach his spotless purity; and as the most provoking aggravation of your guilt, *desired a murderer to be granted unto you,* in preference to him, *and killed the Prince of Life,* the Author and Fountain of natural, spiritual, and eternal life; *whom God hath raised from the dead;* defeating all the malice of his enemies, rolling away the reproach of the cross, and exalting him to a state of the most transcendent glory; *whereof ye are witnesses;* have seen and conversed with him after his resurrection, and are endued with these miraculous powers by him, to make our testimony more regarded. *And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know;* acting under his authority, and trusting on his power, hath this incontestable miracle been performed: *yea, the faith which is by him,* exercised upon him as the object, and wrought in us by him as the author, *hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all;* for this thing was not done in a corner, but publicly in the temple, and the perfection of the cure was evident to every beholder.

3. Yet dreadful as their guilt was, he means not to drive them to despair. *And now, brethren,* exceeding sinful as your conduct hath been, *I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers;* I persuade myself that many, I would hope, the most, who were engaged in that black deed, were blindly hurried on by their passions and prejudices, and knew not what they did, else would they not have crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. ii. 8. *But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled;* and though this be no extenuation of your wickedness, yet since the very end of his dying was in order to obtain remission of sins for the most miserable and desperate, there is still hope, even for those whose hands are red with his blood. *Note,* (1.) Charity bids us hope the best, even of the vilest; and not to impute to them worse motives to their actions than really influence them. (2.) The wickedness of men God can overrule, and bring good out of their evil.

4. He exhorts an immediate penitent return to him whom they had crucified. *Repent ye, therefore,* of this atrocious deed; *and* since there is yet hope towards God, *be converted:* turn to this Jesus as the true Messiah; laying aside your pride and prejudices, yield up your hearts to his guidance and government, and fly to the atoning blood of his cross, which was shed for this very purpose, *that your sins,* however great, numberless, and aggravated, *may be blotted out,* and your guilt cancelled, *when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;* those joyful seasons of consolation which now you will experience, when turning unto him you shall be filled with joy and peace in believing, and shall also find favour with him, and be acknowledged by him, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired of all that believe: in his presence then shall you possess bliss unutterable, and under his shadow enjoy an eternal rest from all the burdens of sin, and sorrow, *and* temptation. For *he shall send Jesus,* this *Jesus* whom he hath made both Lord and *Christ,* and appointed the Judge of quick and dead, even him *which before was preached unto you,* in all the sacred oracles, and by his own blessed ministry; *whom the heaven must receive,* whither we have seen him ascend, and where he now sits enthroned in glory, *until the times of restitution of all things,* when the mystery of godliness shall be finished, all his elect people be gathered into him, and his kingdom shall finally come at the great day of his appearing to judge the world. *Note,* (1.) The great inducement to evangelical repentance, is the promise of pardon and forgiveness. (2.) They who truly turn to Jesus, shall find refreshing and rest to their souls, and reconciliation with a pardoning God. (3.) Though Christ be now exalted to his throne, we expect his coming a second time: O that we may be prepared to meet him! then it shall be a *time of refreshing;* when seeing him face to face, we shall be changed into the same image, be like and with him for ever.

5. He supports what he had said by an appeal and reference to the Scriptures, in which they believed. For these were the things *which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began,* concerning the kingdom of his Messiah. *For* instance *Moses,* that great lawgiver, in whom you glory, he bore a noble testimony to Jesus, *and truly said unto the fathers* in the wilderness, *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren,* sprung from the stock of Abraham, *like unto me;* who shall with far greater dignity be a Mediator between God and you; shall deliver you from worse than Egyptian bondage; and from the most intimate knowledge of God, shall reveal to you his mind and will: *him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you;* embracing his doctrines, obedient to his precepts, and observant of his institutions with implicit faith, unbounded love, and unreserved submission; yielding up your souls to his guidance and government. *And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet,* and believe and obey him, *shall be destroyed from among the people,* cut off by some notorious stroke of divine vengeance. *Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel,* in whom the Spirit of prophecy revived, *and those that follow after,* in a long succession, *as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days;* speaking of the Messiah, his sufferings, glory, and kingdom, from its beginning on earth, till its consummation in heaven.

6. He draws a most encouraging motive from their relation to the prophets, to receive their word, and believe in the Messiah, of whom they testified. *Ye are the children of the prophets,* their disciples, and descendents from the patriarchs, *and* heirs *of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed,* which seed was Christ, whose salvation shall extend to all nations; therefore being the immediate offspring of the great father of the faithful, *Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus,* sending him in the human nature, and raising him from the dead, hath *sent him to bless you,* by his own ministry and labours, and now by investing us with power and authority to preach his gospel, *in* which the most powerful motives are urged, in order to your conversion, and which his Spirit makes effectual to the *turning every one of you,* that believe in him, *from his iniquities,* and bringing you to pardon, salvation, and life eternal. *Note,* (1.) Jesus is come to be the blessing of the world. Without him, the curse and wrath of God must have for ever abode upon us. (2.) Iniquity is the cause of all our misery; when Christ comes to the sinner, he not only pardons his guilt, but converts his soul, and thus effectually recovers him to the life of grace, in order to bring him to the life of glory.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter the persecution against the apostles begins. 1. *Peter and John are taken up upon a warrant from the priests, and committed to jail,* ver. 1—4. 2. *They are examined by a committee of the great Sanhedrim,* ver. 5—7. 3. *They bravely avow what they have done, and preach Christ to their persecutors,* ver. 8—12. 4. *Their persecutors, being unable to answer them, enjoin them silence, threaten them if they go on to preach the gospel, and so dismiss them,* ver. 13—22. 5. *They apply themselves to God by prayer, for the further operations of that grace which they had already experienced,* ver. 23—30. 6. *God owns them, both outwardly and inwardly, by manifest tokens of his presence with them,* ver. 31—33. 7. *The believers had their hearts knit together in holy love, and enlarged their charity to the poor, and the church flourished more than ever, to the glory of Christ,* ver. 33, 34, 37.

1. AND as they spake unto the people, [a] the priests, and the * captain of the temple, and the [b] Sadducees, came upon them, 2. [c] Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached [d] through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3. And they laid hands on them, and [e] put *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now even-tide. 4. Howbeit, [f] many of them which heard the word believed: and the number of the men was about five thousand.

a Ch. 5. 17. Hos. 6. 9. Luke 22 52. John 18. 3.
* Or *ruler.*
b Mat. 22. 23. ch. 23. 8.
c Ch. 5. 17, 24. & 7. 54. & 13. 45. Gen. 3. 15. Neh. 2. 10. Job 5. 2. Eccl. 4. 4.
d 1 Cor. 15. 20. ch. 3. 13—21, 26. & 23. 8. Mat. 22. 23.
e Mat. 10. 17—22. & 24. 9. Luke 21. 12—16. John 16. 2, 3. ch. 5. 18. & 13. 23, 24.
f See ch. 2. 37, 41, 47. Gen. 49. 10. Is. 45. 24. & 49. 24, 25. John 12. 24. & 14. 12. Rom. 10. 17.

Verses 1—4. The success of the gospel could not but provoke Satan's enmity; and the inveterate enemies of the name of Christ cannot be expected long to be at rest.

1. The apostles continued to teach the people, and, as their grand subject, *preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.* They both testified the certainty of his resurrection, and affirmed, that he was raised up for this purpose, to be the author of spiritual and eternal life to his people, who should be raised up by him at the last day to a glorious immortality.

2. Multitudes of their hearers believed: and, notwithstanding the enmity to which they saw their preachers exposed, five thousand converts more were added to the church; so mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed. *Note,* Where the gospel meets with the greatest opposition, it is usually attended with the most remarkable success.

3. The priests, the captain of the temple, who presided over the watches, and the Sadducees, grieved and vexed to the heart, that the doctrine of Jesus, which they had taken such pains to suppress, should now spread with greater rapidity than ever; and that he whom they had ignominiously crucified, should be exalted as the resurrection and life, as the author of all blessedness in time and eternity; rushed upon the apostles suddenly, seized them as criminals, and committed them to safe custody for the night, it being even-tide, that they might be brought before the Sanhedrim the next day. *Note,* They who preach Christ must prepare to suffer for him.

5. ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that [g] their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6. And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, † and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7. And when they had [h] set them in the midst, they asked, [i] By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? 8. Then Peter, [k] filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9. If we this day be examined of the [l] good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; ‡ 10. Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by [m] the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, [n] whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11. [o] This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12. [p] Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. ‖ 13. ¶ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were [q] unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; [r] and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. 14. [s] And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

g Mat. 26. 3, 57. & 27. 1. Luke 3. 2. John 11. 47, 49. & 18. 13, 14. Ps. 2. 1, 2. & 3. 1.
† John was probably the celebrated rabbin Jochanan: Alexander is supposed to have been a noble and wealthy Jew.
h Mat. 10. 17. & 24. 9. ch. 5. 27. Mark 13. 9.
i Exod. 2. 14. Mat. 21. 23. John 1. 18. ch. 7. 27.
k Ver. 31. Mat. 10. 19. Luke 12. 11, 12. Jer. 8. 9, 18, 19.
l Ch. 3. 7.
‡ *By whom,* or *through whom he is made whole.*
m Or *power,* or *authority.* Ver. 7. ch. 3. 6, 16.
n Ch. 2. 23, 24. & 3. 13—15. & 13. 27—30. Mat. 26. 18, 19. & xxvi—xxviii. Mark xiv—xvi. Luke xxii, xxiv. John xviii—xx.
o Ps. 118. 22. Mat. 21. 42. Is. 28. 16. & 49. 7. & 53. 3. Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.
p John 14. 6. & 3. 18, 36. Mat. 1. 21. ch. 10. 43. Rom. 3. 24. 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6.
‖ The sequel shows that Peter did not here speak exclusively of the disordered in body, and their healing.
q Ch. 2. 7, 12. Mat. 4. 18—22.
r Mat. 10. 1—4. ch. 1. 2, 3, 8, 13, 21. & 10. 39.
s Ver. 10, 16. ch. 3. 8—12.

Verses 5—14. No sooner was the morning returned, than we have,

1. The court assembled to try the innocent prisoners: but little justice can be expected, when their judges are known to be their avowed and inveterate enemies. The rulers, elders, and scribes, the high priest Annas, who now enjoyed that dignity, with Caiaphas, who had sat in the chair the year preceding, with John and Alexander, persons of distinguished note, and others of the high priest's kindred, were all leagued against two poor fishermen, to try if their power could not intimidate, or their learning confute, or their authority silence them.

2. The prisoners are arraigned. They *set them in the midst,* to answer before their judges the interrogatories which they chose to put to them, and haughtily demand, *by what power,* human, divine, or diabolical; *or by what name,* by virtue of whose authority, or by the invocation of what name, *have ye done this?*

3. Peter, *filled with the Holy Ghost,* endued with singular boldness, and directed by his immediate influence, according to Christ's promise, Mark xiii. 11. *said unto them,* respectfully addressing them as magistrates, and men of rank, *Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we be examined* as criminals, *this day, of the good deed done to the impotent man;* and you demand information, *by what means* such an act of mercy and power was performed, and *he is made whole;* we with pleasure appear to give you the fullest satisfaction. Therefore, *be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel,* whom it highly concerns, *that by the name,* the precious, powerful, all-prevailing name *of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye* have treated with the highest contempt, and most ignominiously *crucified,* but *whom God raised from the dead,* disappointing the impotent malice of his murderers; *even by him,* by this once despised, but now glorified Jesus, and by no power of our own, by no magic charm, but by faith in him

alone *doth this man stand here before you whole. This* Jesus *is the stone* spoken of, Psal. cxviii. 22. *which was set at nought of you,* who by station and office should be *builders* of God's spiritual temple, but *which is* now exalted of God, and *become the head of the corner,* by which the church of God is supported, and firmly knit together. *Neither is there salvation in any other;* there is no spiritual or eternal salvation out of him, by the deeds of the law, or by any human power or righteousness whatsoever; *for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved;* God having appointed him to be the only Redeemer from sin, death, and hell, and all who believe not in him, must therefore perish everlastingly. *Note,* (1.) Salvation is every sinner's great concern. (2.) In and of ourselves we have nothing but misery, sin, and wrath, and have no power of ourselves to help ourselves. (3.) Christ alone can save a sinful soul by the merit of his blood and righteousness. (4.) God freely offers him in the gospel to the miserable, and invites all men to believe on him to the saving of their souls. (5.) They must inevitably and eternally perish who neglect so great a salvation.

4. Such an answer quite confounded the court. *When they saw the boldness of Peter and John,* their undaunted courage, their readiness of speech, and powerful elocution; *and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men,* had been brought up at none of the public seminaries, at the feet of none of their rabbins, nor had ever the least advantages of education; *they marvelled* at the intrepidity, wisdom, and eloquence that appeared in them; *and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus,* in whose company they recollected they had seen them formerly: *and beholding the man which was healed standing with them,* who probably came ready to bear testimony for them, and to do honour to his benefactors, to whatever danger it might expose him, *they could say nothing against it;* the miracle was too notorious to be contradicted. *Note,* (1.) In Christ's cause, even before the greatest, we may well boldly stand forth; he will bear us through. (2.) They who have been with Jesus will carry the marks of it visibly about them: like Moses on the mount, their faces will shine, and their holy and heavenly conversations proclaim their Master's glory.

t Ver. 1 5 6.

u John 11. 47, 48. & 12. 18, 19. ch. 3. 9. ver. 14.

x Ch. 5. 28, 40. 1 Thes. 2 16. Ps. 2. 1—3. John. 15. 18—21. Mat. 10. 22.

y Exod. 1. 17. ch. 5. 29. Gal. 1. 10.

z Mat 10. 27. Mark 16. 15. ch. 1. 8, 22. & 2. 32. & 3. 15. & 10. 39, 41. & 22. 15. & 5. 32. & 13. 31. 1 John 1. 1—3. 2 Pet. 1. 16.

a You charge us not to preach the gospel God has charged us to preach it; whom must we obey, God or you? Can you think it right to break a divine command in obedience to a human injunction?

a Ver. 17, 18. ch. 5. 28, 40.

b Ps. 31. 15. Luke 21. 18.

c Ch. 5. 26. Mat. 14. 5. & 21. 26. Luke 20. 6, 19. & 22 2.

15. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, [t] they conferred among themselves, 16. Saying, [u] What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it.* 17. But that it spread no further among the people, let us [x] straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, [y] Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. 20. [z] For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.* 21. So, when they had further [a] threatened them, they [b] let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, [c] because of the people: for all *men* glorified God for [d] that which was done. 22. For the man was above [e] forty years old on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

d Ch. 3. 6—11. & 5. 13. ver. 16.

e Ch. 3. 2. John 5. 5. Luke 13. 16. Mat. 9. 20.

Verses 15—22. How to punish those against whom they had no charge to lay they knew not, yet fain would they brand them, if possible, with some mark of infamy.

1. In order to consult upon the case the more freely, *they commanded* the apostles to be led out of the council-chamber, whilst *they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men?* our difficulties are greater than ever; *for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it;* so that to attempt it would but expose our own characters; *but, that it spread no farther among the people,* neither the fame of the miracle, nor the doctrine of Christ, in confirmation of which it was wrought, *let us straitly threaten them,* on pain of our highest displeasure, and at the peril of suffering the punishment due to that contumacy, *that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.* Thus they hope, by silencing the ministers, to suppress the doctrines of the gospel. *And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus;* breathing forth their impotent malice. *Note,* (1.) The enemies of the gospel often join in close cabal how to suppress the growing progress of the truth; but he who sitteth on the heavens laughs them to scorn. (2.) Many a faithful minister of Jesus, for the truths which he hath maintained, hath met the frowns and threatenings of proud priests and prelates, who would fain intimidate and silence them, that they should speak no more in the name of Jesus: but they despise their menaces; they are prepared to suffer, but will not be silent.

2. The prisoners give in their answers; they needed no premeditation to reply, and said unto them, *Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.* Can it be possible we should be silent, when acting under his express injunctions? or how can we thus acquit ourselves to our consciences, or mankind, for whose sake we preach this salvation of Jesus? Your commands therefore being incompatible with the superior obedience we owe to God, cannot possibly be observed: *for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard;* a necessity is laid upon us, and wo unto us if we preach not the gospel. *Note,* (1.) Where the injunctions of men are contrary to the word of God, we must not hesitate a moment which we shall obey. (2.) They who have experimentally known the salvation which is in Jesus, and tasted its sweetness, cannot but delight to spread the savour of his name, and to make all men, as far as their influence reaches, know the grace which is in him.

3. Unable to fix the least accusation against the apostles, they were compelled reluctantly to let them go, repeating their former threatenings, to try if that would intimidate them, and *finding nothing how they might punish them,* as they earnestly wished to do, *because of the people,* who would have risen up against them for such a flagrant act of injustice; *for all men glorified God for that which was done;* the multitude in general were convinced that this was the finger of God, and could not but adore him, who had enabled these men to perform this act of power and mercy; *for the man was above forty years of age, on whom this miracle of healing was showed,* and had been so long known by the people, that the cure was rendered thereby the more singular and astonishing. *Note,* (1.) God can put his restraints upon persecutors, and prevent them, by various considerations, from doing all the mischief to which they are inclined. (2.) They who in old age are cured by the gospel word are more eminent monuments of divine mercy.

23. ¶ And being let go, they went [f] to

f Ps. 119. 63. & 15. 4. & 16. 3. Prov 13. 20. ch. 1. 13. & 2. 46. & 12. 12.

their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24. And when they heard [s] that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, [h] which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25. Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, [i] Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26. The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27. For, of a truth, against thy [k] holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, [l] both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28. [m] For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.* 29. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with [n] all boldness they may speak thy word, 30. [o] By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31. ¶ And when they had prayed, the place [p] was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

s Ps. 106. 1, 2. & 118. 1, 2, &c.

h Gen. 1, 6. Exod. 20. 11. Jer. 32. 17.

i Ps. 2. 1—3. with ver 27—29. Mat. 26. 18.

k Heb. 7. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Isa. 61. 1. John 10. 36. ch. 3. 14. & 7. 52. Ps. 2. 6.

l Luke xxii. xxiii. Mat. xxvi. xxvii. Mark xiv. xv. John xviii. xix. ch. 2. 23.

m Mat. 26. 24, 54. Luke 22. 22. & 24. 25—27, 44. ch. 2. 23. & 3. 18. & 13. 27—29.

* Sin is not the less evil for God's ordering good out of it.

n Ch. 9. 27. & 13. 46. & 14. 3. & 19. 8. & 26. 26. & 28. 31. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Ezek. 2. 6. Is. 58. 1. 2 Thes. 3. 1.

o Ch. 2. 22. & 3. 6—12, 16. & 5. 12, 15. & 6. 34, 40. & 19. 12.

p Ch. 16. 26. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Joel 2. 28. ch. 2. 4.

Verses 23—31. No sooner were the two apostles dismissed than,

1. They returned *to their own company*, not ashamed or afraid to join them, notwithstanding all the threatenings of the priests; *and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them*, and most probably their reply. *Note*, We must never desert the society of our brethren. The world hath its end, if it can confine our religion to our closets, and prevent our open profession of it, by joining those who appear on the Lord's side.

2. *When they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God*, in prayer and praise, *with one accord*, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, speaking as if animated by one soul, *and said. Lord, thou art God*, infinite in power, *which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is*; the great Creator and Governor, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, and all events directed by thy providence and under thy control; *who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* endeavoured to suppress the glorious gospel of Jesus. *The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.* And now this prophecy is eminently fulfilled; *for of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed* as the true Messiah promised so long before, *both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together*, conspiring to destroy the adorable Redeemer; but in the execution of their barbarous and malicious designs thou didst over-rule their wickedness *for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done*, executing thy eternal decrees, and bringing to thyself the greatest glory, to the Redeemer the greatest honour, and to lost souls a free and full salvation. *And now, Lord, behold their threatenings*, restrain and disappoint their rage and malice; *and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word*, openly and zealously preaching thy gospel, in nothing dismayed by their adversaries; and own them in their testimony, *by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus*; by the authority derived from this thy incarnate Son, and to the glory of his great name. *Note*, (1.) In all our dangers we should make application to him who is able to help us. (2.) All the wickedness and wrath of man shall turn to God's praise, and the remainder of that wrath he will restrain. (3.) The sin of persecutors is not the less malignant, because God over-rules it to subserve purposes of his own glory. (4.) God takes cognizance of all the malice of his people's foes, and hears their threatenings: therefore we need not fear them. (5.) They who are to preach the gospel to a gainsaying world, need to be often secretly looking up to God for boldness, that through fear or shame, they may not be unfaithful to men's souls. (6.) Tokens of God's presence and blessing with us, are the comfortable encouragement to us to persevere even through much tribulation.

3. Their prayer receives an immediate answer from God. *When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together*, as a sensible token of the divine presence in the midst of them; *and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*, feeling a growing ardour in their souls, experiencing fresh measures of strength, courage, and consolation communicated to them; *and they spoke the word of God with boldness.* *Note*, When God is for us, we need neither fear nor care who are against us.

32. [q] And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul: neither said any *of them*, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.† 33. [r] And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and [s] great grace was upon them all. 34. [t] Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35. And laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. 36. And [u] Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus, 37. Having land, [x] sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

q Ch. 2. 44—46. Ezek. 11. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Eph. 4. 3—6. ver. 34—37. 1 Pet. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 13. 11.

† They abounded in charity, so that, in effect, they had all things in common.

r Rom. 15. 19. Mat. 7. 29. 1 Thes. 1. 5. 1 Cor 2. 4. ch. 1. 8. & 2. 22. & 5. 29.

s John 1. 16. Luke 2. 52. ch. 2. 4, 47. 1 Cor. 15. 10.

t Ver. 32, 37. ch. 2. 45. & 5. 1—3. Mark 10. 21. Jam. 1. 27. 1 John 3. 17. Luke 12. 33. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 19.

u Not Mat. 13. 55. Mark 15. 40.

x Mat. 19. 29. Luke 12. 33. & 16. 9. 1 Tim. 6. 19. Prov. 11. 24, 25. & 3. 9. Eccl. 11. 1, 2.

Verses 32—37. How beautiful is the scene here represented to us! how unlike the schisms and divisions which have since unhappily rent the church of Christ!

1. *The multitude of them that believed*, vast as the accessions lately made had been, *were of one heart*, knit together in love, united in sentiment, *and* seemed as it were actuated by *one soul.*

2. *With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus*, proving the fact by incontestable evidence, and enforcing the truths connected therewith, confirming their testi-

mony with signs, and wonders, and preaching, with the most intrepid boldness and zeal, the glorious gospel committed to them; *and great grace was upon them all,* the most evident tokens of the divine favour rested upon them; and the effects of it were an entire contempt of the world, and most fervent charity towards all men.

3. *They had all things common,* and none said *that ought of the things which he possessed was his own,* but freely gave up all for the general service: hence there was not *any among them that lacked,* the poorest being equally supported out of the common stock, whilst the richer members of the church, *as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and,* of their own accord, freely *brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet,* as trustees for the good of the community; *and distribution was made unto every man,* by these faithful stewards, *according as he had need. And Joses, who was by the apostles surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, a son of consolation,)* probably from the admirable faculty he possessed of speaking peace to wounded consciences: *a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land,* either in Judea, or in his own country, *sold it,* and *brought the* purchase *money,* which seems to have been very considerable, *and laid it at the apostles' feet:* a noble instance of enlarged and disinterested charity, deserving a particular memorial. *Note,* (1.) What we have in the world is not *our own,* but God's; and, whenever he is pleased to call for it, should be employed in his service. (2.) If we are not called now to the same exercise of charity as in these days of the church's infancy, yet the rich must remember they are still but God's almoners, and should approve themselves faithful stewards of the gifts intrusted to them. (3.) Objects of real *need* have a title to our relief according to our ability, especially those that are of the household of faith. (4.) One bright example provokes the zeal of others, and none that show themselves faithful to Jesus and his cause shall be forgotten by him.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The sin and punishment of Ananias and Sapphira,* ver. 1—11. 2. *The flourishing state of the church in the power that went along with the preaching of the gospel,* ver. 12—16. 3. *The imprisonment of the apostles, and their miraculous discharge out of prison, with fresh orders to go on to preach the gospel, which they did, to the great vexation of their persecutors,* ver. 17—26. 4. *Their arraignment before the great Sanhedrim, and their justification of themselves in what they did,* ver. 27—33. 5. *Gamaliel's counsel concerning them, that they should not persecute them, but let them alone, and see what would come of it; and their concurrence for the present with this advice, in the dismission of the apostles with no more but a scourging,* ver. 34—40. 6. *The apostles' cheerful progress in their work, notwithstanding the prohibition laid upon them, and the indignity done them,* ver. 41, 42.

1. BUT [a] a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2. [b] And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it,* and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. 3. But Peter said, Ananias, why [c] hath Satan filled thine heart [d] to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to [e] keep back *part* of the price of the land? 4. Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5. And Ananias, hearing these words, [f] fell down, and gave up the ghost: and [g] great fear came on all them that heard these things. 6. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him.* 7. And [h] it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. 8. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. 9. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have [h] agreed together to [i] tempt the Spirit of the Lord? [k] behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband *are* at the door, and shall carry thee out. * 10. [k] Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying *her* forth, buried *her* by her husband. 11. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. †

a 2 Tim. 2. 20. John 6. 70. Phil. 3. 19.

b Ch. 4. 37. Josh. 7. 1. Mal. 3. 8, 9. Rom. 2. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 10. 2 Kin. 5. 20.

c John 13. 2, 27. & 8. 44. Luke 22. 3.

d Or *to deceive.* Ps. 94. 7. Is. 29. 15. Hos. 11. 12.

e Num. 30. 2. Deut. 23. 21. Eccl. 5. 4. Ps. 50. 14. Prov. 20. 25. ver. 2, 4, 9. Rom. 2. 21, 22.

f 2 Cor. 10. 6. Num. 14. 36, 38. ver. 10.

g Ch. 2. 43. ver. 11. Ps. 119. 120.

h Gen. 3. 6.

i Exod. 17. 2. Num. 14. 22. Ps. 78. 18, 56. & 95. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 10. 9. ver. 3, 4.

* *Will carry thee out.* It is not threat, but prediction.

k Ver. 5.

† The severity was not only righteous, considering the complication of vain glory and covetousness, of fraud and impiety, which the action contained, but also was wise and gracious, as it vindicated the honour of the Blessed Spirit.—*Doddridge.*

Verses 1—11. The purest societies on this side heaven have some hypocrites, as we see here:

1. Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, willing to appear among the foremost of the disinterested disciples of Jesus, sold a possession, and publicly brought a part of the money, which they would insinuate was the whole, and laid it at the apostles' feet, whilst their covetous hearts secretly reserved a part, and still halted between God and Mammon; though they desired to make a fair show in the flesh, and thought to impose upon the apostles. *Note,* Hypocrites may go far in appearances, and even, through pangs of zeal, forego, for a while, some temporal advantage, or endure loss; but their heart is not right with God, and therefore there is still a reserve made, which serves to make them more eminently miserable, parting with many of the comforts of this world, and yet having no sure portion in a better.

2. *Peter,* who knew by divine revelation the falsehood of this pretended disciple, said unto him, *Why hath Satan filled thine heart* with such covetousness and falsehood, *to lie to the Holy Ghost?* either to think thus to impose upon the apostles, who were endued with the discernment of spirits by the Holy Ghost; or by pretending to act under his impulse and influence, when in fact he was under the spirit of the devil: *and to keep back part of the price,* though intimating that the land was parted with for pious purposes, and devoted to the service of the church. *While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not thine own?* both the sale and surrender of the price being a voluntary act, and none were compelled to do either, but were left to their own pious zeal. *Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?* and harboured the suggestion of Satan to contrive so base a deed; *thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God,* to that eternal Spirit which resided in the apostles, who searcheth the hearts of all men; and from whom nothing is hid, nothing is secret. *Note,* (1.) Nothing betrays persons more frequently into the sin of lying, than the affectation of appearing high in others' esteem. (2.) They who *conceive falsehood in their hearts* are filled with Satan: a lying spirit is his strongest resemblance. (3.) The Holy Ghost is God omniscient. Let those whom pride, worldly-mindedness, or a maintenance, drives into the ministry,

take heed how they presume to declare they are *inwardly moved* by him, lest, like Ananias and Sapphira, their lie be detected, if not here, yet hereafter, to their everlasting confusion.

3. Behold a fearful example of divine vengeance! No sooner had Peter spoken than Ananias *fell down and gave up the ghost*, struck by an invisible hand, as the just punishment of his wickedness, and to make one example to deter others from such impious hypocrisy. *And great fear came on all them that heard these things:* it impressed an awe upon the minds of those who had joined themselves to the church, and served to keep off from the society of the apostles those who would have been spots in their assembly.

4. The young men present removed the corpse, wrapped it in grave-clothes, and buried it.

5. Sapphira, the wife of Ananias, who was privy to his falsehood, ignorant of what had passed, about three hours after joined the assembly; and, being required of Peter to answer if they had sold the land for so much, without hesitation she affirmed the lie, foolishly presuming none could disprove it. Her doom therefore is pronounced; being the partner of her husband's sin, she shares his punishment. *Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?* how astonishing is your stupidity, as well as monstrous your wickedness, to attempt imposing upon the omniscient God? *behold the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.* Instantly, death-struck, she fell at his feet, and they carried her out and buried her with her husband; whilst all the church were filled with reverence and godly fear at that jealous God, who thus appeared the avenger of falsehood and hypocrisy; and all others, that heard these judgments, were afraid of provoking or tempting the apostles, whose very word seemed clothed with death. *Note,* (1.) It is truly grievous when near relations serve to encourage each other in iniquity. (2.) God, though patient under numberless provocations, is pleased to make some sinners monuments of his vengeance, that men may hear and fear and do no more wickedly.

12. ¶ [l] And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and [m] they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. 13. [n] And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. 14. [o] And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) 15. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick * into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at the least [p] the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16. There came also a multitude *out* of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were [q] healed every one.

l Mark 16. 17, 18. John 14. 12. ch. 2. 22, 43. & 3. 6, 7. & 4. 30. & 9. 33, 40. & 13. 11. & 14. 3, 8. & 16. 16. & 19. 6, 11, 12. & 20. 9. & 28. 8. Rom. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 12. 12. Heb. 2. 4.

m Ch. 2. 46. & 3. 11. & 4. 32. John 10. 23.

n John 9. 22. & 12. 42. & 19 38. or 1 Kin. 17. 18. Luke 5. 8. 2 Sam. 6. 9. 1 Sam. 6. 19, 20. Is. 33. 14. ch. 2. 41, 47. & 4. 21, 33.

o Ch. 2. 41, 47. & 4. 4. & 6. 7. Is. 45. 24. Gal. 3. 28. ch. 10. 34.

* Or *in every street.*

p Ch. 19. 12. John 14. 12. Mat. 9. 21. & 14. 36.

q Mark 16. 17, 18. & 6. 56. & 7. 37. Mat. 12. 15. & 14. 14.

Verses 12—16. We are here told,

1. Of the many and great miracles performed by the apostles, in proof of their divine mission; and so much were the people in general convinced of the mighty powers they possessed, that they brought forth the sick in beds and couches and laid them in the streets, *that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them,* persuaded that this would be effectual to work a cure: and from the country vast multitudes of patients, sick and vexed with unclean spirits, were brought to them, *and they were healed every one:* none being rejected who made application to them.

2. Of the vast veneration in which the apostles were held. *They were all with one accord in Solomon's porch,* appearing and teaching publicly in the temple, with the greatest unanimity among themselves: *and of the rest durst no man join himself unto them;* either none of the disciples presumed to set themselves on a level with the apostles, or rather, none durst make a hypocritical profession of Christianity, who were not conscious of the simplicity of their hearts, being terrified at the doom of Ananias and Sapphira; *but the people magnified them,* held them in the highest veneration, and spoke of them with the highest esteem, beholding the wonders which they wrought, and the presence and power of God evident in the midst of them.

3. Of the vast accession of converts made to the church. *Believers were the more added to the Lord,* and made open profession of their faith in Christ, *multitudes both of men and women,* so mightily grew the word of God and increased.

17. ¶ [r] Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with [s] indignation, 18. [t] And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. 19. [u] But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, 20. Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people [x] all the words of this life. 21. And when they heard *that,* [y] they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. [z] But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. 22. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told, 23. Saying, [a] The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within. 24. Now when the high [b] priest, and [c] the captain of the temple, and the chief priests, heard these things, they [d] doubted of them whereunto this would grow. 25. [e] Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

r Ch. 4. 1.

s Or *envy.* Job 5. 2. Prov. 27. 4. Eccl. 4. 4.

t Ch. 4. 3. & 16. 23, 24. Mat. 10. 17—22. & 24. 9. John 16. 2, 3.

u Ps. 34. 7. ch. 2. 7—10. & 16. 25, 26. Heb. 1. 14.

x Mark 16. 15. John 12. 50. & 6. 68. & 17. 3. 1 John 1. 1—3.

y Ch. 21. 13. John 8. 2.

z Ch. 4. 1, 5. John 7. 48. Mat. 26. 3. & 27. 1, 5. ver. 17, 24.

a Ver. 19.

b Gr. *priests.* 2 Kin. 25. 18.

c Ch. 4. 1. Luke 22. 4, 52. John 18. 3.

d Ch. 4. 16, 21. John 11. 47, 48. & 12. 18, 19.

e Ver. 20, 21.

Verses 17—25. It cannot be supposed that the inveterate enemies of the gospel would long be quiet, or Satan rest when his kingdom was falling to ruins before the gospel word.

1. The apostles are seized and imprisoned. The hand of the high priest was first in this transgression, supported by the Sadducean sect, who could not endure the testimony borne to the resurrection of Jesus, which radically struck at all their tenets: exasperated to fury, they could contain no longer, and with lawless violence laid hands on them; and, to put the greater disgrace upon them, dragged them to the common prison among

the vilest malefactors. *Note*, (1.) The success of the gospel is a vexation to wicked men, and, when they have power in their hands, the disciples of Jesus shall feel their oppression. (2.) It is Satan's artifice, by endeavouring to make the ministers of Christ despicable, to prejudice the people against them.

2. The Lord miraculously delivers his servants, by the hand of an angel, from their confinement. The commitment was illegal; therefore the great Judge of all sends his messenger to discharge them honourably; and by his power opening the prison doors, he *said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life*; not the least intimidated by all the malice of their inveterate foes, but in their very ears, in the temple, the most public place, must they declare the life-giving truths of the gospel word, and the offensive doctrines of a risen Redeemer. *Note*, (1.) God can make the most lonesome prison a paradise of delights, when he manifests his presence there. (2.) They who are put in trust with the gospel, must not, in the most public manner, shun to declare the whole counsel of God, however offensive it may prove, and whatever may be the consequences to themselves.

3. Without delay they obey the heavenly command, and early, as soon as the temple doors were open, they went thither, and boldly taught as before, fearless of any consequences. *Note*, When duty calls, no danger must deter us.

4. An extraordinary council was assembled by the high priest and his abettors, consisting not only of the Sanhedrim, *but of all the senate of the children of Israel.* And now, ready to proceed to trial, the prisoners are commanded to be brought forth; when, big with expectations of their appearing in chains before them, they are astonished with the report of their officers, that the prison was safe as they left it, and the guards upon duty, but none of the prisoners, whom they had committed thither, were to be found. Such an account threw them into the greatest perplexity; they knew not what course to take, and began to be under terrible apprehensions *whereunto this would grow*; when, to their great confusion, tidings are brought them, that the men whom they sought, and had the evening before committed to prison, were preaching openly in the temple, in defiance of all their menaces. *Note*, (1.) They who fight against God must needs involve themselves in many troubles. (2.) The Lord can deliver his people out of all their trials, in spite of the malice of their most envenomed persecutors.

26. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them [f] without violence: for [g] they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. 27. And when they had brought them, [h] they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28. Saying, [i] Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and [k] intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29. ¶ Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, [l] We ought to obey God rather than men. 30. [m] The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31. [n] Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. 32. And [o] we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also [p] the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. 33. ¶ When they heard *that*, they [q] were cut *to the heart*, and took counsel to slay them. 34. Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named [r] Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; 35. And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, [s] take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. 36. For [t] before these days rose up Theudas, * boasting himself to be somebody; to whom [u] a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as † obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. 37. [x] After this man rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: [y] he also perished; and all, *even* as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. 38. And now I say unto you, [z] Refrain from these men, and let them alone: [a] for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: 39. But [b] if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. 40. And to him they agreed: [c] and when they had called the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41. ¶ And they departed from the presence of the council, [d] rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. 42. [e] And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

f Without binding them. Mat. 27. 2.
g Ch. 4. 21. Mat. 14. 5. & 21. 26. Luke 20. 6, 19. & 22. 2. Ps. 76. 10. ver. 13.
h Ch. 4. 7. Mat. 10. 17. Mark 13. 9.
i Ch. 4. 18, 21.
k Ch. 2. 23, 36. & 3. 13—15. & 4. 10.
l Ch. 4. 19. Gal. 1. 10. Exod. 1. 17. 1 Thes. 2. 5, 6. Deut. 12. 32. & 5. 32.
m Ch. 2. 24—32, 36. & 3. 13—15. & 13. 27—37. & 10. 38—40. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 1. 21.
n Ps. 110. 1. & 89. 27, 28. Heb. 2. 8—10. Phil. 2. 9—11. Eph. 1. 20—23. ch. 2. 23, 36. & 3. 15, 26. & 11. 18. & 13. 38, 39. Luke 24. 47.
o Ch. 1. 8. & 2. 32. & 16. 39, 41. John 15. 27.
p John 15. 26. & 16. 7, 13, 14. & 14. 16, 17, 26. Heb. 2. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 12. ch. 2. 4.
q Ch. 7. 54. & 13. 45. Prov. 27. 4, 5. Job 5. 2.
r Ch. 22. 3. & 4. 15. & 23. 9.
s 1 Kin. 20. 22. 2 Kin. 6. 9. Mat. 10. 17.
t Mat. 24. 11, 24. ch. 8. 9.
* Josephus mentions a Theudas who stirred up an insurrection seven years after this speech of Gamaliel; but there probably was another of the same name, as there were five leaders of insurrections named Simon within forty years, and three named Judas, within ten years.
About A. M. 4000.
u 2 Pet. 2. 2. 2 Thes. 2. 11.
† Or *believed.*
x Luke 2. 1. & 13. 1.
y Ver. 36. Ps. 9. 16. & 7. 16. Job 20. 5.
z Ver. 35. Ps. 76. 10. ch. 23. 9.
a Prov. 21. 30. Is. 8. 10. Mat. 15. 13. & 21. 25.
b Mat. 16. 18. Luke 21. 15. 2 Chr. 35. 21. Rev. 17. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 25. Phil. 1. 28. ch. 2. 41. & 4. 4, 33. & 6. 10. & 7. 51. & 23. 9.
c Mat. 10. 17. & 21. 35. & 23. 24. Luke 20. 10. Mark 12. 5. & 13. 9. ch. 4. 18.
d Ch. 16. 25. Mat. 5. 10—12. Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 13. & 1. 6. 2 Cor. 6. 10. & 12. 10. Phil. 1. 29. Heb. 10. 34.
e Gal. 6. 9, 10. ch. 2. 42. 46. ver. 12. Luke 21. 37. & 22. 53.

Verses 26—42. We have here,

1. The peaceable submission of the apostles to the officers, who came to seize them a second time in the temple. They dared not use violence, for fear lest the people, who held in just veneration the character of the apostles, should have risen upon them. The captain of the temple therefore, with his attendants, spoke them fair; and they, not unwilling nor afraid to appear before the council, consented to go with them.

2. The insolent reprimand given them by the high priest, for daring to disobey the charge given them. *Did not we straitly command you, that ye should not teach in this name?* and ye have treated our orders with contempt, *and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine*, most detestable and pernicious as it is: *and intend to bring this man's blood upon us*, both to expose us to the people, and lay the guilt of it at our doors, as if we had murdered an innocent man, and one whom you cry up so highly. But had not the apostles told them before, they must obey God rather than man? and had they not themselves invoked the

blood of Jesus upon them, when Pilate would have let them go? Why then should they be angry?

3. The apostles boldly replied, *We ought to obey God rather than men;* and far from softening any of the truths they declared, or the accusations they brought against them as the murderers of the Son of God, to their faces they dare declare it, and charge this atrocious deed on their consciences. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus,* testifying his highest approbation of him, *whom ye slew and hanged on a tree,* with the most impious cruelty and injustice; *him hath God exalted with his right hand* to a throne of glory in the heavens, *to be a Prince and a Saviour* to his redeemed people, *to give repentance to his Israel, and remission of sins,* freely and fully pardoning the transgressions of all who by true faith turn unto him, and working that conversion and faith in their hearts by the power of his grace. *And we are his witnesses of these things,* appointed by him, and speaking with the greatest assurance the truths we most certainly know; *and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to those that obey him,* who in all his miraculous gifts, as well as by the mighty energy of his gospel on our own hearts and the hearts of others, attests the truths which we declare. *Note,* (1.) Christ, as a Saviour, offers the free and full remission of their sins, be they never so many, great, or aggravated, to those who fly to him as their refuge. (2.) The promises of pardon are the great motives and causes of evangelical repentance. (3.) All who embrace Jesus as their Saviour, submit to him as their Prince; they who would reign *with* him, must be ruled *by* him. (4.) Besides all the great and good external evidences of Christianity, every obedient believer hath the internal witness of the Spirit in his heart, which is to him instead of a thousand arguments; and without this divine conviction of the truth, though we may silence and confound gainsayers, we never can convert them.

4. *When they heard this,* far from submitting to the Saviour, and seeking the remission of sins which he is exalted to give, *they were cut to the heart;* malice, indignation, and rage, burned in their bosom; *and* instantly they *took counsel to slay them,* resolving to rid themselves at once of their troublers, and murder them together. *Note,* The bosom of the wicked, when triumphant in iniquity, is a present hell; whilst even in their sufferings for righteousness' sake, the faithful feel their heaven begun.

5. To check the fury of these zealots, Gamaliel, a man of more moderate counsels, arose. He was *a Pharisee, a doctor of the law* by profession; and his high reputation among the people gave him weight and influence in the assembly: and he is said to have been now the president of the Sanhedrim. *He commanded to put the apostles forth a little space,* that he might speak more freely. Whereupon, addressing his brethren, (1.) He advises them not to act too rashly. *Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men,* lest by some hasty resolution ye bring guilt upon your souls, and provoke God's displeasure. (2.) He instances the ruin of some late impostors, who soon came to nothing; which would now be the case with these men, if the matter was a mere human contrivance. Theudas and Judas, two late pretenders, had arisen and collected a number of followers; but both were quickly destroyed, their followers dispersed, and their attempts abortive; and they might reasonably expect the same would be the issue of the present disturbance, if the thing was a mere artifice of deceivers, without embroiling themselves, and taking the matter out of God's hand. *Therefore,* (3.) His advice is for the present *to refrain from these men, and let them alone,* and wait a while to see what course matters may take; *for if this counsel or this work be of men,* a mere invention of the crafty, or the folly of deluded enthusiasts, *it will come to nought,* the deceit will soon be detected, and their attempts end in their own confusion, without our interfering; *but if it be of God,* though you oppose it with never so much violence, *ye cannot overthrow it,* and resistance would be as vain as impious. Therefore wait quietly the event, *lest haply ye be found even to fight against God;* the madness of which is evident, and the consequence cannot but be your own confusion and ruin. *Note,* (1.) Persecution for conscience' sake is as absurd as it is wicked. (2.) They who oppose Christ's ministers and gospel, fight against God, and the issue of that conflict must needs be fatal to his enemies.

6. Gamaliel's counsel so far prevailed as to rescue the apostles from immediate death; but their enemies could not so entirely abstain from them as to discharge them unhurt; their rage must be vented on their backs, though restrained from their blood; they *called* in the *apostles,* and having ignominiously and severely scourged them as malefactors, dismissed them with the most express injunctions of never more speaking in the name of Jesus, at the peril of all the pains and penalties which would attend their disobedience.

7. With admirable constancy the apostles bore their sufferings, and boldly persisted in their glorious work. *They departed from the presence of the council,* without a word of reproach or reviling, patiently submitting to these indignities, and, so far from being ashamed or intimidated, *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.* This reproach was their highest honour, these stripes their glory; *and* so far from desisting and being silent, as they were commanded, *daily in the temple,* in defiance of their persecutors, *and in every house,* where they resorted, *they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.* He was the great theme of all their discourse, and the complete redemption which was in him they explained and enforced, inviting all to come and share their mercy, and believe to the saving of their souls. *Note,* (1.) When for the sake of Jesus and his truth we are called to suffer, we should take pleasure in reproaches, and rejoice at the insults we meet with: they shall issue to our more abundant glory. (2.) A crucified Jesus must be the constant subject of our ministrations; and publicly when called into the pulpit, and privately, when visiting from house to house, *him* should we ceaseless teach and preach.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The discontent about the distribution of the public charity,* ver. 1. 2. *The ordination of seven deacons to ease the apostles of the burden,* ver. 2—6. 3. *The increase of the church,* ver. 7. 4. *A particular account of Stephen, one of the seven:* (1.) *His great activity for Christ,* ver. 8. (2.) *The opposition he met with,* ver 9, 10. (3.) *The convening of him before the great Sanhedrim, and the crimes laid to his charge,* ver. 11—14. (4.) *God's owning him upon his trial,* ver. 15.

1. AND in those days, [a] when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there [b] arose a murmuring of the [c] Grecians against the [c] Hebrews, [d] because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them,* and said, [e] It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3. Wherefore, brethren, [f] look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4. [g] But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. 5. ¶ And the saying pleased

[a] Exod. 1. 12. Mat, 13. 31, 32. Ps. 72. 16. ch. 2. 41, 45, 47. & 4. 4, 34. & 5. 14, 28. ver. 7.
[b] 1 Cor. 1. 10. Heb. 13. 1.
[c] Jews who live among the Greeks, and spoke the Greek tongue. Ch. 9. 29. & 11. 20.
[d] Jam. 1. 27. 1 Tim. 5. 3—5, 16. ch. 4. 35.
[e] Exod. 18. 17. 1 Cor. 9. 16. 2 Tim. 2. 4. ch. 4. 35.
[f] Deut. 1. 13. ch. 16. 2. & 14. 23. & 1. 21. 1 Tim. 3. 7. ver. 8.
[g] 1 Tim. 4. 13—16. 2 Tim. 4. 2. 1 Cor. 9. 16. & 4. 2. ch. 2. 42. & 20. 31.

the whole multitude. And they chose
h Ch. vii. & 22. 20. & 11. 24.
h Stephen, a man full of faith and of the
i Ch. 8. 5, 26. & 21. 8.
Holy Ghost, and i Philip, and Prochorus,
and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas,
k Ch. 1. 24. & 13. 3. & 8. 17. & 14. 23. 1 Tim. 4. 14. & 5. 22. 2 Tim. 1. 6. Mat. 19. 13.
and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:
6. Whom they set before the apostles:
and k when they had prayed, they laid
their hands on them. 7. ¶ [l] And the
l 2 Thes. 3. 1. ch. 12. 24. & 19. 20. Col. 1. 6. ver. 1.
word of God increased; and the number
of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem
m Rom. 1. 5. & 16. 26. 2 Thes. 1. 8. John 12. 42.
greatly; and a great company of the
priests were m obedient to the faith.

Verses 1—7. The admirable peace and harmony of the church here suffers some slight interruption, and yet good arises out of the evil. We have,

I. The cause, whether real or imaginary, of the discontent, which appeared among some of the members of the church. *In those days, when the number of disciples was multiplied;* for the sufferings of the apostles, so far from checking the progress of the gospel, proved its furtherance; *there arose a murmuring of the Grecians,* or Hellenist Jews, who were chiefly foreigners, and were so called from the Greek language, which they spoke, and used in their synagogues, *against the Hebrews,* who were inhabitants of Judea, and made use of the Hebrew language in reading the Old Testament; and they complained, *because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration,* as if there was a partiality shown to the poor who were Hebrews, and *theirs* either passed over, or scantily supplied. The complaint might possibly be real; in the multiplicity of affairs which lay on the apostles' hands, they might be unable to look minutely into the wants of the several widows, or other poor, who had made application to them for relief; or perhaps, as the public stock was chiefly raised by the Hebrews, they might count that the widows and other poor of that denomination were entitled to the preference; but probably mere suspicion dictated the complaint, and as they lay under some kind of disadvantages as foreigners, they were jealous lest they should be slighted; for those who are too apt to be querulous, eye with jealousy what is bestowed on others, and to clamour, as if any kindness done to them was an injustice to themselves. *Note,* (1.) Money matters are too often the causes of much dissatisfaction even among those who profess to be dead to the world. (2.) In the best ordered church some imperfections will be found; and the most careful pastors may hear of some real or pretended cause of complaint.

2. The apostles propose an excellent expedient to remove all cause of murmuring; and this not only for the satisfaction of others, but for their own relief: their necessary employment, in preaching the word of God, being too much interrupted by minding these secular concerns. They assembled *the multitude of the disciples,* it being a matter of common concern, and said, *It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables;* these avocations of providing for the poor diverting them too much from the great business of preaching the gospel. *Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you, men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business,* men of established reputation and integrity, endued with a distinguished measure of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, to enable them for the faithful discharge of their office, and whose wisdom and prudence are eminent, that they may manage the church's stock to greatest advantage. These were to be chosen by the people themselves, who could not afterwards reasonably find fault with the persons of their own appointment; and the apostles would *ordain them* to their office, that they might be invested with due authority, and that those who were concerned might know to whom they must apply in these matters: *but we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word,* as our more immediate and proper employment. *Note,* (1.) They who are appointed to any holy office, even the lowest in the church, may here behold the requisites thereto. They must be persons of *blameless character, men of parts and abilities* for the discharge of their trust *with wisdom,* and, above all, experimentally *acquainted with the grace of God* in their souls, and partakers of the Holy Ghost. To ordain persons immoral, ignorant, destitute of experimental religion, and to count them fit for the ministry who are fit for nothing else, how shocking! how contrary to the apostolical practice and what a scandal must such be to the office they bear! (2.) Divested as much as possible of worldly cares, Christ's immediate ambassadors should be occupied wholly in his work and the service of immortal souls, preaching his gospel in season and out of season, and watering with their prayers the labours of the pulpit, that God may give the increase.

3. The proposal met with general approbation; and, after serious deliberation, they, with joint concurrence and perfect unanimity, made choice of seven persons, whose names are recited, and seems to be of the Hellenist Jews, which would most effectually serve to silence all future murmurings among them. Stephen stands first in the catalogue, with a most honourable testimony borne to him; he was *full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,* a man eminent for gifts and graces. Philip, who follows him, we find afterwards successfully employed in preaching the gospel, chap. viii. Of the rest we have no particular account, unless Nicolas, as some have suggested, was the founder of that sect, which St John mentions with abhorrence, Rev. ii. 6—15. These seven being presented to the apostles, *they prayed* with them and for them, that they might be qualified for their work, and approve themselves faithful, and then, by the imposition of hands, solemnly separated them for this service, to which they were chosen.

4. The church continued to increase greatly, the intestine murmurs being silenced, the apostles being more disencumbered, and all zealously attending to their several charges. Thus the gospel word spread its blessed influence around; the *disciples multiplied in Jerusalem,* where, during our Lord's ministry, few seem to have believed in him; and what is still more astonishing, and to be reckoned among the chief wonders of grace, *a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith,* who had been the most inveterate enemies of Christ and his gospel, but now embraced the profession of Christianity, and proved by their holy conversation the unfeigned faith which was in them. *Note,* True faith in Jesus as a Saviour ever produces sincere obedience to him as our Master.

8. ¶ [n] And Stephen, full of faith and
n 1 Cor. xii. Eph. 4. 11. ver. 3, 5, 10, 15. ch. 3. 55.
power, did great wonders and miracles
among the people. 9. [o] Then there
o Ch. 13. 45. & 17. 18. Eccl. 4. 4. Prov. 18. 6, 7.
arose certain of the synagogue, which is
called *the synagogue* of the Libertines,* *
* The word *Libertines* is generally considered to denote Roman slaves who had been made free, or their descendants.
and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and
of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing
with Stephen. 10. [p] And they were not
able to resist the wisdom and the spirit
p Mat. 10. 19, 20. Luke 21. 15. ch. 7. 51. Exod. 4. 12. Is. 54. 17. ver. 5, 8, 15. Jer. 1. 9, 18.
by which he spake. 11. [q] Then they
suborned men, which said, We have
heard him speak blasphemous words
against Moses, and *against* God. 12.
q Mat. 26. 59. 1 Kin. 21. 10, 13.
[r] And they stirred up the people, and the
r Ch. 13. 50. & 14. 2. & 17. 5, 13. Mark 15. 11
elders, and the scribes, and came upon
him, and caught him, and brought *him* to
s 1 Kin. 21. 10, 13. Ps. 27. 12. & 35. 11. ch. 21. 21.
the council, 13. [s] And set up false wit-

nesses, which said, This man ceaseth not
t Ps. 56 5. Luke 19. 43, 44. Dan. 9. 26. ch. 7. 37, 48. Mal. 1. 11. Mat. 24. 2. & 26. 61.
to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: 14. [t] For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the *customs which Moses delivered us. 15. And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an [u] angel.

* Or *rites.*

u Exod. 34. 30. Mat. 28. 3.

Verses 8—15. Stephen, the first of the seven deacons, not only discharged the office to which he was appointed, but also appeared a zealous preacher of the gospel.

1. *He was full of faith and power;* endued with an eminent measure of courage and zeal for Christ, and, in confirmation of the truths he preached, *did great wonders and miracles among the people.*

2. He appeared a bold disputant against those who opposed the cause of truth. *There arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines,* such Jews as were honoured with the freedom of the city of Rome, *and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.* These Hellenist Jews and proselytes being generally the greatest zealots for Judaism, and perhaps being eminently skilled in Grecian literature, thought they could soon confute and confound this zealous advocate for Christianity, and challenged him to a public disputation. Probably Saul of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, was among the foremost of them. Stephen declined not the opportunity of vindicating the glorious truths of the gospel; and this he did with such clearness of argument, force of reasoning, energy of diction, and piercing application, *that they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke;* confounded, silenced, and unable to make any reply which carried the shadow of argument.

3. Enraged at being thus baffled, and instigated by malice and revenge, *they suborned witnesses which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God;* endeavouring by perjury and murder to silence him for ever, whose arguments they felt themselves so utterly unable to answer. *And,* working upon their prejudices and passions, *they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and* in a popular tumult they *came upon him, and caught him,* as a criminal, *and brought him to the council,* as a blasphemer; *and set up false witnesses, which* they had hired, and instructed what to swear against Stephen, who *said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place,* the temple, *and* against *the law. For we have heard him say,* what fully amounts to the charge we produce against him, *that this Jesus,* the contemptible Nazarene who was crucified, *shall destroy this place,* this sacred house, *and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us;* abolishing all the ceremonial institutions of our celebrated lawgiver, and introducing others of his own appointment in their stead.

Such was the charge: which, if real, was far from amounting to blasphemy; and these things actually came to pass; though probably even in this they falsified, as the apostles themselves seem not to have been yet apprized, that the ceremonial law should be utterly abolished; but, whatever he might have said, we may suppose they put upon it the most malicious construction it would bear. *Note,* It is no new thing for the faithful to be branded as blasphemers; and it is only wonderful, that, when the enemies of the gospel make no conscience of an oath, they do not by more frequent perjuries attempt to blacken or destroy those whom they so much abhor.

4. God owned his suffering servant by a signal mark of his favour, visible even to his persecutors. *All that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him,* to observe if he betrayed any tokens of fear or guilt, *saw his face as it had been the face of an angel;* such deliberate courage, such undisturbed serenity, such majesty and mildness sat on his countenance; perhaps a divine splendour beamed from it, like that of Moses when he came from the mount, and seemed to make him appear more than human.

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 33.

In this chapter, we have the martyrdom of Stephen, the first of the noble army of martyrs. Here is his defence of himself before the council. 1. *He shows by going over the history of the Old Testament, that God never intended to confine his favours to that place, or that ceremonial law; and that they had no reason to expect he should; for the people of the Jews had always been a provoking people, and had forfeited the privileges of their peculiarity: Nay, that that holy place and that law were but figures of good things to come, and it was no disparagement at all to them, to say that they must give place to better things,* ver. 1—50. *And then,* 2. *He applies this to them that prosecuted him, and sat in judgment upon him, sharply reproving them for their wickedness, by which they had brought upon themselves the ruin of their place and nation, and then could not bear to hear of it,* ver. 51—53. 3. *The putting of him to death by stoning of him, and his patient, cheerful, pious submission to it,* ver. 54—60.

1. THEN said the high priest, [a] Are these things so? 2. And he said, [b] Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; [c] The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, [d] when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,† 3. And said unto him, [e] Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. 4. [f] Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. 5. [g] And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not *so much as* to set his foot on: [h] yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child. 6. And God spake on this wise, [i] That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years. 7. And [k] the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place. 8. [l] And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so *Abraham* begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac *begat* Jacob; and Jacob *begat* the twelve ‡ patriarchs. 9. ¶ [m] And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, 10. And delivered him

a Ch. 6. 13, 14. Mat. 26. 62.
b Ch. 13. 26. & 22. 1.
c Ps. 29. 3. & 19. 1—5. & 24. 7—10.
d Gen. 11. 28, 31. Josh. 24. 2. Neh. 9. 7.
† It is thought by many that Abraham had two distinct calls: one in Chaldea, and another in Haran.
Before Christ, cir. 1921.
e Gen. 12. 1. & 13. 14. Neh. 8. 7. Rev. 18. 4. Heb. 11. 8.
f Gen. 11. 31. & 12. 4, 5. Josh. 24. 5. Neh. 9. 7. Heb. 11. 8, 9. Is. 41.
g Ps. 105. 12. Deut. 2. 5.
h Gen. 12. 7. & 13. 15, 17. & 15. 7, 18. & 17. 8. & 26. 3. & 28. 13—15. Ps. 105. 8—11. Neh. 9. 7, 8. Exod. 6. 4, 8. Deut. 34. 4.
i Gen. 15. 13. & 50. 24. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Exod. i—v. & 12. 40. Gal. 3. 17.
Before Christ 1911.
k Gen. 15. 13. Exod. vii—xiv. Ps. lxxviii, cv. cxxxv, cxxxvi. ch. 13. 17.
Before Christ 1897.
l Gen. 17. 9, 14. & 21. 2—4. & 25. 26. & 29. 31—35. & 30. 5—24. & 35. 23. & xlvi. Exod. I. 1—4. 1 Chr. I. 34. & 2. 12. Mat. 1. 2.
‡ Fathers of tribes.
m Gen. xxxvii, xxxix—xli. Ps. 105. 17—22. & 34. 19.

Before Christ. 1715.

out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

n Gen. 41. 53—57. Ps. 105. 16.

o Gen. xlii—xlv.

11. [n] Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Charran, and great affliction; and our fathers found no sustenance.

Before Christ. 1706.

12. [o] But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

p Ps. 105. 15. Gen. 45. 9—28.

13. And at the second *time* Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.

q Including his brethren's wives. Gen. 46. 26. Deut. 10. 22.

14. [p] Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to *him*, and all his kindred, [q] threescore and fifteen souls.*

* Here Stephen appears to quote the Greek version. Stephen's expression is, *the kindred of Jacob.*

r Gen. 46. 5. & 49. 33.

15. [r] So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he and our fathers,

s Gen. 23. 6, 20. & 47. 30. & 49. 29. Exod. 13. 19. Joseph and his brethren were buried there.

16. [s] And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that [t] Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor, *the father* of Sychem.

t In Jacob, his grandson. Gen. 33. 19. Josh. 24. 32. Mat. 2. 18. 2 Chr. 1. 8.

Verses 1—16. This noble confessor is now before his judges assembled in full council, with the high priest at their head; all his known, avowed, and inveterate enemies: yet in answer to the high priest's demand, *Are these things so?* he boldly undertakes his defence. The scriptures are the armoury from whence he draws the weapons of his warfare, and we find him a complete master of his subject. Being a Hellenist Jew, he quotes the Septuagint, as the version commonly in use in their synagogues, though containing some variation from the original Hebrew. He begins,

1. With a respectful and affectionate address, entreating their unprejudiced attention; *Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken.*

2. He lays before them a concise view of the patriarchal history, in order that they might remember, that God had a church and people in the world before the law was given, and still would have one when all the ceremonial institutions were abolished.

1. He opens with the call of Abraham, to whom *the God of glory appeared*, in some visible display of his presence, *when he was at Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran*, in an idolatrous land, *and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee:* accordingly he immediately left his country, and removed to Charran, and, after his father's death, receiving a second call, he came into the land of Canaan, and abode there where they now dwelt.

From hence it appeared, that Abraham was in God's favour before he was circumcised, and that God's Shechinah had visited Ur of the Chaldees before it appeared in Canaan; and therefore they might see, that neither the dispensation of the law, nor the land of Israel, were needful for the acceptable worship of God. *Note*, (1.) Though we may not see clearly whither God is leading us, yet, when we have his call, we may confidently go forward. (2.) They who are travelling to the heavenly Canaan, cheerfully turn their backs on earth, with all its allurements.

2. Though God had promised Abraham the land of Canaan, for a possession, and to his seed after him, *when as yet he had no child*, yet he gave him not a foot of land for a present inheritance: nor for four hundred years after, reckoning from the birth of Isaac, did any of his posterity enjoy the promised inheritance, but lived unsettled, and afflicted under the tyranny of strangers, till, at the expiration of the time appointed, God engaged to *judge* their Egyptian oppressors, and to bring them at last to serve him in this place. And this Stephen suggests in order to lower their pride in their original; and from the length of time which elapsed between the promise and the fulfilment of it, as well as from the hardships their fathers endured in the intermediate space, to show them, that the principle object to which the Lord intended to lead them, was the heavenly Canaan, of which this was but the figure; and therefore it could be no blasphemy to say that Jesus would destroy this country, when he promised to bring them to the heavenly Canaan, and the Jerusalem which is above. *Note*, (1.) Though God's promises may be long in their fulfilment, they are sure. (2.) The children of God's love may be, and usually are, called to endure the severest afflictions here. (3.) He will finally avenge them on their oppressors.

3. Having called Abraham to be his servant, God gave him the covenant of circumcision, as a seal of the righteousness of that faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised; and this rite he transmitted to his posterity, circumcising his son Isaac on the eighth day, according to the divine command. And Isaac begat Jacob and the twelve patriarchs, in whom the family of Abraham began to enlarge; yet even then did the same spirit of envy break forth against Joseph, as they who boasted themselves descendants from these patriarchs afterwards showed to Jesus, of whom Joseph was an eminent type, both in his sufferings and exaltation. *The patriarchs, moved with envy, sold him into Egypt: but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions;* and endued him with such wisdom as recommended him to Pharaoh's favour, who constituted him *governor over Egypt, and all his house.* And thus had God exalted his Son Jesus, whom they had brought to the lowest state of ignominy and abasement, to a throne of glory. A dearth, which Joseph had foretold, shortly after drove the brethren of Joseph from Canaan to Egypt, where, through his care, provision had been laid up against the years of famine. There, at the second interview, to the astonishment of his brethren, Joseph made himself known to them; and Pharaoh being acquainted with his kindred, at his desire Joseph invites his father and all his family into Egypt, consisting of seventy-five persons. There Jacob, with the patriarchs, died; and, in the faith of the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, the patriarchs' bones were carried out of Egypt, and *laid in the sepulchre which* Jacob, the grandson of *Abraham, bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.* Thus they might observe, that the land on which they set so high a value was afflicted with famine; that the patriarchs of whom they boasted, all died in a strange country, yet were accepted of God, and died in faith, expecting that heavenly country to which Jesus was appointed to bring all the Israel of God.

17. ¶ [u] But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

u Gen. 15. 13. Exod. 1. 7, 12, 20. Ps. 105. 24.

18. [x] Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

x Exod. 1. 8—22. Ps. 105. 25. & 129. 1—3. Gen. 15. 13.

19. The same dealt subtilely with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

Before Christ. 1574.

y Exod. 2. 2—10. 1 Sam. 16. 12. Heb. 11. 23.

20. [y] In which time Moses was born, and was † exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

† Or *fair to God.*

21. [z] And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for

z Exod. 2. 7. Gen. 22. 14. Deut. 32. 36. Ps. 34. 19.

her own son. 22. [a] And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. 23. And [b] when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. 24. And seeing one *of them* suffer wrong, he defended *him*, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: 25. For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but [c] they understood not. 26. [d] And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, [e] ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? 27. But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, [f] Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? 28. Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday? 29. [g] Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons.*

a 1 Kin. 4. 30. Luke 24. 19.

b Exod. 2. 11—22. Heb. 11. 24—26.

Before Christ. 1531.

c Ps. 106. 7. & 94. 8. 1 Cor. 2. 8, 14. Deut. 29. 4.

d Exod. 2. 13.

e Gen. 13. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 7. Heb. 13. 1.

f Ch. 4. 7. Mat. 21. 23. John 1. 19, 22, 25. & 2. 18.

g Exod. 2. 14—22. & 18. 1—6. Num. 12. 1.

* The attempts which Moses made to deliver Israel, Stephen insists much upon, and it serves as a key to the history, Exod. 2. 11, 15. as does also the faith and self-denial referred to by the apostle, Heb. 11. 24, 26.

Verses 17—29. Stephen proceeds with the history of the Jewish people.

1. *When the time of the promise drew near*, they multiplied exceedingly. Then a new king arose, *which knew not Joseph*, nor remembered what a saviour he had been to the land; but, jealous of the increase of the Israelites, with hellish craft he sought to extirpate them, by a bloody edict to kill all the male children which should be born; whilst, by the most servile and incessant toils and labour, he sought to harass to death their fathers. And thus were they acting against the disciples of Jesus and his infant church; but their subtilty and malice would be equally abortive; the followers of Jesus but increased and multiplied the more.

2. In this state of distress Moses was born, designed of God for their great deliverer; for when God's people are at the last extremity, he is ready gloriously to appear on their behalf. The child was *exceeding fair;* something peculiarly beautiful appeared on his infant countenance. After being concealed three months, he was at last exposed; and so providence ordered it, that Pharaoh's daughter, coming down to the spot to bathe, found the babe, and was so struck with his beauty and tears, that she took and brought him up as her own son, giving him the most accomplished education; so that he was *learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds:* remarkably judicious in his counsel, and eminent for his courage.

Stephen showed hereby, that far from dishonouring Moses, he regarded him with the greatest admiration, and spoke of him with the highest encomiums. He was also an eminent figure of Christ, exposed to like danger in his infancy, and raised up of God to be a greater Saviour to his people.

3. Being arrived at the prime of life, and at the height of grandeur and affluence, moved by a divine impulse, he resolved to leave the court of Pharaoh, and visit his afflicted brethren. And seeing one of them most unjustly abused and beaten, he interposed in his behalf, and slew the Egyptian, as a specimen of that authority with which he was invested, as their appointed deliverer; supposing by this action they would understand what God intended to do for them by his means; *but they understood not. The next day he showed himself* again *unto them as they strove*, and, as a peace-maker, would fain have reconciled the two Hebrews who quarrelled with each other, suggesting their near relation, and how unbecoming it was in them to abuse and fight with one another. But he who was the aggressor, impatient of the rebuke, (as those usually are who are in the wrong,) insultingly rejects his interposition, saying, *Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?* as if he assumed an authority to which he had no title, and upbraids him with what he had done the day before; *Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?* Perceiving hereby the danger in which he was, and the ingratitude and baseness of his brethren, *Moses fled*, lest the fact being published, he should be arrested as a murderer; and taking up his abode in the land of Madian, he spent another forty years there, where he begat two sons.

Now Stephen insinuates it was no new thing with them to reject and ill use their divinely-appointed deliverers. As their fathers perversely shut their eyes against the pretensions of Moses, so had they refused Jesus the prince of glory, who came to deliver them from a worse than Egyptian bondage, even from the tyranny of sin and Satan, and from the power of death and hell.

30. [h] And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an [i] angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. 31. When Moses saw *it*, [k] he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold *it*, [l] the voice of the Lord came unto him, 32. *Saying*, I *am* the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. [m] Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. 33. Then said the Lord to him, [n] Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground. 34. [o] I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. [p] And now come, I will send thee into Egypt. 35. This Moses, whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? [q] the same did God send *to be* a ruler and a deliverer [r] by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. 36. He brought them out, after that he had [s] shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years. 37. ¶ This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, [t] A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, ‡ like unto me; him shall ye hear. 38. [u] This is he that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount

h Exod. 3. 1—10. with 19. 1—3. 1 Kin. 19. 8.

i Exod. 3. 2, 6. Mal. 3. 1. Is. 63. 1, 9. Gen. 48. 16. Deut. 33. 16. Gen. 16. 13. Ps. 66. 12. Is. 43. 2. Deut. 4. 20. Dan. 3. 27. John 1. 14. Zech. 13. 7. Tit. 2. 14.

k Ps. 72. 18. & 111. 2. Jer. 31. 22. Luke 4. 26.

l Gen. 17. 7, 8. Exod. 3. 6. Mat. 22. 32. Heb. 11. 16.

m Exod. 3. 6. Gen. 17. 3. 1 Kin. 19. 13. Is. 6. 2—5. Luke 5. 8. Heb. 12. 21. Dan. 10. 7, 8. Mat. 17. 7. Rev. 1. 17.

n Josh. 5. 15. Exod. 3. 5. Ps. 89. 7. & 86. 9.

o Exod. 3. 7. & 2. 25. Gen. 29. 32. 1 Sam. 9. 16. Ps. 106. 44. Mat. 9. 36.

p Ver. 27. Exod. 3. 10. Ps. 105. 26. & 77. 20. Mic. 6. 4.

q Ps. 75. 7. & 113. 7, 8.

r Num. 20. 16. see ver. 30—32. Heb. 12. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 10. 9.

s Exod. vii—xx. Num. xi, xiv, xvi, xvii, xx. Deut. iv, viii, ix, xi. Ps. lxxviii, cv, cvi, cxxxvi. Neh. ix. Is. 63. 7, 14.

t Deut. 18. 15—19. ch. 3. 22. Mat. 17. 5.

‡ Or *as myself.*

u Josh. 5. 14. Exod. 19. 3, 20. Gal. 3. 17, 19. Heb. 2. 2. ver. 53.

Sina, and *with* our fathers; who received the [x] lively oracles to give unto us: 39. [y] To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust *him* from them, and in their hearts [z] turned back again into Egypt, 40. [a] Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for *as for* this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. 41. And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. 42. [b] Then God turned, and gave them up to worship [c] the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, [d] O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices *by the space of* forty years in the wilderness? 43. Yea, [e] ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I [f] will carry you away beyond Babylon.

x Deut. 32. 47. & 30. 19, 20. 7—10. John 6. 63. & 20. 31. Rom. 3. 2. & 9. 4. Ps. 78. 5—7.

y 2 Chr. 36. 15, 16. Mat. 21. 34, 35. Neh. 9. 16, 26.

z Exod. 14. 11, 12. & 16. 3. & 17. 3. Num. 11. 5. & 14. 1—4.

a Exod. 32. 1—8. & 19. 24. Deut. 9. 12, 16. 2 Kin. 17. 16. Neh. 9. 18. Ps. 106. 19, 20.

b Ps. 81. 11, 12. Is. 66. 4. Hos. 4. 17. Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. 2 Chr. 15. 2. Ezek. 20. 26, 39.

c Deut 4. 19. & 17. 3. 2 Kin. 17. 16. & 21. 3, 6. Jer. 19. 13. Ezek. 8. 16.

d Amos 5. 25—27. Ps. 95. 10.

e 2 Kin. 17. 10, 16, 17. & 16. 3 & 21. 2—6. Jer. 7. 31. & 32. 35. Lev. 20. 2—6. Deut. xiii. & 17. 2—6.

f Amos 5. 27. 2 Kin. 17. 6. & 18. 11.

Verses 30—43. Stephen proceeds in his account of Moses; and, far from speaking aught that could be construed into blasphemy against him, none could ever make more honourable mention of this great lawgiver.

1. At the expiration of forty years, the great Angel of the covenant, who in the fulness of time was to come into the world as God incarnate, in the person of the Man Christ Jesus, appeared to him in a bush, which seemed all on fire, yet remained unconsumed. Struck with astonishment at this strange sight, when Moses approached to take a nearer view, the voice of God was heard from the midst of the bush, saying, *I am the God of thy fathers; the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;* remembering his covenant, and now about to fulfil his promises to their seed after so long a time. The doctrine of a resurrection then, at which the Sadducees were so offended, hath Moses for its voucher; and God hath not limited his presence to the temple, but had here displayed his glory in a wilderness, and that very covenant of promise made unto the fathers, which God spoke of to Moses, Stephen preached, showing its most evident and glorious accomplishment in the spiritual salvation of Jesus; so far was he from contradicting, and much more from blaspheming Moses, as they alleged.

2. Struck with sacred reverence, his eyes fixed on the earth, Moses durst not behold. Then God bids him put his shoes from off his feet, as standing now on holy ground, and gives him his commission. *I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning and am come down to deliver them.* Though God suffer his people to be in distress, he hears their cry, and in his good time will help them. *This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler, and a deliverer, by the hands of the angel which appeared to him in the bush; and* thus had God exalted Jesus, whom they had in like manner rejected to be a Prince and a Saviour.

3. Moses faithfully executed his commission, and *brought them out* from the house of bondage, *after he had showed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.* So highly does he speak of Israel's deliverer; nor was it any derogation from him, that a greater than he should arise, accomplishing a more glorious redemption for them, since of such a one doth Moses himself prophesy.

4. *This is that Moses,* the very person for whose honour they were so jealous was he *which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me;* a new lawgiver, who should introduce another dispensation; or *as me;* as he hath raised up me, so shall there arise another, invested with divine authority and power; *him shall ye hear,* submitting to his word, and obedient to his voice in all things. Far therefore from dishonouring Moses, Stephen shows the accomplishment of his prophecy, and that they ought to testify their real veneration for his memory, by obeying his injunctions, and submitting to that new and spiritual dispensation which Jesus the great prophet came to introduce.

5. Notwithstanding all the services which Moses did them, and all the honour God hath conferred upon him, their fathers had treated him with the highest contempt and ingratitude. *This is he that was in the church in the wilderness,* as their captain and leader, *with the angel,* that uncreated Angel of the covenant; the great Jehovah Jesus, *which spoke to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers,* face to face, as a man talketh to his friend; *who received the lively oracles to give unto us; oracles,* as being of infallible certainty; and *lively,* sharp, and piercing the conscience, or leading those who truly understood them to eternal life. Yet greatly as Moses was honoured of God herein, *our fathers would not obey* him, *but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt;* murmuring and mutinying against him: and at the very time when, as their mediator, he was in the mount with God, sinking into the grossest idolatry, *saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.* So disrespectfully did they speak of their great deliverer. *And* accordingly *they made a calf in those days,* in imitation of the Egyptian god Apis, *and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the work of their own hands.* Instead therefore of charging Stephen with blasphemy, they would do well to remember what their own ancestors had done.

6. For these abominations God was justly provoked. *Then he turned,* withdrew from them his grace and favour, *and gave them up to worship the host of heaven,* leaving them in righteous judgment to their own inventions. In consequence of which they neglected God, and all the newly instituted ordinances, and relapsed, after they came into Canaan, into the grossest idolatry; for which he quotes a prophet's word, whose authority they would not dispute, Amos v. 25—27. *Have ye offered unto me slain beasts, and sacrifices, by the space of forty years in the wilderness?* No: they neglected his worship, and what they offered was to devils, and not to God, Deut. xxxii. 17. so that they themselves disused for forty years those very customs which Moses had delivered to them. And, worse still, *ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch,* the image of this idol enclosed in a shrine; *and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them,* in express contradiction to the commands of God: *and* for this he threatens them with condign punishment; *I will carry you away beyond Babylon,* see 2 Kings xvii. 5—8.

Now, if God dealt thus severely with them for despising Moses' law, of how much sorer punishment than even their ancestors received, would they be counted worthy, for rejecting the dispensation of grace which Jesus, so far greater than Moses, came from God to reveal to them?

44. ¶ Our fathers had [g] the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, [h] that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. 45. [i] Which also our

g Ex. xxv—xxxi, xxxv—xl. Num. iii, iv, vii. & 9. 15—22. & 10. 17, 21. & 16. 19. Josh. 18. 1.

h Exod. 25. 22, 40. & 26. 30. Heb. 8. 5.

i Josh. 3. 11—14. & 16. 1. Judg. 18. 31. 1 Sam. 4. 4. & 7. 2. 2 Sam. vi. 1 Chr. xiv—xvi. 2 Kin. 8. 1—44.

fathers that came after brought in with * Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, [k] whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; 46. Who [l] found favour before God, [m] and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. 47. [n] But Solomon built him an house. 47. Howbeit, [o] the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, 49. [p] Heaven *is* my throne, and earth *is* my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what *is* the place of my rest? 50. [q] Hath not my hand made all these things?

* *i. e.* Joshua.
k Exod. 34. 24. Deut. 4. 38. & 7. 1, 22. Ps. 78. 55. ch. 13. 19.
l Ps. 78. 70, 71. & 89. 19, 20. 1 Sam. 16. 12. 13. Acts 13. 22.
m Ps. 132. 1—5. 2 Sam. 7. 1—5. 1 Chr. 17. 1—4. & 22. 7, 8.
n 1 Kin. v—viii. 2 Chr. ii—vii. 2 Sam. 7. 13. Chr. 17. 32.
o Ch. 17. 24. 1 Kin. 8. 27, 47. Jer. 7. 4.
p Is. 66. 1, 2. Mat. 5. 34. & 23. 22. Ps. 115. 2, 16. Jer. 23. 24. 1 Kin. 8. 27.
q Gen. i. Exod. 20. 11. & 31. 17. Ps. 33. 6. & civ. Jer. 32. 17.

Verses 44—50. The accusation lodged against Stephen was for speaking against the temple, as if that was blasphemous; whereas he shows, that their fathers worshipped God acceptably for ages before any temple was built.

1. It was not till they came into *the wilderness*, that *the tabernacle of witness* was reared, according to the model which God showed to Moses on the mount. God accepted his faithful worshippers before there was any tabernacle; and they might again serve him as acceptably, if *the holy place*, the temple, was destroyed; and the very care shown in the making of this tent according to the divine model, intimated that it was a shadow of good things to come, being typical of the incarnation of the Son of God, and of his spiritual and gracious presence in his church.

2. This tabernacle Joshua brought into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before him; and if it was set up in that polluted land of Canaan, why might not God now erect his spiritual tabernacle among the nations of the heathen?

3. Till David's time God was pleased to dwell in this mean and moveable tent, above four hundred years: and when David was desirous to build a temple for the Lord, he forbade him, reserving that honour for Solomon, who *built him an house*. It appeared therefore evident, that God was not solicitous to have a temple for his abode, as if that was necessary for their acceptable worship; and also, that if Solomon might change the tabernacle for a temple, God might no doubt, if he pleased, destroy that, and make his abode in his spiritual temple, the church of the redeemed.

4. Though God ordered the erection of the tabernacle, and the building of the temple, it could not be conceived, that his immensity could be circumscribed by these narrow bounds, when, as the prophet, Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. had observed, *Heaven is his throne, and earth is his footstool.* No house made with hands can then be comparable to that glorious temple the universe, which himself hath reared: nor can he need a place to repose himself, when all things and creatures whatever are the work of his hands. Therefore it was no disparagement to the temple to affirm, that Jesus should destroy this temple, and set up another, into which all nations should flow together, and their worship be acceptable to him.

51. ¶ [r] Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always [s] resist the Holy Ghost: [t] as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye. 52. [u] Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the [x] Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53. [y] Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and [z] have not kept *it*.

r Exod. 33. 3. & 32. 9. & 34. 9. Deut. 9. 6. & 10. 16. Neh. 9. 16. Jer. 6. 10. & 7. 26. & 9. 25, 26. Ezek. 44. 9. Is. 48. 4. Zech. 7. 11, 12. Lev. 26. 41.
s Luke 7. 30. ch. 6. 10.
t Ver. 9, 25, 37, 40, 41. Ps. 78. 8. & 21. 34—39. & 22. 6. 1 Thes. 2. 15. ch. 2. 3. & 3. 13—15. & 4. 10, 27. & 5. 30.
u 2 Chr. 36. 16. Neh. 9. 26. Mat. 5. 12. & 23. 31, 34, 37.
x Ch. 3. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Heb. 7. 26. 1 John 2. 1.
y Exod. xix, xx. Gal. 3. 19. Heb. 2. 2. Deut. 33. 2. Ps. 68. 17.
z 2 Kin. 17. 8—23. Is. i, v, lix, &c. Ezek. xvi, xx, xxii, xxiii.

Verses 51—53. Probably Stephen was proceeding to show, that the temple and its service must come to an end, but perceiving the rage that fired the bosoms of his enemies sparkling in their eyes, and expecting soon to be interrupted, he closes with a word of piercing application.

1. He charged them with their obstinacy and stubbornness, like unto their fathers. *Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears;* in profession God's servants, but hardened in pride and prejudice against the clearest intimations of his will; *ye do always resist the Holy Ghost;* rejecting the evidence of his miracles, wilfully blind to the clearest prophecies, and fighting against the convictions of your own consciences. *As your fathers did, so do ye;* refusing to hearken unto us the inspired servants of Jesus, as they turned a deaf ear to the warnings of the prophets; and just is it in God to devote those to ruin, who will not hearken to his admonitions, but obstinately harden their hearts.

2. They were persecutors and murderers, like their fathers. *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?* more or less reviling or opposing them: *and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One,* the Divine Messiah, Jesus, the Holy One of God, sent to bring in an everlasting righteousness, by his perfect obedience in the sinner's stead, *of whom ye,* treading closely in your ancestors' steps, and exceeding them in wickedness, *have been now the betrayers and murderers.*

3. They had rejected God's word, as their fathers before them, *who have received the law,* delivered in the most august manner, *by the disposition of angels,* whose ministry God employed on mount Sinai, when in shining ranks they graced that solemnity, as attendants on the King of Glory; *and have not kept it;* have, like them, broken its most essential precepts, and added to all their guilt the rejection of the gospel also, notwithstanding all the glorious evidence wherewith it hath been attended; and how then can ye hope to escape the vengeance of an offended God?

54. ¶ When they heard these things, they were [a] cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with *their* teeth. 55. But he, being [b] full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw [c] the glory of God, and Jesus [d] standing on the right hand of God, 56. And said, Behold, I see [e] the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57. [f] Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58. [g] And cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him:* and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. 59. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God,* and saying, [h] Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, [i] lay not this sin to their

a Ch. 5. 33. & 13. 45. & 22. 22, 23. Prov. 2. 4, 5.
b Ch. 4. 8, 31. & 6. 5, 8, 10.
c Is. vi. Ezek. i, x. Rev. iv, v. Mat. 3. 16. ch. 10. 11. Dan. 7. 13. Mark 16. 19.
d Heb. 9. 24. & 7. 25. & 1. 3. & 4. 14. & 8. 1. Ps. 109. 31. & 110. 1, 5.
e Ezek. 1. 1. Mat. 3. 16. ch. 10. 11.
f See ver. 54. Prov. 27. 4, 5. ch. 13. 45. & 14. 5. & 22. 22, 23. Mat. 27. 22—25.
g Lev. 24. 14, 16. Deut. 13. 9. & 17. 5, 7. 1 Kin. 21. 10, 13. Luke 4. 29. ch. 6. 11. & 22. 20. Heb. 13. 12, 13.
h Ps. 31, 5. Luke 23. 46.
i Mat. 5. 44. Luke 6. 28. & 23. 34. Is. 53. 6, 12.

charge. And when he had said this, he fell [k] asleep.

k Mat. 9. 24. John 11. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 6. 18, 20. 1 Thes. 4. 13, 14. Rev. 14. 13.

Verses 54—60. We have here the glorious and triumphant death of the first Christian martyr.

1. *When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart,* so filled were they with envy, indignation, and malice, as if sawn asunder; *and they gnashed upon him with their teeth,* as if they would have devoured him alive. *Note,* Wicked men carry their hell about with them, in those diabolical tempers and raging passions, which make them their own tormentors.

2. Stephen, unterrified with their malice, and *being full of the Holy Ghost,* receiving an abundant increase of grace and consolation suited to his present condition, *looking up stedfastly into heaven;* appealing to God, confidently expecting divine support, and eagerly longing after that crown of glory that now shone bright in his view, and enabled him to look down with contempt upon the malice of his enemies; *and,* by a miraculous manifestation, *saw the glory of God,* some visible emblem of the eternal Majesty, such as the Shechinah, *and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,* in his human nature as mediator, exalted to the highest honour and dignity, appearing as the advocate of his suffering saint, to strengthen him boldly to resist unto blood, to crown him with martyrdom, and shortly to avenge him of his bloody persecutors. Transported with his beatific vision, he *said,* with wonder and delight, *Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God. Note,* (1.) In times of suffering, our eyes should be lifted up to heaven, for from thence cometh our help. (2.) As our tribulations for Christ abound, he is pleased, by the most gracious manifestation of himself, to cause our consolations to abound also. (3.) A sight of Jesus, at the right hand of God, will carry us triumphantly through death, armed with all its terrors, and enable us to defy the stroke.

3. Concluding now that they had full cause for his condemnation, *They cried with a loud voice,* to drown his speech, to express their detestation of what they heard, and sharpen each others' fury; *and stopped their ears,* as if shocked at his blasphemy, *and ran upon him with one accord;* the whole multitude of the people rising in tumultuous rage: *and cast him out of the city,* as a wretch not fit to live, and who defiled that holy place where he stood, *and stoned him,* as a blasphemer, Lev. xxiv. 16. *and the witnesses,* whose hands were first upon him, Deut. xvii. 6, 7. *laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul,* a fiery zealot, who with pleasure saw the bloody execution of this holy martyr. *Note,* (1.) The cause of Christ is often run down with clamour, and rage supplies the place of reason. (2.) Many of the dearest saints upon earth have been counted as the offscouring of all things, and thought unworthy of the air they breathed.

4. *They stoned Stephen, calling upon God;* though cast out from earth, as unworthy to live, he had a sure interest in heaven, *saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit; and,* now ready to expire, *he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice,* expressive of the vehemence of his desire, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,* copying closely his divine Master's example; *and when he had said this, he fell asleep,* as these words dropped from his lips, the mortal blow reached him, and in the arms of everlasting love he sweetly rested from suffering and sorrow for ever. *Note,* (1.) In a dying hour, we cannot be better employed than in commending our souls into the arms of Jesus. (2.) If our immortal part be safe, it little matters what becomes of the fleshly tabernacle. (3.) Jesus is very God, the object of his people's adoration; and as by faith in him we can only live comfortably, so by an eye to him, as the resurrection and the life, we can die happily. (4.) Our bitterest persecutors must share our prayers; and the more wicked they are, the more they need them. (5.) When we come to die, it will be essential to our own comfort, that we are truly in charity with all men. (6.) Death to a believer is but a sleep, reposing a while in that bed of dust where our Lord hath lain, his voice shall wake us up in the resurrection morn, and we shall arise to share with him the triumphs of that eternal day, *when our sun shall no more go down, nor our moon withdraw itself, but the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and our God our glory.*

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 34.

We have here, 1. *The persecution of the church,* ver. 1—3. 2. *Its enlargement by Philip's preaching at Samaria,* ver. 4—13. 3. *Peter and John confirm the disciples there, and rebuke Simon Magus,* ver. 14—25. 4. *Philip, by divine direction, preaches to converts, and baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch,* ver. 26—38. 5. *He returns,* ver. 39, 40.

1. AND [a] Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was [b] a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem:* and [c] they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2. And [d] devout men carried Stephen *to his burial,* and made great lamentation over him. 3. [e] As for Saul, he make havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed *them* to prison.

a Ch. 7. 58. & 22. 20. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
b Ch. 7. 58. & 26. 10. & 9. 14.
* Tacitus, who lived at this period, notices this fact.
c i. e. the preachers. Ver. 4, 14. ch. 11. 19.
d Ch. 2. 5, 42, 26. Gen. 50. 10. & 23. 8. John 11. 31. 2 Sam. 3. 31.
e Ch. 7. 58. & 9. 1, 2, 11, 18, 21. & 22. 3, 4, 19, 20. & 26. 9, 12. Gal. 1. 13, 23. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Phil. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13.

Verses 1—3. We are here told,

1. The pleasure and satisfaction Saul took in seeing the first martyr bleed. He not only consented to the deed, but, as the word signifies, feasted his eyes with the shocking spectacle, in hopes such sharp methods would soon put a stop to the progress of that gospel which he abhorred.

2. The chief priests and rulers determined to pursue their blow, and whilst the fury of the people lasted, severely persecuted the church at Jerusalem, so that the preachers, who were the great objects of enmity, were forced to withdraw, and disperse themselves through Judea and Samaria, except the apostles, who still continued at Jerusalem, and were preserved safe from the rage of their blood-thirsty enemies.

3. Stephen's friends, *devout men,* eminent for their piety, dared, notwithstanding the danger to which they were exposed, to gather up his broken remains, and *carried him to his burial;* and though they could not but rejoice in his triumphant death, they bewailed their own and the church's loss, deprived of so able an advocate for the cause of Christ. *Note,* (1.) The departure of the eminent servants of Jesus demands a tear; though it be their gain, it is our loss, and we should weep for ourselves. (2.) The corpse is honourable in which a heavenly spirit hath dwelt, and should be decently laid in the dust, in sure and certain confidence of a glorious resurrection, when it shall awake in brighter array.

4. *Saul,* the envenomed foe to the Christian name, a fiery zealot, the fittest tool the priests could have chosen for their service, *made havoc of the church,* persecuting them even unto death, as he owns, (Acts xxii. 4.) *entering into every house,* and, sparing neither age nor sex, *haling men and women, committed them to prison.* To such low and dirty work doth enmity against the gospel lead a man of note, a gentleman, a scholar; as if every mark of contempt and cruelty to a Christian was meritorious and commendable.

4. Therefore they that were scattered abroad [f] went every where preaching the word. 5. Then [g] Philip went down to [h] the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. 6. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 7. [i] For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed *with them:* and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. 8. [k] And there was great joy in that city. 9. ¶ But [l] there was a certain man called Simon,† which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: 10. [m] To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. 11. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had [n] bewitched them with sorceries. 12. [o] But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13. Then Simon himself [p] believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the [q] miracles and signs which were done.

[f] Mat. 10. 23. ch. 11. 19. & xiii. xiv, xvi—xix. Mat. 5. 15, 16. 1 Cor. 14. 31. Mark 16. 15.

[g] Ch. 6. 5. & 21. 8. with ver. 1, 14, 15.

[h] John iv. Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 42. 1—, with Mat. 10. 5, 6.

[i] Mat. 10. 1. Luke 10. 17. Mark 16. 17. John 14. 12. Heb. 2. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 12.

[k] Is. 24. 14—16. & 42. 10—12. & xxxv, xl, liv, lx. ch. 13. 48. Rom. 15. 9—12. Ps. 19. 8. cxvii.

[l] Ver. 11. ch. 5. 36. & 13. 6, 8. Exod. 7. 11. 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10. Rev. 13. 13, 14.

† Josephus mentions Simon, a native of Cyprus, a pretender to magic.

[m] Rev. 13. 3, 13, 14. Ps. 81. 11, 12. Rom. 1. 28.

[n] Deut. 18. 10—12. Is. 8. 19. & 2. 6. & 47. 9, 12. & 44. 25.

[o] Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15, 16. ver. 36, 37. ch. 1. 3. & 16. 15. 1 John 5. 4.

[p] Ver. 21. Ps. 106. 12, 13. & 78. 35—38. Jam. 2. 19.

[q] Ch. 2. 22. ver. 7. Mark 16. 17. John 14. 12. & 2. 23. & 10. 38.

Verses 4—13. The attempt to extinguish and suppress the rising flame of Christianity, served but the more to spread the sacred fire. *They that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word;* not hiding themselves in corners, or seeking concealment by their silence; but publishing throughout the country the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ. Philip, the second of the deacons, and now the first since Stephen had finished his glorious course, was among the chief of these dispersed evangelists.

1. He went *down to the city of Samaria,* to the metropolis of the country, which was either Samaria, or, as some think, Sychar, or Shechem, where Jesus had been formerly, (John iv. 5.) *and preached Christ unto them.* As a herald he publicly proclaimed his name, as exalted to the throne of glory, and invited all to come and share the blessings of his happy government: and this must be our constant theme, Christ crucified, glorified.

2. Great was the success that attended his labours. *The people with one accord,* in general, *gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke;* showing the most serious attention to his discourses, *hearing and seeing the miracles which he did,* in proof of his divine mission, and of the gospel of Jesus which he declared unto them. Miracles of the most stupendous nature, such as dispossessing unclean spirits, who with the utmost rage exclaimed at the power they could not withstand; curing the paralytic, and restoring the use of their limbs to the lame, when all human help was desperate. *And there was great joy in that city:* the people transported beheld these amazing works of divine power and grace, and rejoiced in the glad news of pardon and salvation preached to them through the Redeemer. *Note,* (1.) So far as the gospel effectually reaches the heart, Satan's power is broken, and his kingdom of uncleanness within is destroyed. (2.) The grace of God cures the moral impotence of our fallen nature, and enables the lame man to leap like a hart, and the paralytic soul to arise and run the way of God's commandments. (3.) The great things which make for our everlasting peace, deserve our most serious attention: and the more we attend unto them, the more shall we consult our own happiness. (4.) True religion will make none melancholy; but wherever the gospel is known and believed, there the soul will taste the sweetest and most substantial joy.

3. What made the success of the gospel in this place still more extraordinary, was the delusion under which the people had lain, through the feats of a certain sorcerer named Simon, who had *bewitched the people of Samaria,* astonishing them with his magic arts and diabolical illusions; *giving out that himself was some great one,* the great God himself, or, as others suppose, the expected Messiah; and such was the influence which his pretended miracles had on the minds of the people, that *they all gave heed* unto him, *from the least to the greatest,* high and low, young and old, *saying, This man is the great power of God;* as if he was endued with almighty power, equal to the great God himself; so strangely had he for a considerable time *bewitched them with his sorceries.*

4. Before the gospel word the kingdom of Satan fell. *When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God,* the blessings and privileges, the doctrines and ordinances of it, *and the name of Jesus Christ,* as the great Saviour of lost sinners, the head of his church, the author of all mercies here, and glorious hopes hereafter; they gladly embraced his salvation, abandoned the impostor Simon, and by baptism made open profession of their faith in Jesus, *both men and women. Note,* (1.) They who are most bewitched by Satan's sorceries, and the power of sin, are not beyond the recovering influence of the Redeemer's grace. (2.) When we truly believe in Jesus, we shall openly and boldly profess him before men.

5. Even Simon the magician himself was so astonished at the real miracles and signs which Philip wrought, that he *believed also;* so far at least, as to make outward profession of Christ as the true Messiah, and to desire, and be admitted to baptism in his name. *Note,* (1.) They who have been most atrociously wicked, when they make profession of repentance and conversion to God, are to be received cordially into the church, notwithstanding all that is past. (2.) Though many hypocrites may and do join themselves with God's people, yet we must leave men's hearts to the searcher of hearts, and judge of others with all candour and charity, till they give evident proofs of their unfaithfulness.

14. ¶ Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they [r] sent unto them Peter and John: 15. Who, when they were come down, [s] prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16. [t] For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17. [u] Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. 18. ¶ And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he [x] offered them money, 19. Saying, [y] Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands,

[r] 1 Thes. 3. 2. ch. 13. 2—4. & 11. 22.

[s] Mat. 7. 7, 11. John 14. 13, 14. & 16. 23, 24. Luke 11. 13. ch. 2. 38.

[t] Mat. 28. 19. ch. 2. 38. & 19. 2, 5. & 10. 48.

[u] Mat. 19. 15. ch. 19. 6. & 6. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 6. Heb. 6. 2.

[x] 1 Sam. 9. 7. 2 Kin. 5. 5, 15, 16. & 8. 9.

[y] Ver. 9—11.

he may receive the Holy Ghost. 20. But Peter said unto him, [z] Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. 21. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for [a] thy heart is not right in the sight of God.* 22. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if [b] perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. 23. For I perceive that thou art in the [c] gall of bitterness, and *in* the bond of iniquity. 24. Then answered Simon, and said, [d] Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. 25. And they, when they had [e] testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

z Ch. 15. 10. & 20. 33. Mat. 10. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 5, 6. 2 Kin. 5. 16, 26, 27.

a Ps. 78. 37, 38. Jer. 17. 9. Rom. 8. 7, 8. Mat. 6. 22, 23. 2 Tim. 3. 5.

* Thou art immersed in wickedness of the vilest sort, and fast bound in the chains of sin and of Satan.

b Dan. 4. 27. Amos 5. 15 Joel 2. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 25. Is. 55. 7. Jer. 4. 14.

c Deut. 29. 18. & 32. 32 Heb. 12. 15. Rom. 8. 7, 8. Prov. 5. 25. Tit. 3. 3. Is. 28. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 5.

d Exod. 8. 8. & 10. 17. Num. 21. 7. 1 Kin. 13. 6.

e John 15. 27. ch. 1. 8. & 20 21. & 28. 23, 31. & 18. 5. & 26. 22, 23. 1 Pet. 5. 12.

Verses 14—25. The glad tidings soon reached Jerusalem of the happy progress of the gospel at Samaria; and the apostles for the furtherance of the blessed work, despatched two of their body, Peter and John, immediately, to confirm the disciples, and communicate unto them those extraordinary gifts which the apostles alone could confer. We have,

1. The success of their journey. *They prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost*, in his miraculous gifts, and be set on a level with the Jewish converts; *for as yet he had fallen upon none of them*, though they had experienced his illuminating, sanctifying, and comforting influence upon their souls, in consequence of which they *had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*; yet they had not, by any visible appearance of the Holy Ghost, received the gifts of tongues, or prophecy, or the power to work miracles. But when the apostles had prayed, and were assured of an answer to their requests, *then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost*, in some visible manner, at least many of them, on whom the apostles laid their hands; and probably ordained them to the ministry of the word, for which they were thus more eminently qualified. *Note*, Though we may not expect miraculous powers, yet the same Holy Ghost, in all his gracious influences, is still given in answer to the prayer of faith.

2. Simon's hypocrisy on this occasion appeared. *When he saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given*, he was vastly ambitious of possessing the same apostolic power, and thought he could well reimburse himself any expense, could he but obtain it; therefore, supposing their views mercenary as his own, *he offered them money, saying, Give me this power also, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost*; thus discovering both his ambition and avarice, and showing the rottenness of his heart, notwithstanding his pretended conversion.

3. Peter, with abhorrence, rejects the proposal, and denounces his doom. *Thy money perish with thee*; thou and it must perish together, if in this temper of mind thou abidest; as for us, we detest thy mercenary offer, *because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money*; an imagination as absurdly foolish as impiously wicked. *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter*; art neither a partaker of the gifts nor graces of the Spirit, and as yet an alien from the kingdom of grace, and destitute of the hope of glory; *for thy heart is not right in the sight of God?* but under the specious profession of Christianity, lurks the foulest hypocrisy. *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness*, so great and aggravated, if yet repentance may be given; *and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*, and there be a possibility of pardon. *For I perceive* by this proposal, *that thou art in the gall of bitterness*; in a state of unregeneracy, under the dominion of the most abhorred corruptions, *and in the bond of iniquity*; enslaved by Satan and sin; and, as a criminal carrying to execution, exposed to the severest vengeance of an offended God. *Note*, (1.) The fatal bait of money, how many souls hath it plunged into perdition and destruction! (2.) Where the heart is not right with God, though a *form* of godliness may conceal the hypocrisy from men, there is one that seeth and judgeth. (3.) Sin is the odious thing which renders the soul abominable to God; and when it breaks forth in an apostate, justly exposes his character to the detestation of all good men. (4.) They who are now held in bonds of iniquity, may assuredly expect to be bound over to everlasting shame and punishment. (5.) The vilest of sinners must not be abandoned, but still invited to repentance and prayer; whilst there is life, there is hope.

4. Simon, terrified at this dire commination and reproof, entreats their prayers for him; not so much that his heart might be renewed, as that the threatened vengeance might be averted: and that is a sure sign of an unhumbled spirit, when it is more affected with the dread of suffering, than with the evil of sin.

5. The apostles *when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord*, confirming and establishing the faith of the disciples at Samaria, *returned to Jerusalem*, to give an account to their brethren of their proceedings and success; *and*, in their way, they *preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans*, improving every stage of their journey, and taking every opportunity of publishing the great salvation of their master Jesus. Let us imitate such worthy examples, preaching the word *in season*, and, as some may think, *out of season*.

26. ¶ And [f] the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto [g] Gaza, which is desert. 27. And he arose and went: and, behold, [h] a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and [i] had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28. Was returning, and, sitting in his chariot, [k] read Esaias the prophet. 29. [l] Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot. 30. And Philip [m] ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, † and said, [n] Understandest thou what thou readest? 31. And he said, [o] How can I, except some man should guide me? and he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. 32. The place of the scripture which he read was this, [p] He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth: 33. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his genera-

f Heb. 1. 14. Ps. 91. 11.

g On the southwest of Canaan. Josh. 15. 47. & 13. 3. Judg. 16. 1. Zech. 9. 5.

h Ps. 68. 31. & 87. 4. Is. 18. 7. & 43. 6. Zeph. 3. 10.

i Ps. 68. 29. 1 Kin. 8. 41. John 12. 20. Is. 56. 6—8.

k Deut. 6. 6, 7. Col. 3. 16. John 5. 39. ch. 17. 11.

l Ch. 16. 6, 7. Prov. 3. 5, 6.

m Eccl. 9. 10. Rom. 12. 11. John 4. 34. Ps. 119. 32.

† It appears that it was the Greek version of the Septuagint that he was reading.

n Mat. 15. 10, 17. & 16. 9, 11. & 13. 23. John 5. 39.

o Ps. 73, 22. Prov. 30. 2, 3. Rom. 10. 14. Mal. 2. 7. Prov. 2. 2, 3, 5.

p Ps. 53. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 2. 21—24. & 3. 18. Phil. 2. 7, 8. Heb. 2. 9, 10. & 5. 8. Mat. xxvi, xxvii. Mark xiv, xv. Luke xxii, xxiii. John xviii, xix.

tion? for his life is taken from the earth.
34. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, [q] of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? 35. Then Philip opened his mouth, and [r] began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 36. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; [s] what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37. And Philip said, [t] If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, [u] I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they [x] went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord [y] caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way [z] rejoicing. 40. But Philip was found at [a] Azotus:* and passing through he preached [b] in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.†

q Deut. 17. 9. Mat. 2. 4. Mark 4. 10. Mal. 2. 7.

r Luke 24. 27, 44. ch. 28. 23. & 26. 22, 23. & 10. 43. 2 Cor. 1. 20. Col. 2. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 2. 2.

s Ch. 10. 47.

t Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15, 16. Rom. 10. 10. ch. 2. 38, 39. ver. 12.

u 1 Pet. 3. 15. Rom. 10. 10. Mat. 16. 16. John 6. 69. & 11. 27. & 9. 35—38. ch. 9. 20. 1 John 4. 15. & 5. 5.

x Mat. 3. 16.

y 1 Kin. 18. 12. 2 Kin. 2. 16. Ezek. 3. 12, 14. & 8. 3. & 11. 24.

z Rom. 5. 2, 11. Is. 61. 10. & 45. 25.

a Ashdod. Josh. 13. 3. Zech. 9. 6.

* The *Ashdod* of the Old Testament, Josh. 15. 47.

b Mat. 9. 37. Rom. 15. 19. ch. 10. 1. & 21. 8. & 23. 23, 33. & 25. 4.

† In Palestine, formerly called Strato's Tower.

Verses 26—40. We have here the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch, by whom it was generally supposed Christianity was first planted in that country, and the Scripture fulfilled, Psal. lxviii. 30.

1. Philip who continued still at Samaria, is directed by an angel to depart thence, and *go towards the south, unto the way that goeth from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert.* *And*, immediately obedient to the heavenly call, *he arose and went.* *Note*, Though we see not at first the reasons on which God's providential disposition of us is founded, yet when we bow to his command, we shall see cause to acknowledge his wisdom and goodness.

2. He there met a man of singular distinction, *an Ethiopian*, an inhabitant of Africa, *a eunuch*; either really such, they being formerly often preferred to the first offices of state; or this may signify his station at the court, as the word is used of Potiphar, Gen. xxxix. 1. being a man *of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure*, a post of distinguished eminence, *and had come to Jerusalem for to worship*; either being a Jew, or a proselyte to their religion. *Note*, God hath taken some of all nations, and all ranks, to be to the praise of the glory of his grace.

3. Philip receives an intimation from the Holy Spirit, to *go near, and join himself to this chariot*, where he found him reading aloud the prophet Esaias, perhaps the portions which he had heard expounded at Jerusalem; where, though he must have heard of Christ and his apostles, yet he seems to have paid no regard to them, and was returning attached as much as ever to the Jewish religion. *Note*, (1.) The Lord by strange providences, often brings about great events: even when we travel on the road, we know not what good may be done, though among strangers, if we had but the heart to speak a word for Christ. (2.) The Scriptures should be much in our hands; they are the best companion on our journeys, and will supply matter for the choicest meditation. (3.) It is no evil for men of station and affluence to ride in their chariots, if that, as well as every other gift, be sanctified by the word of God and by prayer.

4. Philip hearing him read the prophet Esaias, puts a question to him of great moment, and which we should often put to ourselves, when perusing the sacred oracles, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* His reply was singularly humble; far from taking the question ill, though from a stranger on foot, and meanly dressed, he answers with the most modest acknowledgment of his own poor attainments, *How can I, except some man should guide me?* and, willing to be instructed, and glad to embrace every opportunity of increasing his knowledge of these blessed prophecies, *he desired Philip*, who appeared to be intelligent in these matters, *to come up* into the chariot, *and sit with him*, well judging that the honour he did the evangelist, would be abundantly repaid by the instructions he should receive. *Note*, (1.) To show a teachable spirit, is the surest way to become wise unto salvation. (2.) The Scriptures, especially the prophecies, are many of them hard to be understood; and we should therefore call in the assistance of good men, and good books, to assist our inquiries; and above all, look up to the Spirit of wisdom for an enlightened understanding.

5. This illustrious Ethiopian having seated him in the chariot, inquires of Philip the meaning of the passage he had been reading, Isa. liii. 7, 8. where, according to the Septuagint version, it was written, *He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth*; the Ethiopian therefore begs Philip to inform him, of whom the prophet in this passage speaks, *of himself, or of some other man?* Hereupon *Philip opened his mouth, and*, glad of so fair an opening, *began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus*, the great subject of the prophecy. He was *the sheep led to the slaughter*, willingly offering himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people; silent *before his shearer as a lamb*, neither upbraiding nor threatening, but meek and patient under all the indignities shown him; he humbled himself to the lowest state, to the life of a servant, and the death of a slave: *his judgment was taken away*; he was treated in the most unjust and cruel manner, hurried from one judgment-seat to another; and, though confessedly innocent, executed as the vilest of malefactors: *and who shall declare his generation?* the wickedness and impiety of the men of that age in which he suffered these things; *for his life is taken from the earth*, and by wicked hands he was crucified and slain, cut off as a criminal unworthy to live. Yet God raised him from the dead, exalted him to his right hand, in token of his fullest approbation: and having accepted his sacrifice for the sins of his people, hath given power to his ministers to preach remission of sins to all nations; and to admit those who professed faith in him to baptism, as the initiatory ordinance into his church.

6. Convinced of the truth by Philip's discourse, he embraced the gospel of Jesus, which the evangelist preached; and *as they went on their way*, Philip opening the truth at large, and the eunuch attentively listening, *they came unto a certain water*, when, desirous to make open profession of his faith by baptism, if Philip had no objection, he humbly proposes it, that he might be baptized. *Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart* the great truths on which I have been discoursing, trusting on Jesus alone for pardon, righteousness, and salvation, and willing to yield thyself to his government and service, *thou mayest. He answered, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, the divine, all-sufficient, and promised Saviour, the true Messiah, God incarnate. Satisfied with his confession of his faith, Philip consents to his proposal; and the eunuch ordering his chariot to stop, *they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.* *Note*, (1.) Nothing affects the consciences of men like the preaching of a crucified Jesus. (2.) Faith is

not a mere speculative assent to gospel truths, but the embracing with the heart a salvation suited to the case of a lost sinner. (3.) No man can truly say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Spirit of God; and the real knowledge of this truth secures eternal life.

7. Philip and the eunuch are parted as miraculously as they were brought together. *When they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more;* and this miracle served to bear testimony to his doctrine, *and he went on his way rejoicing* in Christ Jesus, with whose salvation he was now become acquainted, and happy in the hope of carrying the glad tidings to his countrymen. *But Philip was found at Azotus*, or Ashdod, upwards of thirty miles from Gaza: *and passing through, he preached* as he travelled, *in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea*, where afterwards, it seems, he chiefly took up his abode, Acts xx. 8.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 34.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The famous story of St Paul's conversion.* (1.) *His awakening call as he went to Damascus,* ver. 1—9. (2.) *How he was baptized by Ananias,* ver. 10—19. (3.) *How he immediately preached the faith of Christ,* ver. 20—22. (4.) *How he was persecuted and narrowly escaped with his life,* ver. 23—25. (5.) *How he was admitted among the brethren at Jerusalem, how he preached and was persecuted there,* ver. 26—30. (6.) *The rest and quietness which the churches enjoyed for some time after this,* ver. 31. 2. *The cure wrought by Peter on Eneas, who had long been laid up of palsy,* ver. 32—35. 3. *The raising of Tabitha from death to life at the prayer of Peter,* ver. 36—44.

1. AND [a] Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2. And desired of him [b] letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of [c] this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. 3. [d] And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5. And he said, [f] Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: [g] *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6. And he, trembling and astonished, said, [h] Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, [i] hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: [k] but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus. 9. And he was three days [l] without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

[a] Ch. 8. 3. ver. 13, 21. ch. 25. 4, 5, 19, 20. & 26. 9—12. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Ps. 27. 12.

[b] Esth. 3. 12. ch. 26. 12. & 22. 5. ver. 14.

[c] Ch. 19. 9, 23. & 28. 22. The phrase means *of this religion.* Thus, *the way of the Lord*, means the whole of the worship due to and prescribed by him. The Jewish writers designate the whole doctrines and practice of Christianity by a similar expression, viz. *the way, doctrine, or sect of the Christians.*

[d] Ezek. 10. 6. ch. 22. 6—16. & 26. 13—20. ver. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 8. 2 Cor. 12. 2.

[e] Is. 63. 9. Mat. 25. 45. 1 Cor. 12. 12. Eph. 5. 30.

[f] 1 Sam. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 13.

[g] Job 9. 4. & 40. 2. Is. 45. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 22. Luke 20. 8. ch. 5 39.

[h] Ch. 2. 37. & 16. 4, 30. Luke 3. 10. Rom. 7. 9. Ps. 94. 12.

[i] Dan. 10. 7 ch. 22. 9. & 26. 13, 14.

[k] 2 Kin. 6. 19. ch. 13. 11.

[l] 1 Cor. 3. 18, 19. ver. 8, 11, 12. Gal. 1. 12, 15, 16. 2 Cor. 12. 2.

Verses 1—9. Saul, the bloody persecutor of the church, again appears, but henceforward to support a very different character. His Hebrew name, *Saul*, signifies *desired;* his Roman name, *Paul, little.* He was by birth a Cilician, of the city of Tarsus; sprung from the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; skilled deeply in Grecian literature, as well as Jewish theology; brought up under the greatest masters of the time: a fiery zealot for the law; a man of rank, though a tent-maker, (it being a custom with the Jews to instruct all those who were bred scholars, in some handicraft trade,) and a Roman, born a freeman of that city. His conversion, which holds so distinguished a place in the records of Christianity, happened about a year after our Lord's ascension. We are here told, in conformity with the former account given of him,

1. With what rage he persecuted the disciples of Jesus. *He yet breathed out threatenings and slaughter;* not satiated with the blood of martyrs, which he had shed, his fury grasped at the utter extirpation of the Christian name; determined to intimidate them from their profession, to drive them to blaspheme, or murder the obstinately faithful. For this end, not content with the mischief he had done at Jerusalem, he pursued them to other cities; and *desired,* and obtained, *letters from the high priest* and the *whole estate of the elders,* Acts xxii. 5. empowering him to act in their name at Damascus; and if in the synagogue there be found any *of this way,* favourers of this new religion, Christianity, *whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem,* to be tried and punished by their spiritual court, the Sanhedrim. Thus was Saul employed when the Lord stopped him in his mad career. Let us admire the wonders of grace, and never despair of the chief of sinners.

2. God marvellously arrests him in the midst of his mad career. He was now arrived near the place of his destination, and already, in imagination, triumphed in the havoc he should make: but how far are God's ways above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts! When sinners are driving to the height of wickedness, he is sometimes pleased to magnify his power and grace, in bending their iron necks to his yoke. *As he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven,* brighter than the meridian sun, the dazzling lustre of which quite overpowered him; and the presence of Jesus in his glory filled him with such amazement *and* confusion, that *he fell on the earth,* unable to stand on his feet: or, being more probably on horseback, he was struck down, as with a blast of lightning. *Note,* Those whom God designs for eminent usefulness, he sometimes exercises with the deepest terrors and distress, and lays them in the lowest pit of humiliation.

3. Christ having seized him as his prisoner, addresses him out of the glorious light which shone around him. *He heard a voice saying, Saul, Saul;* Christ speaks with vehemence, as to one who stood on the precipice of ruin, insensible of his danger; and with fervent compassion, as desirous to snatch him from instant ruin: *why persecutest thou me?* with daring impiety lifting thy rebel arm against the Almighty: with black ingratitude thus returning the love of him who died to redeem thee; with cruel enmity persecuting those who never injured thee; and in them, my people, striking at me their Lord and Master. *Note,* (1.) When Christ comes with his Spirit, convincing the soul of sin, he brings the matter home to the conscience, and the sinner hears him say, Thou art the man. (2.) The Lord resents the insults shown to his people, as injuries done to himself.

4. The affrighted criminal, now cited to answer at the bar of this justly offended Redeemer, with terror replies, *Who art thou, Lord?* desirous to be acquainted with him, whose heavenly voice he heard: *And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest;* that name thou hast so often blasphemed, and against whom thou art now acting with such envenomed malice and enmity; *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks;* as absurd and self-

destructive must these attempts against my church and people prove, as with the naked foot to kick against a sharp iron goad. *Trembling and astonished*, Saul inquires, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* A flood of light now broke in upon his soul, his sins, in all their aggravations, rose up to his view: the dreadful consequences he had justly to apprehend from the wrath of an offended Saviour, stared him in the face, and made him willing now to do and suffer any thing, if he may escape the vengeance which he hath provoked: he earnestly begs information, if yet there may be hope of mercy, pardon, and salvation. And the Lord said unto him, *Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do;* he leaves him for a while to ruminate in darkness on the past, yet with some gracious hope of hearing farther from him; for he might well conclude, that had Christ intended to destroy him, he would not thus have spared and spoken to him. *Note*, (1.) They who rebel against the convictions of their conscience, the warnings of God's word, and the calls of God's ministers, will pierce themselves through with many sorrows. (2.) When God's Spirit sets a man's sins in array before him, and opens his eyes to see the flaming gulf on the brink of which he stands, no marvel if horror and a terrible dread seize upon him; and like Belshazzar, his knees smite against each other. (3.) Our terrors of conscience must not drive us from Christ, but to him: inquiring into his will; and what hope of salvation remains for us. Let not the greatest sinner add despair to all his crimes. (4.) Though the Lord may not give present ease, or relief, to the troubled conscience, yet we must wait his leisure, and be found at his feet, where never miserable soul yet perished.

5. Saul's fellow-travellers, the guards, sent to assist him in executing the high priest's and Sanhedrim's commission, *stood speechless*, when risen from the ground, to which they had been struck down; *hearing a voice*, some tremendous sound like thunder: or words, the meaning of which they did not understand: *and* though they heard Saul speak, *seeing no man*, to whom he addressed himself.

6. *Saul* himself *arose from the earth* at Christ's bidding; and now opening his eyelids, his sightless eyeballs no longer met the light of day; he is taken off from the view of outward objects, that he might turn his thoughts more intensely to what appears within. Thus blind, his companions *led him by the hand, and brought him to Damascus*, a spectacle of wretchedness; where he purposed, a few moments before, in pomp to make his entry; so soon can God change the sinner's mirth into mourning, and humble his pride in the dust. *Three days and nights* he continued dark in his body, and probably under deeper distress and darkness in his soul; *and he neither did eat nor drink:* his troubled mind destroyed all relish for food, and in fasting and prayer he spent these three melancholy days, the most fearful hours that he ever knew.

10. ¶ [m] And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias;* and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. 11. And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called [n] Saul of Tarsus: for, [o] behold, he prayeth, 12. [p] And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, [q] how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14. And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that [r] call on thy name. 15. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way; for [s] he is a chosen vessel† unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16. [t] For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17. [u] And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and, putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and [x] be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18. [y] And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. 19. [z] And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. 20. [a] And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. 21. But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said, [b] Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? 22. But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, [c] proving that this is very Christ.

m Ch. 22. 12. Num. 12. 6. 1 Sam. 3. 9, 10.

* An opinion has prevailed in the Greek church that this Ananias was one of the seventy-two disciples, and that he was martyred.

n Ch. 21. 9. & 22. 3. & 11. 25.

o Is. 55. 6. Luke 18. 13. Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15. & 32. 6. Dan. 9. 20.

p Num. 12. 6. Dan. 9. 21.

q Ch. 8. 3. ver. 1, 2. ch. 22. 3—5. & 26. 9—12. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15.

r Ver. 21. ch. 22. 16. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Rom. 10. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 2.

s Ch. 13. 2. Rom. 1. 1, 5, 9. Gal. 1. 15. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11. & 2. 20. ch. 22. 21. & 26. 17—20. Rom. 11. 13. & 15. 16, 19. Eph. 3. 8. ch. xii, xxvi. & 21. 11.

† The word, though literally signifying *a vessel*, is used also to signify any kind of instrument or means by which an act is done.

t Ch. 20. 22, 23. & 23. 11. & 21. 11. 2 Cor. 11. 23.

u Ch. 22. 12—16. ver. 3, 10. ch. 8. 17. Mat. 19. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 8.

x Ch. 8. 15. & 2. 4, 33. & 4. 31. & 6. 3, 5, 8, 10. & 1. 4, 5, 8.

y Ver. 8. Gal. 1. 15, 16. 2 Cor. 3. 14. & 4. 6.

z Mark 5. 43. 1 Kin. 19. 7. Ps. 104. 15.

a Gal. 1. 15, 16, 23. ch. 26. 19—23. & 8. 37. Phil. 3. 7—9. 1 Cor. 2. 2. & 15. 10.

b Mat. 13. 54, 55. 1 Sam. 10. 11. Gal. 1. 13, 23, 24. ch. 8. 1. ver. 1, 2, 13, 14.

c Luke 24. 25—27, 44. ch. 18. 28. Heb. 1—x.

Verses 10—22. The Lord now returns to visit the distressed, afflicted Saul, for he will not leave those to despair whom he casts down with convictions.

1. The Lord in a vision speaks to a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; who with ready attention and obedience attends his orders. He bids him *Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one Saul of Tarsus*, a person of distinguished name; *for, behold*, an astonishing change is passed upon him, humbled in the dust *he prayeth, and hath*, in answer to his prayer, *seen in a vision a man named Ananias, coming in, and putting his hands on him, that he might receive his sight;* he being therefore the person pointed out for this service, must go without delay. *Note*, (1.) God sees the distresses of the afflicted, he also will hear their cry, and will help them. (2.) The moment a soul is truly turned to God, this evidence of spiritual life will immediately appear, *behold, he prayeth.* Those who are prayerless, are evidently yet dead in trespasses and sins. (3.) When Christ calls us to his service, we should with delight and readiness answer, Here am I.

2. Ananias at first objects to go, but is quickly satisfied. The well known character of Saul made him apprehensive of danger, should he put himself within the reach of such a bigoted perse-

cutor, who had not only done so much evil at Jerusalem, but had come to Damascus armed, with the chief priests' commission, to bind all that called on the name of Jesus, and carry them as criminals to Jerusalem. But Christ silences his objections; *the Lord said unto him, Go thy way*, there is no danger; *for he is a chosen vessel unto me*, appointed to distinguished honour and eminent usefulness; *to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel*, preaching that faith he once destroyed. *For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake*, and will enable him to endure the most severe persecutions; and at last, in testimony of the truth of his mission, to seal it with his blood. *Note*, (1.) All God's people are elect vessels, though some are chosen to more distinguished honour and usefulness than others. (2.) They who embark in Christ's cause, especially as ministers of his gospel, must prepare for the cross, and learn to endure hardness, as good soldiers.

3. Ananias hereupon immediately obeys; and entering the house where Saul lodged, *and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul*, now adopted into the family of God, a child of grace, an heir of glory with us, and henceforward associated into the ministry of the gospel, *the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest*, and struck thee with blindness, *hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy* bodily *sight*, the emblem of the happier illumination of thy soul with the light of truth; *and* that thou mightest *be filled with the Holy Ghost*, with his miraculous gifts, as well as the most abundant measure of his grace, in order to qualify thee for the great and glorious service to which thou art appointed. *Note*, (1.) When God is pleased to work a change on the vilest, we must with open arms receive them as our brethren. (2.) Where the Lord wounds, he will heal.

4. No sooner had Ananias spoken, than the cure was wrought. The scales fell from his eyes, *he received sight forthwith, and he arose, and was baptized*; openly making profession of that faith which he now most heartily embraced. No longer the blind Pharisee, but the enlightened Christian: delivered from the horrible darkness of terrifying guilt, and rejoicing in the Sun of Righteousness arisen upon him with healing in his wings.

5. Behold the fierce persecutor instantly commencing a faithful preacher. Having refreshed himself with proper food after so long a fast, he was strengthened in body, as well as soul; *then* he joined the faithful disciples of Jesus at Damascus; and, instead of the threatenings he lately breathed against them, he was united with them in the closest bonds of Christian communion; appeared openly among them, and immediately *preached Christ in the synagogue, that he is the Son of God*, the true Messiah, to the astonishment of all who heard him; for knowing his past conduct, and the intention of his journey thither, they could not but stand amazed at this wondrous change. But far from being ashamed of the apostasy with which some reproached him, or dubious about the merits of that cause which his former Jewish friends so decried, and still with bitterness opposed, *Saul increased the more in strength*, supernaturally taught and strengthened, and daily growing more bold and zealous in defence of that faith which he had embraced, pleaded the cause of Jesus against every gainsayer, and *confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ*, by such irrefragable arguments as left them nothing to reply. *Note*, (1.) Christ is the glorious subject, on which his faithful ministers delight to dwell. (2.) It justly excites astonishment, and serves for a fresh confirmation of the truth of the gospel, when bitter opposers, by the power of divine grace, appear advocates for the cause which they once decried.

23. ¶ And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews [d] took counsel to kill him: 24. [e] But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. 25. [*] Then the disciples took him by night, and let *him* down by the wall in a basket.* 26. ¶ And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, [f] he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. 27. But [g] Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the [h] apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached [i] boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. 28. And he was with them [k] coming in and going out at Jerusalem. 29. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the [m] Grecians: but they went about to slay him. 30. *Which* when the brethren knew, [n] they brought him down to Cesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus. 31. [o] Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

d Mat. 10. 16—23. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. John 16. 3. & 11. 47—57.

e 2 Cor. 11. 32, 33. Josh. 2. 15, 16. 1 Sam. 19. 12.

* Favoured probably by a house built against or upon the wall, through a window on which they thus lowered him in a basket.

f Ch. 22. 17. Gal. 1. 18. Mat. 10. 17.

g Ch. 4. 36. & 11. 22, 25. & xiii. xiv. xv. Gal. 2. 9, 13.

h Gal. 1. 18, 19.

i Ch. 4. 13. Eph. 6. 19, 20. ver. 20, 22.

k Num. 27. 17, 21. Ps. 121. 8. ch. 1. 21.

l Ch. 6. 10. & 4. 13. & 18. 22. Eph. 6. 19, 20. ver. 20, 22.

m Jews who used the Greek tongue. Ch. 6. 1. & 11. 20. And perhaps John 12. 20.

n Mat. 10. 23. ch. 13. 50, 51. & 14. 6. & 17. 10.

o Ch. 2. 41—47. & 4. 4, 31—34. & 6. 7. & 12. 24. Rom. 14. 17. Prov. 16. 7. Ps. 119. 165.

Verses 23—31. The transactions here recorded happened three years after the foregoing; during which, the apostle went into Arabia, preaching to the Jews who were settled in that country, and then returned again to Damascus, Gal. i. 15, 18. where we find,

1. The narrow escape he had out of the jaws of his envenomed persecutors. Enraged at his apostasy from them, as they regarded it, and unable to bear the powerful energy of his discourses, inculcating the glorious truths of the gospel, they resolved to despatch him; and having gained the governor to their side, they watched the gates day and night in order to murder him: but vain is the malice of the wicked against those whom the Lord will protect; their scheme was discovered either by some friend, or by revelation: and the brethren, in order to elude the vigilance of those bloody minded persecutors, let the apostle *down by the wall in a basket by night*, and so he escaped. *Note*, If we are for the Lord's sake brought into the greatest straits and temptations, he is still able to make a way for us to escape.

2. He proceeded to Jerusalem; and there he met new difficulties. See Gal. i. 18.

(1.) From the brethren themselves. He immediately *assayed to join himself to the disciples*; his former noble friends he had now forsaken, and wished to be admitted among the poor and persecuted disciples of Jesus; *but they were at first afraid of him*, not having heard about him probably during the three years he was in Arabia, *and believed not that he was a disciple*; knowing his past enmity, they suspected his present conversion might be feigned. Caution is needful; we should be well acquainted with those whom we admit into our communion, lest they be wolves in sheep's clothing: *believe not every spirit*. But Barnabas, who had received full information concerning Paul's case, soon satisfied the minds of the disciples; and bringing Paul to the apostles James and Peter, who alone were then at Jerusalem, he told them all the circumstances of his extraordinary conversion, and his approved fidelity and zealous labours ever since, particularly

at Damascus. Hereupon they gladly gave him the right hand of fellowship, and he appeared publicly among the disciples, going in and out with them, joining them in their worshipping assemblies, *and spoke boldly in the name of Jesus.* They who have so good a cause, may well courageously appear in defence of it; Christ's service will bear us out.

(2.) From the Jews. The Hellenists, who were most bigoted to Judaism, encountered him, and he *disputed* with them with such evidence, power, and demonstration, that, unable to stand before the force of his arguments, they determined to silence him by the sword. Therefore, after a short abode of fifteen days at Jerusalem, having received a revelation from God, directing him in his labours, Acts xxii. 17, 18. and the brethren being solicitous for his safety, he was brought by them as far as Cesarea, and from thence was sent to Tarsus, his native city, where he continued preaching the gospel, till Barnabas joined him, chap. xi. 25. *Note,* (1.) It is a sure sign of a bad cause, where recourse is had to violence instead of argument. (2.) Whatever plots the wicked contrive against the ministers of truth, the Lord will take care of them till they have finished their testimony.

3. *Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria;* Paul being removed, the flames of persecution, which were again kindled, abated: and a little respite was a great mercy to them, after they had been so harassed by their foes: nor did they fail to improve it; *they were edified* in knowledge and faith, enjoying more quietly the means of grace, and assembling more undisturbed: *and walking in the fear of God,* a filial, reverential fear, which made them circumspect and holy in all manner of conversation, *and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost,* enjoying much of his light, love, and consolations, *were multiplied;* increasing in numbers, and growing in grace. *Note,* They who walk most nearly and humbly with God, will enjoy most of the comforts of his Spirit.

* Of Saul, we hear no more till ch. 11. 30. which is supposed to have been about five years after this time.

32. ¶ And it came to pass, as Peter* passed throughout all *quarters,* he came down also to [p] the saints which dwelt at Lydda.† 33. And there he found a certain man named Eneas, which had kept his bed [q] eight years, and was sick of the palsy. 34. And Peter said unto him, Eneas, [r] Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. [s] And he arose immediately. 35. [t] And all that dwelt in Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

p Gal. 2. 7—9.
† See note on ver. 38.
q Ch. 3. 2. & 4. 22. John 5. 5. & 9. 2, 21. Luke 13. 16. Mark 9. 17, 21. & 5. 25.
r Ch. 3. 6, 12, 16. & 4. 10. John 5. 8. Mat. 9. 6.
s See ch. 3. 7. Mark 1. 31, 42. ver. 40. ch. 14. 8—10. John 14. 12.
t Luke 7. 16. ch. 4. 4. & 5. 12—14.

Verses 32—35. The historian for a while leaves Paul to his labours, and returns to relate the ministry of Peter.

1. He travelled about to visit the churches which had been planted, to confirm the disciples, and ordain ministers among them; and among other places, *he came down to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. Note,* They who are called to be Christians, are by their very profession saints, separated from the world, and devoted to God.

2. Peter there performed a notable miracle, which is here recorded. A man whose name was Eneas, had lain bedridden eight years, through the palsy, and all possibility of a cure by human means was despaired of; but when the apostle saw him, he said, *Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed;* instantly the cure was wrought, and the man arose restored to perfect health and strength. *Note,* (1.) By nature we are absolutely impotent to all good, and no man can afford us the least relief. (2.) Christ is the great physician: he can cure those whose state is the most deplorable and desperate. (3.) When he speaks to the soul, power accompanies his word, and we are enabled to rise from the bed of spiritual weakness and impotence, by the mighty power of his grace.

3. Great was the effect produced by this miracle. The people of Lydda and Saron in general, convinced of the divine power evident in the cure, *turned to the Lord,* and made profession of Christianity; and then was the Scripture eminently fulfilled which said, *They should see the glory of the Lord, and become a fold of flocks,* Isa. xxxv. 2. lxv. 10.

Cir. 37.

36. ¶ Now there was at [u] Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called ‡ Dorcas: this woman was [x] full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. 37. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an [y] upper chamber. 38. And forasmuch as Lydda ‖ was nigh to [z] Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he would not § delay to come to them. 39. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him [a] weeping, and shewing [b] the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. 40. [c] But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and, turning *him* to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. 41. And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up: and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42. [d] And it was known throughout all Joppa: and many believed in the Lord. 43. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in [e] Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

u Josh. 19. 46. 2 Chr. 2. 16. Ezra 3. 7. Jon. 1. 3. ch. 10. 5.
‡ *Doe,* or *Roe.*
x Ch. 10. 4. Prov. 31. 31. Jam. 1. 27. Tit. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 5. 10.
y Ch. 1. 13. & 20. 8. Mark 14. 15.
‖ Lydda was a town in the tribe of Ephraim, almost on the border of Judea, and about 10 leagues from Jerusalem. It was afterwards known by the name of Diospolis.
z Josh. 19. 46. 2 Chr. 2. 16. see ver. 36, 43.
§ Or *be grieved.*
a Ch. 8. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 13. Gen. 50. 10. & 23. 2. John 11. 31. 2 Sam. 3. 31.
b Ver. 36. Prov. 10. 7. & 31. 31.
c 1 Kin. 17. 19—23. 2 Kin. 4. 32—36. Mark 5. 40—43. Mat. 9. 25. ch. 7. 60.
d See ver. 35. John 2. 11. & 14. 12.
e A noted sea-port on the west of Canaan. Josh. 19. 46. 2 Chr. 2. 16. Ezra 3. 7. Jon. 1. 3. ch. 10. 5, 6, 32.

Verses 36—43. Another, and a still greater miracle is here wrought, in confirmation of the divine authority under which Peter acted. We have,

1. The sickness and death of an excellent woman, whose name was *Tabitha;* in Greek, *Dorcas,* or a Doe; she was an inhabitant of Joppa, and adorned the profession of Christianity which she made; being full *of good works,* the genuine proofs of the truth of the faith she possessed, *and of alms-deeds, which she did;* not only bestowing her substance liberally to the necessitous, but labouring with her hands, that she might be more extensive in her beneficence; for real Christians will show the fruits of grace; their works will speak their praise. In the midst of her useful life it pleased God to cut her off; she fell sick and died. From the ravages of mortality the best have no exemption; and according to their custom they had now washed the body, and laid it out for interment.

2. The disciples at Joppa, who heard of Peter's being so near as Lydda, and of the miracle he had there wrought, sent two of their number to him, informing him of the present afflictive pro-

vidence, and entreating him to come to them and comfort them under their grief; and probably with some expectations, that he might yet restore to life their departed sister.

3. Peter without delay complied with their request; and when he came, found the body laid out in the upper chamber, and the widows lamenting their loss of such a bountiful friend; showing the coats and garments, which perhaps they then wore, the tokens of her charity, diligence, and pity to the poor, whilst she was with them. *Note,* (1.) The fatherless and widows are peculiar objects of compassion; to them the hand of charity should be liberally stretched forth. (2.) Though they who are truly charitable will ever be silent, and desire no commendation or return; yet those who reap the blessings of their bounty, ought not to be so; gratitude, at least, is the tribute which they owe.

4. Peter, who, following his Master's example, Mat. ix. 25. declined all appearance of vain-glory, put forth the company; and after kneeling down and praying, he turned to the body and said, *Tabitha, arise,* in the full confidence of the power which accompanied his word; and immediately opening her eyes, which had been closed in death, when *she saw Peter, she sat up:* and Peter, giving her his hand, assisted her to rise from the bier where she lay, and calling the widows, *presented her alive,* to their great astonishment and joy.

5. The fame of the miracle quickly spread through Joppa, and was in every body's mouth; and many, struck with the evidence of God's approbation of the doctrine which Peter preached, *believed in the Lord,* and made public profession of his gospel. Encouraged by such a prospect of success, the apostle made some considerable abode in that place, lodging in the house of *one Simon a tanner;* satisfied with any accommodation, and only intent upon preaching the gospel of his adored Lord and Master.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 41.

The Gentiles here begin to be admitted into the church. 1. *Cornelius is directed by a vision to send for Peter, and did send for him accordingly,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Peter is directed by a vision to go to Cornelius, though he was a Gentile,* ver. 9—23. 3. *The happy interview between Peter and Cornelius at Cesarea,* ver. 24—33. 4. *The sermon Peter preached in the house of Cornelius to him and to his friends,* ver. 34—43. 5. *The baptizing of Cornelius and his friends with the Holy Ghost first, and then with water,* ver. 44—48.

1. THERE [a] was a certain man in Cesarea called Cornelius, a [b] centurion of the band called the Italian *band,* 2. [c] *A* devout *man,* and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. 3. [d] He saw in a vision evidently, about the * ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. 4. And when he looked on him, [e] he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are [f] come up for a memorial before God. 5. [g] And now send men to Joppa, and call for *one* Simon, whose surname is Peter: 6. [h] He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. 7. And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier† of them that waited on him continually; 8. And when he had declared all *these* things unto them, [i] he sent them to Joppa.

† We do not find that it was then, even among the Romans, considered a disgrace for a military officer to teach his men lessons of morality and piety, whatever it may be in some Christian countries now. — *A. Clarke.*

i Eccl. 9. 10. Ps. 119. 59, 60. ver. 33. ch. 11. 12.

a Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 42. 1, 6. 7. Mat. 2. 1, 11. & 8. 5—11. & 15. 22—28 John iv. & 12. 20. & 10. 16.

b Captain of a hundred soldiers. Mat. 8. 5. & 27. 54. ch. 23. 17, 23. & 27. 1.

c Ch. 2. 5. & 22. 12. Gen. 18. 19. Josh. 24. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 17. ver. 4, 22, 30, 35.

d Dan. 9. 21. ver. 30. Heb. 1. 14. Ps. 91. 11. & 34. 7.

* Three o'clock, afternoon.

e Mat. 28. 4, 5. Rev. 1. 17. ch. 7. 32.

f Ps. 141. 2. Heb. 13. 16. Rev. 8. 3. ver. 31. Phil. 4. 18.

g Ver. 32. Rom. 10. 14—17.

h Ch. 9. 43. & 11. 13, 14. ver 22, 32.

Verses 1—8. The gospel had for about seven years been preached to Jews only, and the apostles as yet seem not to be fully apprized of the extent of their commission. But now a door of faith is opened to the Gentiles, and Peter is first sent expressly to preach the gospel to them. We have an account,

1. Of Cornelius, the first-fruits of the Gentiles unto Christ. He was a centurion, captain over a hundred soldiers, belonging to the regiment or band called *the Italian,* in garrison at Cesarea; and though arms were his profession, and from a Gentile nothing good could well be expected, yet he was singularly *devout,* having abandoned the idolatry in which he was bred, and become a proselyte of righteousness, worshipping and fearing *God with all his house,* who were influenced by his pious example; a man of distinguished liberality, who *gave much alms to the people,* Jews or Gentiles, who appeared truly necessitous; *and prayed to God alway,* observing the Jewish stated hours of prayer. *Note,* (1.) It is no disparagement to a soldier to be found upon his knees: he who truly fears God, will be most ready to fight and die for his country. (2.) Where the master of a family fears God, we may be assured his house will be a house of prayer. (3.) Charity is the inseparable attendant on a gracious character; whilst a niggard's hand and heart prove the total absence of vital godliness.

2. An angel appears to Cornelius as he was at prayer, about three o'clock in the afternoon, at the time of the evening oblation. Affrighted with this celestial visitant, the centurion with deepest reverence desires to know the purport of his coming, fearing lest he brought some message of evil. But the angel soon quieted his fears, and said unto him, *Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God;* are graciously accepted as the genuine fruits of thy faith and love, according to the measures of light thou hast received. *And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter; he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side; he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.* Cornelius seems already to have been a proselyte, and to have been living in the faith of the promised Messiah, according to the prophecies; but as yet he had not heard him preached as actually become incarnate, and this was most needful for him to know, according to the present dispensation of grace, in order to his salvation. And to put an honour on the gospel ministry, the angel gives him no farther information, but refers him to the divinely appointed ministers of the word.

3. No sooner was the angel departed, than immediately Cornelius called two of *his household servants, and a devout soldier that waited on him continually,* who being truly religious, like his master, was always kept near his person. To these he related his extraordinary vision, and ordered them early in the morning to proceed to Joppa, and telling Peter the occasion, to desire he would return with them to Cesarea. *Note,* They who are truly godly themselves, delight to have those near them as servants who are partakers of the same grace.

9. ¶ On the morrow, as they went on [k] their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, [k] Peter went up upon the house-top [l] to pray about the [l] sixth hour: 10.

k Ch. 11. 5—10. Mat. 6. 6. 1 Tim. 2. 8. Ps. 55. 17. Eph. 6. 19.

l Mid-day. Mat. 20. 5. & 27. 45. Ps. 55. 17.

And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but, while they made ready, he fell into [m] a trance, 11. And saw [n] heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been [o] a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12. Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 13. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.* 14. But Peter said, [p] Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. 15. And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time, [q] What God hath cleansed,† *that* call not thou common. 16. This was done [r] thrice: [s] and the vessel was received up again into heaven. 17. ¶ Now, while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men [t] which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, 18. And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. 19. While Peter thought on [u] the vision, [x] the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. 20. [y] Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them.

m Num. 24. 4. Rev. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 12. 1, 2, 4.

n Ch. 7. 56. Ezek. 1. 1. Rev. 4. 2, 3, &c. & 19. 11. Mat. 3. 16.

o Mat. 8. 11. Is. 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 45. 22. & 11. 6—10. & 55. 1—7. & liv, lx. Rom. 15. 8—19. 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. Mat. 13—47. Rev. 22. 17. John 6. 37. Rom. 1. 16. & 3. 22, 29, 30.

* Or, *sacrifice* and *eat.* Dr Clarke considers this meaning may well be preserved here.

p Rom. 10. 2. with Lev. 11. 4—31. & 20. 25. Deut xiv. Ezek. 4. 14. & 44. 31.

q Mat. 15. 11. ver. 28, 34. ch. 11. 9. & 15. 9. Rom. 14. 14, 17, 20. 1 Tim. 4. 4 Tit. 1. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 25. Luke 11. 41.

† Or, *what God hath declared clean.*

r John 13. 38. & 21. 17.

s Mat. 8. 11. Eph. 3. 6—8. & 2. 4—22. Rev. 5. 9. & 7. 9.

t Ver. 9—16.

u Ver. 10—16.

x Ch. 11. 12. & 16. 6, 7. & 21. 4. John 16. 13.

y Ch. 15. 7. Mark 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Eph. 3. 8.

Verses 9—20. The servants of Cornelius departing early in quest of Peter, the Lord prepares him to give them a welcome reception. He, like his countrymen, was still prejudiced against the Gentiles, and thought all familiar communion with them was unlawful: the Lord therefore in a marvellous way is pleased to overrule these prepossessions.

1. A vision appears to him when he went up to the top of the house to pray, where he might be most retired, just before the servants of Cornelius arrived. It was noon; and whilst he was thus devoutly engaged, *he became very hungry and would have eaten: but while they made ready* some refreshment for him, *he fell into a trance;* a supernatural ecstasy came upon him, *and* to show him the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles into the church, whom he had been used to regard as persons unclean, *he saw heaven opened,* in token of some farther revelation of God's will now about to be made to him; *and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein,* suitably to his present hungry situation, there *were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air; and there came a voice to him,* saying, *Rise, Peter; kill and eat,* without distinction of clean or unclean. Peter, though hungry, objected to the proposal, *Not so, Lord:* he could not think of transgressing the ceremonial law; *for,* saith he, *I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.* The voice *a second time* addressed him, saying, *What God hath cleansed that call not thou common.* He who first commanded a distinction of meats, had a right to abrogate it again if he pleased; and as he had taken the Jews for his peculiar people, he might also bring the Gentiles to share the blessings of the same gracious covenant: and as this was now his purpose, Peter might safely eat whatever was set before him, and go and converse with, and preach to the Gentiles, without fear of pollution. *This was done thrice,* to show the certainty of the vision, and engage his attention to it, *and the vessel was received up again into heaven.*

2. The vision soon receives an explication. Peter was now seriously considering, but at a loss to know what this vision meant; and just then the men whom Cornelius had sent were at the door inquiring for him. The Spirit therefore gives him an intimation what messengers waited for him below, and, though they were Gentiles, bid him go with them, *doubting nothing* of the unlawfulness of being in their company, for they were divinely sent by his orders. *Note,* Whilst we are in simplicity desiring in our difficulties to know God's will, he will by some gracious intimations direct us aright.

21. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius, and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what *is* the cause wherefore ye are come? 22. And they said, [z] Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. 23. Then called he them in, and lodged *them.* [a] And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. 24. And the morrow after they entered into Cesarea: and Cornelius waited for them, [b] and had called together his kinsmen and near friends. 25. ¶ And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and [c] worshipped *him.* 26. [d] But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up: I myself also am a man. ‡ 27. And as he talked with him, ‖ he went in, and found [e] many that were come together. 28. And he said unto them, Ye know [f] how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me [g] that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29. Therefore came I *unto you* without gainsaying, [h] as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? 30. And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was [i] fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in [k] bright clothing, 31. [l] And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight

z Ver. 2—5.

a Ch. 9. 42. & 11. 12.

b John 4. 28, 29. Josh. 24. 15. Mat. 9. 10. Mark 5. 19, 20.

c Rev. 19. 10. & 22. 3.

d Ch. 14. 14, 15. Rev. 14. 10. & 19. 10. & 22. 9. Mat. 4. 10. Acts 14. 13—15.

‡ "I am not an *angel;* I am come to you simply on the part of God, to deliver to you the doctrine of eternal life."—*A. Clarke.*

‖ Cornelius had met Peter at some short distance from his house, and they conversed together till they went in. — *A. Clarke.*

e Ver. 24.

f Ch. 11. 3. Gal. 2. 12, 15. John 4. 9, 27. & 18. 28.

g Ver. 15. ch. 11. 9. & 15. 8, 9. Eph. 3. 6.

h Ps. 119. 60. Gal. 1. 16. Eccl. 9. 10.

i Ezra 9. 4, 5. Dan 9. 20. ver. 3. ch. 3. 1.

k Mat. 28. 3. Mark 16. 5. Luke 24. 4. ch. 1. 10. ver. 3.

l Ver. 4—6.

of God. 32. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter: he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea side; who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. 33. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God,* [m] to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

* Some MSS. and versions read, *before thee.* The people were all waiting for the preacher, and every heart was filled with expectation. — *A. Clarke.*

m Ch. 22. 22. Is. 42. 23. & 49. 1. & 55. 3. Rom. 10. 14—17. Rev. 2. 7, 11. Ps. 85. 8. Heb. 3. 7, 8.

Verses 21—33. Peter, having received full satisfaction, went down without delay to the messengers.

1. Having told them he was the person whom they sought, he desired to be informed of the cause of their coming: and *they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man,* eminent for his probity and integrity among men, *and one that feareth God,* though a Gentile, a worshipper of the God of Israel, *and of good report among all the nation of the Jews,* who respect his amiable and exemplary character, *was warned of God by a holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee* concerning the things that make for his everlasting peace.

2. Peter courteously hereupon received and lodged the messengers that night, *and on the morrow went away with them for Cesarea,* accompanied by certain brethren from Joppa, who might desire to be present at this interview, or more probably went at Peter's request, that they might be witnesses for him, if at any time he should be blamed by his Jewish brethren for visiting a Gentile family. *Note,* (1.) It becomes ministers, and all Christians to be hospitable. (2.) When there is danger that our conduct may be censured, or our conversation misrepresented, it is prudent to have witnesses for what passes, to whom we can appeal.

3. The second day, in the afternoon, Peter and the messengers entered Cesarea, where Cornelius with eager expectation waited his arrival, having called *his kinsmen and near friends* to share with him the blessing of Peter's discourse. *Note,* The greatest kindness we can show our friends, is to invite them to partake with us our spiritual mercies, and to join in our religious exercises.

4. Cornelius received the apostle with deepest reverence and respect, and paid him honour which Peter thought excessive; he fell at his feet as he entered the house, and *worshipped* him, prostrate before him, as if he had been the mightiest potentate. But the apostle, too humble and modest to accept such profound admiration, *took him up,* and would not suffer him to stay in that posture, *saying, Stand up, I myself am also a man,* a poor sinful worm, though honoured with this office of apostleship. And thereupon familiarly conversing with him, he entered into the house, where a number of persons were assembled, desirous to hear Peter's words, and affording him a larger field of usefulness, than he might have expected. *Note,* It is a great encouragement to speak, where we meet a large and attentive audience.

5. Peter inquires the cause wherefore Cornelius sent for him, saying to him and the company, *Ye know that it is unlawful,* and looked upon as an abominable thing, *for one that is a Jew,* as I am, *to keep company or come unto one of another nation* in any way of familiar intercourse. *But,* though I long thought so, *God hath* of late *showed me, that I should not call any man common or unclean,* on account of his being of a different nation. Obedient *therefore* to the admonition of God, *came I unto you, without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for;* perfectly persuaded of his will in this matter. *I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?* that I may be able suitably to improve the present opportunity, to God's glory and for your good.

6. Cornelius relates the late occurrences which occasioned the present meeting. *Four days ago I was fasting unto this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house,* when the evening sacrifice was offering, the usual hour of prayer; *and behold,* in answer to my requests for divine direction and guidance, *a man stood before me in bright clothing,* an angel in a human form; *and,* addressing me, *said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God: send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon, a tanner, by the sea-side, who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee,* and give the direction thou art seeking. *Immediately therefore,* without delay, *I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come;* we regard it as a singular kindness done to us, and doubt not but it will be highly pleasing to God. *Now therefore are we all here present before God;* met in his fear, hoping for his mercy, and expecting his special presence and blessing, seriously disposed to hear, and desirous to embrace and obey, *all things that are commanded thee of God,* whom we with all reverence receive as a messenger expressly sent from him to lead us in the way of salvation. *Note,* (1.) The gospel then comes with effect, when those who sit under it show solemn attention and seriousness, receiving it not as the word of man, but as the word of God. (2.) They who are sincere with God, desire to hear and know *all* his will; not merely what he promises, but what he commands, however displeasing it may be to flesh and blood.

34. ¶ Then Peter [n] opened *his* mouth, and said, [o] Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35. [p] But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. 36. [q] The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; (he [r] is Lord of all;) 37. That word, *I say,* ye know, [s] which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38. How [t] God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who [u] went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for [x] God was with him. 39. And [y] we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom [z] they slew and hanged on a tree: 40. Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; 41. [a] Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. 42. [b] And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he [c] which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. 43. [d] To him give all the prophets witness,

n Mat. 5. 2. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Job 3. 1, 2.
o Deut. 10. 17. Job 34. 19. Gal. 2. 6. Eph. 6. 9. Rom. 2. 11. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Col. 3. 11.
p Ch. 15. 8, 9. Rom. 2. 25, 29. & 3. 22, 23, 29. & 10. 12. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. Eph. 1. 10. & 2. 11. & 3. 5, 6. Phil. 3. 3. Col. 1. 6, 23—27. & 3. 11. Gen. 4. 7. 1 John 2. 29.
q Mat. 10. 6. & 28. 19. ch. 11. 19. & 13. 46, 47. Eph. 1. 10. & 2. 14—17. Is. 57. 19. Luke 2. 10, 11, 14. Col. 1. 28, 29.
r Ps. 45. 11. & 22. 27—30. & 47. 5, 6. & lxxii. & 89. 19—29. & xcv—c. Is. 9. 6, 7. & 52. 13. & 53. 12. Dan. 7. 13, 14. Hos. 1. 7, 10. Mat. 28. 18. Rom. 10. 12. Phil. 2. 9—11. Eph. 1. 20—23. Col. 1. 15—18. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Rev. 17. 14. & 19. 16.
s Luke 4. 14. ch. 1. 22.
t Is. 11. 2—4. & 42. 1. & 61. 1—3. Mat. 3. 16, 17. Luke 4. 18. John 3. 2, 34. & 11. 42. & 10. 36, 38. Col. 1. 19. & 2. 9. ch. 2. 22. & 4. 27.
u Mat. 18. 11. & 20. 28. & iv—xxv. Mark 1—xiii. 1 John 3. 8. Is. 49. 24—26. & 61. 1—4.
x John 23. 10, 38. & 8. 29. & 16. 32. Col. 2. 9. Mat. 3. 17.
y Ch. 1. 8, 22. & 2. 23, 32. & 3. 15. & 5. 30, 32. & 7. 52. & 13. 31. ver. 41.
z Mat. xxvi—xxviii. Luke xxii—xxiv. John xviii—xx. Acts 1. 2—9. 1 Cor. 15. 3—8. Rom. 4. 24, 25. & 6. 4—6. & 8. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 11, 14. Gal. 1. 1, 4. Eph. 1. 20. Col. 2. 12. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Heb. 13. 20.
a Luke 24. 30, 41, 48. John 14. 17, 22. & 21. 13. ch. 1. 2—9, 22. & 13. 31.
b Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15. Luke 24. 47. ch. 1. 8. John 20. 21, 22.
c Ch. 17. 31. John 5. 22—29. Rom. 14. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 1, 8. 1 Pet. 4. 5. Mat. 25. 31—46. Rev. 1. 7. & 20. 11—15. & 22. 12.
d See John 1. 45. Luke 24. 27, 44, 47. ch. 4. 12. & 13. 38, 39. & 26. 22. & 15. 9. Is. 53. 4, 5, 11. Jer. 31. 33, 34. Dan. 9. 24. Mic. 7. 18—20. Zech. 13. 1. Mal. 4. 2. Mat. 26. 28.

that through his name [d] whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

[d] Ch. 15. 9. & 26. 18. Rom. 10. 11.

Verses 34—43. Peter, on comparing his own vision with that which Cornelius related, was now fully persuaded of God's gracious designs towards the Gentiles; and therefore, with great warmth of affection, delight, and earnestness, addressed this attentive auditory.

1. He expresses his full persuasion, notwithstanding all his former prejudices, that the Lord had now abolished all national distinctions, and designed his gospel should indiscriminately be preached to Jews and Gentiles. *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons*, on account of any external circumstances of birth, rank, or country; *but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.* Not that we are to conceive that any unenlightened Gentile was capable of fearing God or working righteousness by any power in himself, or that these are the ground of acceptance before God: no; they are only the fruits of faith, and are descriptive not of the conditions of acceptance with God, but of the person who is in a state of favour with him. The meaning of the apostle seems to be, That Gentiles, as well as Jews, though uncircumcised, were capable of partaking of God's favour through the gospel, and their works were accepted through faith. Of this number Cornelius was one, who had known so much of the gospel doctrine as a proselyte, as to build his hopes thereon, and act agreeably thereunto: and God in mercy therefore was now leading him into fuller discoveries of the truth, as it is in Jesus.

2. He refers them to the reports that had been every where spread of the life, miracles, doctrines, death, and resurrection, of Jesus. *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ*, the glad tidings of reconciliation with an offended God through him, *(He is Lord of all*, the self-existent Deity, God over all, and as Mediator incarnate, invested with all power in heaven and earth,) *that word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout Judea, after the baptism which John preached*, by Jesus himself and his disciples, the fame of which could not but have reached them; *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power*, authorizing and enabling him to perform the most astonishing miracles in proof of his divine mission; *who went about doing good* to the bodies and souls of men, by his heavenly doctrine instructing them, *and* by his miracles of grace *healing all that were oppressed of the devil*, under whatever disease or torment, or corporal possession, they laboured: *for God was with him*, mightily supporting him, and testifying his approbation of him. *And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem*, having been his constant followers and disciples; *whom they slew and hanged on a tree*, a death the most painful and ignominious, in hatred of his pretensions as the promised Messiah, because he corresponded not with their carnal notions of his character and office; *him God raised up the third day*, to their confusion, and in testimony of his perfect satisfaction in this divine Redeemer's undertaking, *and showed him openly*, after his resurrection; *not to all the people*, who had so obstinately rejected the clearest evidence of truth; *but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead*, and, from the fullest conviction of our senses, were assured of his resurrection, and were appointed by him to bear our testimony thereto. *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead*, before whom all must appear, and give an account of the things done in the body. *To him give all the prophets witness*, from the beginning speaking of him as the great subject of their discourses, and pointing to him under various types and figures, *that through his name*, through his sacrifice and obedience unto death, *whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins*, justified freely and fully from all his transgressions, whether he be Jew or Gentile, and thus prepared to stand before his judgment-seat with confidence of acceptance. *Note*, (1.) The remission of sins is the first and great gospel promise, and the door of admission to all the rest. (2.) If we believe that Jesus shall indeed shortly be our Judge, we cannot but be anxiously solicitous to secure an interest in his favour.

44. ¶ [e] While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45. And they [f] of the circumcision which believed were † astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46. For they heard them [g] speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47. [h] Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48. And he commanded them [i] to be baptized in the name of the Lord. [k] Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

[e] Ch. 2. 2, 4, 37. & 4. 31. & 8. 15, 16. ver. 45, 46.
[f] Ch. 9. 42. & 11. 3, 18.
† Because it was a maxim with them that the *Shechinah*, or Divine influence, could not be revealed to any person who dwelt beyond the precincts of the promised land.—*A. Clarke.*
[g] Ch. 8. 17. & 19. 6. & 2. 4. Ps. 100. 1.
[h] Ch. 8. 36. with 2. 4. & 15. 8.
[i] Ch. 2. 38. & 11. 16, 17. & 8. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 16, 17. Rom. 6. 3—6. Gal. 3. 27. Mat. 28. 19.
[k] Ch. 16. 15. John 4. 40.

Verses 44—48. While these words were yet dropping from the apostle's lips, God himself appears, bearing witness to the gospel which Peter preached.

1. *The Holy Ghost*, in his miraculous gifts, as well as gracious influences, *fell on all them that heard the word*, as on the disciples at the day of Pentecost; *and they of the circumcision, which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost*, though they were neither circumcised nor baptized; *for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God*; like the other ministers of the gospel, they were equally qualified for that service, in which probably the Lord designed to employ the first-fruits of the Gentiles, and in the various languages which they spoke, adored God for the blessings of that redemption in Christ Jesus, of which they now were made partakers. *Note*, They who have received the Holy Ghost cannot but desire to magnify God, both in the exercise of his gifts and graces seeking the divine glory.

2. Peter, no longer dubious, hesitates not to admit them into the church by the instituted rite of baptism. It would be highly absurd for the most rigid Jewish Christian to object against admitting those to the sign and seal of the covenant, who had received the gifts and graces of the covenant. *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* the point was too clear to admit of a scruple, and therefore *he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.* Hence it appears evidently, that water baptism is an ordinance to be used by those who are most clearly baptized with the Holy Ghost.

3. They entreated Peter to tarry *certain days* with them, that they might enjoy the edification and comfort of his farther ministrations. *Note*, (1.) They who have received a blessing under the discourse of a gospel minister, covet to hear more. (2.) The most advanced in gifts and graces are never to think themselves above the ministry of the word.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 41.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Peter's necessary vindication of what he did in receiving Cornelius and his friends into the church,*

from the censure he lay under for it among the brethren, and their acquiescence in it, ver. 1—18. 2. *The good success of the gospel at Antioch, and the parts adjacent,* ver. 19—21. 3. *The carrying on of the good work that was begun at Antioch, by the ministry of Barnabas first, and afterwards by Saul in conjunction with him, and the lasting name of Christian first given to the disciples there,* ver. 22—26. 4. *A prediction of an approaching famine, and the contribution that was made among the Gentile converts for the relief of the poor saints in Judea upon that occasion,* ver. 27—30.

1. AND the apostles and * brethren that were in Judea † heard that [a] the Gentiles had also received the word of God. 2. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, [b] they that were of the circumcision contended with him, 3. Saying, [c] Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. 4. But [d] Peter rehearsed *the matter* from the beginning, and expounded *it* by order unto them, saying, 5. [e] I was in the city of Joppa praying; and [f] in a trance I saw a vision, [g] A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me: 6. Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw [h] four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 7. And I heard a voice saying unto me, [i] Arise, Peter; slay and eat. 8. But I said, [k] Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. 9. But the voice answered me again from heaven, [l] What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common. 10. And this was done [m] three times: and [n] all were drawn up again into heaven. 11. And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me. 12. And ° the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover, these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house: 13. [p] And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter: 14. Who shall tell thee [q] words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. 15. And as I began to speak, [r] the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. 16. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, [s] John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. 17. Forasmuch then as [t] God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed ‡ on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, [u] that I could withstand God? 18. When they heard these things, [x] they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, [y] Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

* Jewish Christians.

† According to Calmet, Judea is here put in opposition to Cesarea, which, though situated in Palestine, passed for a Greek city, being principally inhabited by Pagans, Greeks, or Syrians.

a Ch. 10. 34—48. Gen. 49. 10. Ps. 22. 27. Is. 42. 1, 6. & 11. 10.

b Ch. 15. 1, 5. Josh. 22. 12, 22. with ch. 10. 25.

c Ch. 10. 23—28, 48. Gal. 2. 12. Luke 15. 2.

d Josh. 22. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 15. Prov. 15. 1. Luke 1. 3.

e Ch. 10. 9—48.

f Num. 24. 4. Rev. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 12. 1, 2. ch. 22. 17.

g Mat. 8. 11. Is. 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 45. 22. & 55. 1—7.

h Is. 11. 6—10. & 43. 20, 21. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.

i Is. 30. 21. Mark 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Rom. 1. 16. & 3. 22, 29, 30.

k Rom. 10. 2 with Lev. xi. Deut. xiv. Lev. 20. 25. Ezek. 4. 14. & 44. 31.

l Mat. 15. 11. ch. 10. 15, 28. & 15. 8, 9.

m John 13. 38. & 21. 17.

n Mat. 8. 11. Eph. 3. 5—8. & 2. 4—22. ch. 15. 14. Rom. 15. 8—12, 16. Col. 1. 20.

o Ch. 10. 19. & 16. 6, 7. & 21. 4. John 16. 13.

p Ch. 10. 3—6, 30—32. & 9. 43. Ps. 91. 11. & 34. 7.

q Mark 16. 15, 16. Rom. 1. 16, 17. John 20. 31. 1 John 5. 9—13, 20. ch. 16. 31. Luke 19. 9, 10. Rom. 10. 17.

r Ch. 2. 4. & 10. 44—47.

s Ch. 1. 5. & 19. 4. Mat. 3. 11. Mark 1. 8. Luke 3. 16. John 1. 26. Is. 44. 3—5. Joel 2. 28. Prov. 1. 23.

t Ver. 15. ch. 10. 44—47. & 15. 8, 9.

‡ Or, *unto us also, upon our believing.* — Scoble-field.

u Rom. 8. 31. Job 40. 2. & 9. 3, 4, 12. Dan. 4. 35. ch. 10. 47.

x Josh. 11. 20. ch. 21. 20. Is. 54. 1—5.

y Ch. 5. 31. & 20. 24. 2 Cor. 7—11. Jer. 31. 18—20. Ps. 22. 27. Is. 55. 5, 7.

Verses 1—18. The conversion of the Gentiles and the admission of those into the Christian church who were uncircumcised, was a thing so new and extraordinary, that it soon reached Jerusalem. And we are told,

1. What offence it gave to some of the Christians there, who were as yet wedded to the Jewish ritual. *They that were of the circumcision contended with Peter;* so far were they from entertaining any thought of his supremacy or infallibility, which his pretended successors have since claimed, that they called him to account for what he had done, as if it was a matter of blame, *saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them;* supposing it a prostitution of their privileges, and a high disgrace to the apostolic character. *Note,* (1.) Even good men are sometimes strangely enslaved by prejudices and bigotry. (2.) Rash censures sometimes drop from gracious men, and we must mildly bear with them, and answer in the spirit of meekness. Even godlike charity will be sometimes called latitudinarian by narrow minds, that never tasted the warm sensations of generous, catholic love.

2. Peter relates the whole transaction from the beginning, and then refers the matter to their judgment. He might have despised their censures; but it is a debt we sometimes owe ourselves, to set what is misrepresented in its true colours, and remove, as far as we can, the prejudices of our brethren.

(1.) He informs them of the vision which he himself had seen in all its particulars: wherein God intimated to him, that all the Mosaical distinctions between meats and persons were now at an end.

(2.) He relates the vision which Cornelius was favoured with, and the express command given him to send for Peter from Joppa, as the person by whose words he and his house *should be saved,* through faith in that Saviour whom the apostle should preach unto him, and out of whom there is no salvation.

(3.) He declares the express command he had from the Spirit to go with the messengers Cornelius sent, and his prudent precaution to take several of the brethren with him, that his journey might be the less subject to any misrepresentation, when he had them as witnesses for his conduct.

(4.) He pleads what above all other arguments vindicated his procedure, the attestation which the Holy Ghost bore to his word almost as soon as he began to speak to them of the gospel salvation, giving them the same miraculous gifts as he bestowed on themselves at the beginning. And this brought to his mind *the word of the Lord,* just before his ascension, Acts i. 5. *how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.* Seeing therefore this promise thus eminently fulfilled, and that God made no distinction between Gentile and Jewish converts, who, though of the seed of Abraham, *believed in the Lord Jesus Christ,* and expected salvation by faith in him alone, *what was I, that I could withstand God?* or refuse to admit to baptism those whom he had so eminently called into the participation of the glorious privileges of the gospel.

3. An account so satisfactory silenced every cavil. No objections could possibly be made to Peter; but contrariwise, *they glorified God* for this unexpected event, *saying,* with wonder and

delight, *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* *Note*, (1.) Repentance is God's gift: it is not in the power of our own will, nor to be produced by judgments or mercies, but comes purely from his Spirit working effectually upon the conscience, without which we must for ever continue under our native blindness and hardness of heart. (2.) Where repentance is evangelical, and the gift of God, there it is the sure symptom of present spiritual life, and the earnest of that which is eternal.

19. ¶ [z] Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as [a] Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word [b] to none but unto the Jews only.* 20. And some of them were men of Cyprus and [c] Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the [d] Grecians, [c] preaching the Lord Jesus. 21. [f] And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. 22. ¶ Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and [g] they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. 23. Who, when he came, and [h] had seen the grace of God, was glad, and [i] exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would [k] cleave unto the Lord. 24. For he was a [l] good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. 25. Then departed Barnabas to [m] Tarsus, for to seek Saul: 26. And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year [m] they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called [o] Christians first in Antioch.

[z] Ch. 8. 1, 4. Mat. 10. 23.
[a] Is. xxiii. ch. 13. 4. ver. 26.
[b] Mat. 10. 5, 6. ch. 3. 26. & 13. 46. & 10. 28.
* Townsend considers that the gospel was preached to the proselytes of the gate and to devout Gentiles only, before it was preached to the idolatrous Gentiles.
[c] Ch. 2. 10. Luke 22. 26.
[d] Jews who spake Greek. Ch. 6. 1. & 9. 29. John 12. 20.
[e] Ch. 8. 35. & 9. 20. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2. Eph. 3. 8.
[f] Is. 53. 1. Rom. 1. 16. ch. 1. 41, 47. & 4. 3, 32. & 5. 14. & 6. 7. ver. 24.
[g] Ch. 8. 14, 15. & 13. 2, 3.
[h] Mat. 7. 16—21. & 12. 33. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9.
[i] Ch. 13. 43. & 14. 22.
[k] Gal. 2. 20. Mat. 16. 24. 1 Cor. 15. 50. Col. 1. 22. & 2. 6, 7. Deut. 10. 20. & 30. 20. Josh. 22. 5. & 23. 8.
[l] Ch. 6. 3, 5, 8. & 24. 16. cir. 42.
[m] Ch. 9. 11, 30. & 22. 39. Jon. 1. 3.
[n] Ch. 2. 41—47. & 4. 32.
[o] Mat. 16. 16, 24. Rom. 8. 1, 2, 9. 1 Cor. 6. 17. & 12. 12. Phil. 2. 5. & 3. 3. Col. 3. 3. 1 John 2. 20, 27.

Verses 19—26. We have here an account of the planting the gospel at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, and one of the most famous cities in the Roman empire.

1. The preachers of the gospel, who, on the persecution which arose after Stephen's death, were dispersed abroad, carried the glad tidings of the gospel as far as Phenice, a province of Syria, and Cyprus, a large island of the Mediterranean sea, and Antioch. But as they knew not yet the extent of their commission, as reaching to all nations and every creature, they confined themselves wholly to the Jews who were dispersed in these countries. *And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene*, a city in Africa, *which, when they were come to Antioch, spoke unto the Grecians;* either unto the Hellenist Jews, or, as some suppose, on hearing of the conversion of Cornelius and his friends, and that the preaching the gospel to the Gentiles had been approved by the apostles, they enlarged their field of usefulness, *preaching* to the Grecian Gentiles, *the Lord Jesus*, whose character, offices, grace, and glory, were the constant subject of their ministrations. *And the hand of the Lord was with them*, not only enabling them to perform astonishing miracles, but blessing their labours with signal success; *and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord*, effectually brought to Jesus as their only Redeemer and Saviour, on whose righteousness and grace they placed their entire dependence. *Note*, (1.) The labours of God's ministers are only then effectual, when *the hand of the Lord is with them*; without him, Paul must plant and Apollos water in vain. (2.) True faith will ever show itself in real conversion of heart, from the ways of sin and the world, to the love and service of the blessed God.

2. The church at Jerusalem, whither the apostles still frequently resorted, no sooner heard these glad tidings than they sent forth *Barnabas*, a Hellenist, a native of Cyprus, and a man of singular abilities, *that he should go as far as Antioch*, passing through the places where the gospel had got footing, to strengthen and establish the new converts. Barnabas readily accepted the mission, and proceeded to Antioch: and when he *had seen the grace of God*, visibly manifested in the conversion and conversation of those whom the Lord by his gospel had called in that city, *he was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord*; encouraging them to maintain their profession amidst all opposition, and suggesting the most powerful arguments to establish their fidelity; *for he was a good man*, of a noble, generous, disinterested spirit, sweet and affable in his discourse, *and full of the Holy Ghost*, possessed of very eminent gifts and graces, *and of faith* in a most abundant measure; *and much people was added unto the Lord* by his ministry and labours. *Note*, (1.) They who are truly partakers of the grace of God in their own souls, behold with singular delight the powerful effects of the same grace upon the hearts of others (2.) They who turn to the Lord, must cleave to him in a persevering course of fidelity: but if any man draw back, aggravated perdition must be the consequence. (3.) When we are ourselves deeply and fully pursuaded of the truth, we shall be enabled to speak more forcibly and powerfully to others.

3. The field being large, and the prospect promising, Barnabas sought an able fellow-helper; and knowing that Paul was yet at Tarsus, about a hundred miles off, he went to seek him, and invite him to Antioch, where his labours were greatly wanted. Having found him at Tarsus, he invited him to return with him to Antioch; to which Paul readily consented; and for a year *they assembled themselves with the church*, leading the religious assemblies of the faithful, *and taught much people*, vast multitudes attending their ministrations. *Note*, (1.) They who have the glory of their Lord simply at heart, can take pleasure in the greater gifts and abilities of others, and are happy to procure their assistance, though they may be more admired and useful preachers than themselves. (2.) The work of the ministry is doubly pleasing, when we see the fruits of our labour in the growing edification of the faithful, and the conversion of sinners to God.

4. *The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch*, not probably by their enemies as a term of reproach, but, as the word (χρηματισαι) seems to imply, by some divine intimation, and solemn act of their own. Thus they would abolish the distinction of Jew and Gentile, and in their very name, as *Christians*, make profession of their full and entire dependence on Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Are we Christians then? let our lives prove the reality of the profession we make.

27. And in these days came [p] prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28. And there stood up one of them named [q] Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: † which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar. 29. Then the dis-

[p] Mat. 23. 34. 1 Cor. 12. 28. & 14. 32. Eph. 4. 11. Rev. 22. 9. ch. 2. 17. & 13. 1. & 15. 32. & 21. 4.
[q] Ch. 21. 10.
† Or, *all the land.* This famine began in the latter end of the 4th year of Claudius.

[r] Ezra 2. 69. Neh. 5. 8. ch. 6. 1. & 12. 25. Rom. 15. 25. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 8. 3, 4, 9. & 11. 8. & 9. 1 1 Pet. 4. 11. Gal. 2. 10. Heb. 13. 6.
[s] 1 Pet. 5. 1. 2 John 1. ch. 12. 25.

ciples, every man [r] according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea: 30. Which also they did, and sent it to the [s] elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Verses 27—30. Among the eminent gifts bestowed on the primitive Christians, some were endued with the Spirit of prophecy. We are here told,

1. Of a vision from certain prophets of Jerusalem, who, hearing the great success of the gospel at Antioch, came thither to help forward the glorious work, and to comfort and establish the hearts of the disciples.

2. One of them, named Agabus, had it revealed to him by the Spirit, *that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world;* and, standing up in the midst of the assembled church, signified to them this afflictive event, which accordingly came to pass about two years afterwards, in the reign of Claudius Cesar.

3. *Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea,* who, by the persecutions they had suffered, were greatly reduced; and those who had riches, had at the first parted with all for the service of the gospel; and probably it was suggested, that the famine would be most severely felt in those parts. No sooner was the matter resolved than the contribution was made, *and they sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul,* to be distributed according to the necessities of the faithful; than which nothing could serve more to conciliate their minds to the Gentile converts, and to remove their deep rooted prejudices. *Note,* (1.) Every Christian, according to his ability, is bound to contribute to the assistance of his brethren. (2.) God will take care of his poor, and by some means or other provide that in the time of dearth they shall be supplied. He that feedeth the ravens will not leave his children to famish.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 44.

In this chapter we have the story, 1. *Of the martyrdom of James the apostle, and the imprisonment of Peter, by Herod Agrippa, who now reigned as king in Judea,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The miraculous deliverance of Peter out of prison,* ver. 5—19. 3. *The cutting off of Herod in the height of his pride, by the stroke of an angel, the minister of God's justice,* ver. 20—23. 4. *Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch,* ver. 24, 25.

cir. 44.
[a] Not the tetrarch, Luke 3. 1—19. & 13. 31. & 23. 7. ch. 13 1. but his nephew. He was made king by the emperor Caligula.
[*] Or *began.*
[b] Mat. 10. 17, 18. & 24. 9. John 15. 20, 21. & 16. 2.
[c] Mat. 20. 23. & 4. 21.
[d] John 12. 43. Gal. 1. 10.
[e] Mat. 4. 18. & 26. 75.
[f] Exod 12. 15—20. & 13. 7. Lev. 23. 6—14.
[g] John 21. 18. Mat. 24. 9. Luke 21. 12.

1. NOW about that time [a] Herod the king * stretched forth *his* hands [b] to vex certain of the church. 2. And he [c] killed James the brother of John with the sword. 3. And [d] because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take [e] Peter also. [f] Then were the days of unleavened bread. 4. And [g] when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Verses 1—4. Herod, the grandson of Herod the Great, and father of Agrippa, before whom Paul pleaded his cause, chap. xxvi. 1—28. had now, through the favour of Claudius the Roman emperor, received the government of Judea as well as Galilee. Being a bitter enemy of Christianity, he interrupted the rest which the church had for a while enjoyed, and lighted up afresh the fire of persecution.

1. He began to harass and distress the saints at Jerusalem; either countenancing those who insulted and abused them, or imprisoning and persecuting them on account of their profession. The faithful may expect short respite from tribulation in this world, and must be always prepared to suffer.

2. *He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.* Thus did he drink of the cup with his Lord, as was foretold, Matt. xx. 23. and first of the apostles sealed his testimony with his blood. He was probably executed in prison, like the Baptist, by a private order from the king, and led the way to his brethren, who were hereby taught to prepare for the like fate, and be faithful unto death.

3. *Because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also;* glad to ingratiate himself with the people, at the same time that he gratified his own enmity against the disciples of Jesus; and Peter, as an especially active, zealous preacher, was peculiarly obnoxious. *Then were the days of unleavened bread,* the feast of the passover approaching. *When* therefore *he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers,* sixteen in number, who guarded him by four at a time, and relieved each other, *to keep him,* that he might not escape, *intending after Easter,* or the Passover, *to bring him forth to the people,* to gratify them with the pleasing spectacle of his ignominious execution. *Note,* (1.) They who study to please men will be led into many a guilty deed. (2.) Success in wickedness often emboldens sinners to proceed to greater lengths

5. Peter therefore was kept in prison: but † prayer was made [h] without ceasing of the church unto God for him. 6. And when Herod would have [i] brought him forth, the [k] same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains;‡ and the keepers before the door kept the prison. 7. And, behold, [l] the angel of the Lord came upon *him,* and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains § fell off from *his* hands. 8. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. 9. And he went out, and followed him; [m] and wist not ‖ that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. 10. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city, [n] which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. 11. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety [o] that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod,

† Or *instant and earnest prayer was made.*
[h] Luke 18. 1 1 Thes. 5. 17. Eph. 6. 19, 20. 2 Thes. 3. 2. James 5. 16. Heb. 13. 3, 18.
[i] Ver. 2. ch. 7. 54, 57.
[k] Gen. 22. 14. Deut. 32. 36. 1 Sam. 23. 26. Rom. 5. 1. Ps. 3. 5, 6.
‡ Two soldiers guarded his person; his right hand being bound to the left hand of one, and his left hand bound to the right hand of the other. This was the Roman method of guarding their prisoners. — *A. Clarke.*
[l] Ch. 5. 19. 1 Kin. 19. 5, 7. Heb. 1. 14. Ps. 91. 11, 12. 34. 7.
§ The chains by which he was bound to the two soldiers.
[m] Ps. 126. 1. Gen. 45. 26. Luke 24. 11.
‖ Knew not.
[n] Ch. 16. 26. Ps. 146. 7.
[o] Dan 6. 22. 2 Tim. 4. 17. Ps. 34. 7. & 46. 1.

and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews. 12. And when he had considered *the thing*, [p] he came to the house of Mary the mother of [q] John, whose surname was Mark; where [r] many were gathered together praying. 13. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came * to hearken, named Rhoda. 14. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. 15. And they said unto her, [s] Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is [t] his angel.† 16. But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, they were astonished. 17. But he, [u] beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them [x] how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And [y] he departed, and went into another place.‡ 18. Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. 19. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and [z] commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to [a] Cesarea, and *there* abode.

p Ch. 4. 23. & 15. 37.

q Ver. 25. ch. 13. 5, 13. & 15. 37. Col. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 11. Phile. 24.

r Ver. 5. Is. 65. 24. & 58. 9. Dan. 9. 20, 21. Jam. 5. 16. Mat. 18. 19.

s Or *to ask who was there.*

t Luke 24. 11. Gen. 19. 14.

† According to an idea general among the Jews, and held by some amongst the Gentiles, that a tutelary angel was appointed to every good person.

u Ch. 13. 16. & 19. 33. & 21. 40.

x Ver. 11. Ps. 102. 10, 21. & 146. 7.

y Mat. 16. 17. 23. John 7. 1. & 8. 59. & 10. 40. & 11. 54.

‡ Scripture does not afford us the least information as to the place where Peter now secreted himself.

z Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. & 12. 10. Ps. 23. 9, 10. & 76. 10.

a Ch. 9. 40. & 21. 8. & 23. 23. & 25. 4.

Verses 5—19. To human view Peter's case seemed desperate, and a few days would complete the triumph of his persecutors. But God had otherwise ordained, and then the craft of the wisest and the power of the mightiest are alike vain.

1. During Peter's imprisonment, *prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him;* they were fervent and frequent at a throne of grace; perhaps one company after another continued their incessant supplications, deeply concerned for fear of losing him after all their other breaches, and trusting that, though no human prospect of his deliverance appeared, the Lord would, in his own time and way, rescue his suffering servant from the hands of his blood-thirsty persecutors, *Note*, When the faithful ministers of Jesus are suffering for their testimony, the church is called to pray earnestly for them, that, if the Lord so pleases, they may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, and spared for further usefulness.

2. The time appointed for Peter's execution now drew near; the next was the fatal day appointed to bring him forth to the people. Peter mean time was kept with greatest care, chained to two soldiers within the prison, whilst without the guards kept the door, to prevent any rescue or escape: and never could greater precaution be taken. Yet, though his danger was so imminent, his case so desperate, unterrified, composed, in peace he sweetly slept, whilst probably the eyes of his malicious foes were held waking, and their disturbed minds could take no rest on beds of ivory. A good cause, a good conscience, and the desire to glorify God, whether by life or death, raised him superior to every fear; and, though expecting no deliverance, he took his wonted repose. *Note*, (1.) God suffers us sometimes to be reduced to extremities, that his power and grace in rescuing us from our trials may appear with more distinguished lustre. (2.) When wicked men seem to have insured the success of their enterprises, God is often pleased to blast their designs, and to cover them with confusion.

3. God sends his angel to deliver the faithful prisoner; and he whom gates nor guards could not exclude, suddenly entering the prison in a blaze of light, with a gentle touch awakened Peter from his slumbers; then, bidding him arise, his chains marvellously *fell off from his hands;* and, being now at liberty, the angel *said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.* Peter obeyed, and as yet apprehended not the reality of the facts, but supposed the scene was merely visionary. Passing now the first and second bodies of guards without molestation, who were cast into a profound sleep; or terrified with the angelic minister's appearance, they came unto the iron gate, *which opened of its own accord;* and, being now in the city, the angel accompanied Peter through one street, and then departed, his presence being no longer needful, and Peter could then provide for his own safety. *Note*, (1.) We have in Peter's deliverance a lively image of our redemption. We lie by nature fast bound in the chains of sin, and sleep securely, not apprehensive of danger, though ruin is before us. Then God sends his gospel as his angel, and by his Spirit smiting our hearts, awakens us from our security and insensibility. Quickened by grace, the chains of corruption fall off, and we are now enabled to rise and walk, clothed with the garments of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Under divine light and guidance we are enabled to pass through numberless difficulties, and through hosts of enemies hold on our way, till the iron gate of death appears in view, and, opening wide, admits us into the new Jerusalem. (2.) No difficulties are insurmountable if God be for us. (3.) When we have the ordinary means before us, we are not to expect miracles.

4. Peter, being left alone, soon recovered from his surprise, and, reflecting on what was past, was fully assured the scene was not visionary but real; *that the Lord* had *sent his angel, and delivered* him *out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews,* who waited impatiently for his execution. Deliberating then whither in prudence he should direct his steps, *he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying;* and importunate no doubt they were, when the danger was now so near: when lo! a most astonishing answer is given to their prayers: behold, *Peter knocked at the door:* a visitant little expected by them. A damsel, named Rhoda, ran immediately into the porch, to listen whether it were a friend or foe, before she opened the gate; when, hearing Peter's well known voice, so transported was she, that, instead of opening the door, she ran to her mistress, where they were all assembled for prayer, and told them, to their astonishment, that, *Peter stood before the gate.* Unable to credit so strange a story, they said, *thou art mad;* it is impossible. But she *constantly affirmed* the certainty of the fact, *that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel,* a messenger come from him, or one of the celestial spirits, who imitates his voice, and brings some tidings concerning him. Mean time Peter repeated his knocks at the gate; and, going down, they opened the door, when with amazement they beheld him; and eager to know the circumstances of this extraordinary event, they together began to ask him concerning it; whereupon he beckoned with his hand, commanding silence, whilst he declared to them his miraculous deliverance. And, as no time was to be lost to secure himself, having charged them to inform James and the brethren of his escape, for their comfort and encouragement, *he departed, and went into another place,* where he

SYRIA
NORTH PART.
English Miles
5 10 20
TERSOOS
ADANA
CYLICIA CAMPESTRIS
Aleius Campus
Bay of Ayas
BAY OF ISKENDEROON
SISSUS SINUS
ISSICUS SINUS
Karadash Boorno
Karadash River
Mountains of Amanus
Pass of Amanus
Beylan
Bay of Alexandretta
Alexandretta
Scanderoon
Iskenderoon
Mountains of Rhosus
Rhosus
Mountains of Rhosus
Rhosus
Mountains of Rhosus
Rhosus

SYRIA
SOUTH PART.
English Miles
SUPPLEMENT.
English Miles
Note. The names of the Twelve Tribes are referred to by figures.
1. ASHER
2. NAPTHALI
3. ZEBULON
4. ISSACHAR
5. MANASSEH this side Jordan
6. EPHRAIM
7. BENJAMIN
8. DAN
9. SIMEON
10. JUDAH
11. REUBEN
12. GAD
13. MANASSEH Beyond Jordan
8. DAN
9. SIMEON
10. JUDAH
11. REUBEN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ARABIA PETRÆA
DESERT OF ZIN
DESERT OF ET TIH
GULF OF SUEZ
GULF OF AKABAH
DEAD SEA
Longitude East from Greenwich

might be secured from the danger. *Note*, (1.) They who persevere in prayer, will at last meet an answer of peace. (2.) Sudden and great joy for the time often destroys reflection, and makes us forget what we say or do. (3.) Though, when called of God, neither death nor danger must deter us from the way of duty, yet, when the Lord opens a door for our escape, we may lawfully provide for our own safety.

5. The next morning the guards were in the utmost consternation at finding their prisoner gone, and justly dreaded the rage of the king, as if they had been chargeable with neglect or connivance. In vain strict search is made by Herod every where; and, unable to find Peter, he wreaks his vengeance on the keepers, who could not give the least satisfactory account of the matter, and therefore were ordered to be put to death for their supposed negligence or corruption. Then retiring from Judea to Cesarea, in order, it is said, to celebrate games in honour of Augustus Cesar, for some time *he abode there*. *Note*, God can, when he pleases, hide his people from the malice of their most envenomed foes.

|| Or *bare a hostile mind, intending war.*
* Gr. *that was over the king's bedchamber.*
b 1 Kin. 5. 9, 11. Ezek. 27. 17.
c Ps. 12. 2. Jude 16.
d Dan. 4. 30, 31. 37. Job 40. 2, 11, 12. & 9. 13.
† The disease appears to have been that called *morbus pediculari*s, of which, it is remarkable, many other tyrants have died!
e Is. 2. 2, 3. & 55. 11. ch. 6. 7. & 19. 20. Col. 1. 6, 23. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Prov. 28. 28.
f Or *charge*. ch. 11. 29, 30.
g Ver. 12. & 13. 5, 13. & 15. 37, 38. 1 Pet. 5. 13.
‡ The son of Mary ver. 12. and sister's son to Barnabas, Col. 4. 10. He afterwards shrunk from the difficulties encountered by the apostles; but seems to have subsequently retrieved his character, Col. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 11. Philem. 24.

20. ¶ And Herod || was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him; and, having made Blastus * the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was [b] nourished by the king's *country*. 21. And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. 22. And the people gave a shout, *saying*, [c] *It is* the voice of a god, and not of a man. 23. And [d] immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.† 24. ¶ [e] But the word of God grew and multiplied. 25. ¶ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled *their* [f] ministry, and took with them [g] John, whose surname was Mark.‡

Verses 20—25. Proud persecutors justly meet an avenging God.

1. Herod's pride now reached the summit of wickedness. On some provocation given him by the maritime cities of Tyre and Sidon, Herod was highly offended; and, justly fearing the wrath of this haughty monarch, they instantly despatched ambassadors to him to make their submission, and deprecate his displeasure: for, as they chiefly drew their provision from his territories, if he prohibited his subjects from supplying them, it would have exposed them to a famine. Therefore having, by presents probably, gained Blastus, the king's chamberlain, for their friend, who had a considerable influence with his master, *they desired peace;* and a day was fixed to give them public audience. Herod, arrayed in royal robes, glittering, says Josephus, with silver, and reflecting the sunbeams so strongly as dazzled the eyes of the spectators, and, seated on his gorgeous throne, *made an oration to the people*, probably expatiating on the provocations of the Tyrians, and displaying his own clemency in pardoning them on their submission. The people, delighted with his splendid appearance, pleased with his discourse, and willing to flatter his pride, shouted their blasphemous admiration, as if they heard a present deity, saying, *It is the voice of a god, and not of a man;* whilst he, well pleased, received the impious adulation.

2. Instantly God smote him, and hurled him from his towering height of pride into the abyss of despicable wretchedness. An angel, the executioner of wrath, struck the fatal blow, *because he gave not God the glory*, and dared accept such adoration. A foul, filthy, and tormenting disease seized his vitals; in agonies he lingered five days; worms bred in his putrid carcass; and, devoured alive, he miserably perished, a spectacle of horror to every beholder. So easily can God abase those who walk in pride, and make the meanest worm that crawls an instrument of his vengeance.

3. In spite of all persecution and opposition, *the word of God grew and multiplied*, spreading with rapidity and vast success. And Barnabas and Saul, having finished their business at Jerusalem, returned again to Antioch, taking with them John, whose surname was Mark, Barnabas' nephew. *Note*, When ministers are called abroad, and have finished their work, they must hasten home again, where their stated labour awaits them.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 45.

Here is, 1. *The solemn ordination of Barnabas and Saul, by divine direction, to the great work of spreading the gospel among the Gentiles*, ver. 1—3. 2. *Their preaching the gospel in Cyprus, and the opposition they met with there from Elymas the sorcerer*, ver. 4—13. 3. *The heads of a sermon which Paul preached at Antioch in Pisidia*, ver. 14—41. 4. *The preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles at their request, and upon the Jews' refusal of it*, ver. 42—49. 5. *The trouble which the infidel Jews gave to the apostles, which obliged them to remove to another place*, ver. 50—52.

1. NOW [a] there were in the church that was at Antioch certain [b] prophets and teachers; as [c] Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, * which had been brought up with [d] Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2. As they [e] ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, [f] Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3. And [g] when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

a Ch. 11. 20, 25, 26. & 12. 25. & 14. 26.
b Ch. 11. 28. & 21. 10, 11.
c Ch. 4. 36, 22—26, 30. & xiv, xv. Gal. 2. 9, 13. Rom. 16. 21.
* Or *Herod's foster brother.*
d Luke 3. 1, 19. & 13. 31. & 23. 7. not ch. xii.
e Deut. 10. 8. & 18. 5, 7. 1 Chr. 23. 13. Mat. 9. 15. ch. 6. 4. & 2. 42.
f Num. 8. 11. Mat. 9. 38. ch. 9. 15. & 22. 21. Rom. 1. 1. & 10. 15. Gal. 1. 15. & 2. 8, 9. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. i, ii. & 2. 2. Heb. 5. 4. 14. 23. 1 Tim. 5. 22.
g Ch. 6. 6. & 8. 15, 17. & 14. 23. 1 Tim. 5. 22.

Verses 1—3. Though the gospel had now begun to make its entrance into the Gentile world, none had been yet particularly ordained and appointed to that service, till Saul and Barnabas, by the immediate order of the Holy Ghost, were called thereunto.

1. The church at Antioch flourished greatly. There were *certain prophets*, who ranked next to the apostles in the church; *and teachers*, eminent for their gifts and graces; *as Barnabas and Simeon*, who, probably from his dark complexion, *was called Niger; and Lucius of Cyrene*, an African by birth; *and Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod* Antipas, *the tetrarch* of Galilee, his friend and companion; but now had quitted the honours of a court for the reproach of the gospel; *and Saul*, so famous in the records of Christianity. *These ministered to the Lord, and fasted*, diligently employed in the service of immortal souls; and, at seasons, in more solemn acts of prayer and fasting, waited upon God for his blessing and direction.

2. Whilst they were, on a certain day, thus engaged, *the*

Holy Ghost, by his immediate suggestion, and by his own divine authority, *said, Separate me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have called them*, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to be chiefly employed in that service. Learn hence, (1.) The personality of the Holy Ghost, and his co-equal glory with the Father and Son. (2.) The true call to the ministry must come from above.

3. Pursuant to this order, Paul and Barnabas were solemnly set apart, with fasting and prayer, and imposition of hands, for the peculiar service to which the Holy Ghost had appointed them: and wishing them all success in their arduous undertaking, the brethren *sent them away*. And henceforward we find them, the two great apostles of the Gentiles, spread the glorious gospel to distant lands, whither the glad tidings had never reached before.

4. So they, [h] being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to [i] Cyprus. 5. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God [k] in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also [l] John to *their* minister. 6. ¶ And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain [m] sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name *was* Bar-jesus. 7. Which was with the deputy* of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. 8. But Elymas the sorcerer, (for so is his name by interpretation,) [n] withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. 9. Then Saul,† (who also *is called* [o] Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, 10. And said, [p] O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease [q] to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11. And now, behold, [r] the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. 12. Then the [s] deputy, [t] when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. 13. ¶ Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and [u] John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.

h Mat. 9. 38. Rom. 10. 15. ch. 20. 28. & 16. 6, 7.
i Ch. 11. 19. & 4. 36. & 27. 4.
k Mat. 10. 27. ch. 5. 20. & 14. 1. & 17. 1, 2, 10. & 18. 4, 6, 7, 19. ver. 14, 46.
l Ch. 12. 12, 25. & 15. 37. ver. 13. Col. 4. 10.
m Ch. 8. 9. Rev. 21. 8.
* This title has been supposed by some to belong only to governors of proconsular dignity; but the correctness of the sacred historian, even in this minute particular, has been amply vindicated by the discovery of an ancient coin and inscription, on both of which this title is applied to the governor of Cyprus.
n Exod. 7. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 8.
† It is generally supposed that Saul now changed his name because he was brought much among the Greeks and Romans, to whom his Hebrew name was unknown.
o A Roman name fit for an apostle of the Gentiles. Ver. 4, 7.
p Mat. 3. 7. & 13. 38. & 23. 33. John 8. 44. 1 John 3. 8.
q Mat. 23. 13. Luke 11. 52.
r Ezek. 6. 14. Gen. 19. 11. 2 Kin. 6. 18. ch. 5. 5, 10. & 9. 5, 8.
s Roman governor, ver. 7. Mat. 27. 2.
t Mat. 27. 54. Luke 7. 16. ch. 5. 5, 11, 14. & 12. 23, 24. & 19. 17.
u Ch. 12. 25. ver. 5. ch. 15. 38. Phil. 2. 21.

Verses 4—13. Being in this solemn manner sent forth, Paul and Barnabas immediately applied themselves to their work.

1. They directed their course to Cyprus, the native land of Barnabas, going to Seleucia, and thence sailed for Salamis, the chief town of the eastern part of the island. And first, as was their custom, *they preached the word in the synagogues of the Jews*, giving them the preference; and, if they rejected the gospel, leaving them thereby inexcusable: *and they had John to their minister*, to assist them in their work, provide necessaries for them, and execute any service which might be appointed him.

2. They travelled through the greatest part of the island, preaching the gospel, till they came to Paphos, the chief city, on the western coast, famous for the temple of Venus. There they met with one *Bar-jesus*, which signifies the son of Joshua, a Jew by birth, addicted to magic, who set up for a prophet, and had insinuated himself into the favour of Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor of the island, *a prudent*, considerate, thinking *man*, who, hearing of the fame of Barnabas and Saul, desired to learn from themselves that new doctrine which they taught as a revelation from God. But Elymas, the sorcerer, knowing, that if the deputy received the gospel, his influence with him would be at an end, set himself to oppose these ministers of Christ, and to turn away the deputy from the faith. *Note*, (1.) It is prudent to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. (2.) Wherever the gospel comes, Satan will find some tool to employ, in order to cast stumblingblocks in the way of those who desire to hear.

3. *Saul*, who henceforward is always called by his Roman name, Paul, as more agreeable to the Gentiles, among whom, for the future, he chiefly conversed, *filled with the Holy Ghost*, fired with zeal for the gospel, and under a divine afflatus, *set his eyes on him*, with indignation and abhorrence of his wickedness, *and said, O full of all subtilty*, expert in every art of deceit, taught by the great deceiver, *and*, like him, set on *all mischief, thou enemy of all righteousness*, the implacable foe to truth and godliness, and that gospel which is designed to promote them, *wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?* to misrepresent them, and, by every artful and malicious suggestion, to prejudice men against the Lord Jesus, and those ways of his grace which alone can lead to eternal life and glory? *And now behold*, as an evident token of God's displeasure, *the hand of the Lord is upon thee*, in righteous judgment, *and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season;* the emblem and punishment of the wilful blindness of thy heart. *Note*, (1.) Subtilty and delight in mischief united, form the strongest image of the devil. (2.) They who are enemies to the gospel, must be enemies to all righteousness, since this alone can effectually produce true holiness in the heart. (3.) The Lord's ways are all right, and lead direct to happiness and heaven: they who pervert or misrepresent them, as unreasonable, unpleasant, or unprofitable, shall bear their burden.

4. His doom is no sooner pronounced than executed. *Immediately there fell on him a mist and darkness, and*, his sight being entirely lost, *he went about*, groping his way, and *seeking some to lead him by the hand.* Struck with the evidence of the miracle, perceiving the sorcerer confounded by the arguments, and unable to stand before the power with which Paul appeared to be invested, *the deputy believed* in Jesus, *being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord*, which came with such convincing power and energy to his heart, and contained such amazing discoveries of God and his great salvation, with which he had been before utterly unacquainted.

5. Having shortly after set sail from Paphos, Paul and his companions directed their course to Perga, a city of Pamphylia, situate in Lesser Asia. There John, their minister, quitted them, and returned to Jerusalem. A worldly or timid spirit prevailed against him: he wanted to see his mother; or he was weary of the fatigues of the Gentile mission; or some temporal affair drew off his attention from the ministry of the word: which was by Paul much resented, and laid a ground of future contention between him and Barnabas.

14. But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch [x] in Pisidia,

x Not Antioch in Syria, as ver. 1. ch. 11. 19—26. & 14. 26.

and [y] went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and sat down. 15. And, after [z] the reading of the law and the prophets, the [a] rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, [b] *Ye* men *and* brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. 16. Then Paul stood up, and, [c] beckoning with *his* hand, said, [d] Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. 17. [e] The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, [f] and with an high arm brought he them out of it. 18. [g] And about the time of forty years † suffered he their manners in the wilderness. 19. And [h] when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot. 20. And after that [i] he gave *unto them* judges, about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. 21. [k] And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. 22. And when he had removed him, he [l] raised up unto them David to be their king: to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David, the *son* of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. 23. [m] Of this man's seed hath God, according to *his* promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: 24. [n] When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25. And as John [o] fulfilled his course, he said, [p] Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose. 26. [q] Men *and* brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. 27. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because [r] they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which [s] are read every sabbath-day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*. 28. [t] And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. 29. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, [u] they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre. 30. [x] But God raised him from the dead: 31. [y] And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his [z] witnesses unto the people. 32. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the [a] promise which was made unto the fathers, 33. God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, [b] Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. 34. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, [c] I will give you the sure ‡ mercies of David. 35. Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, [d] Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 36. For David, ‖ after he had served [e] his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37. But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. 38. [f] Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: 39. And by him [g] all that believe are justified from all things, from which [h] ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40. Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the [i] prophets; 41. Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

y Ch. 16. 13. & 17. 2. & 18. 4. ver. 5.
z Ver. 27. ch. 15. 21. Luke 4. 16.
a Mark 5. 22. Luke 13. 14.
b Ch. 1. 16. & 2. 29, 37. & 7. 2. & 15. 7, 13 & 22. 1. with Heb. 13. 22.
c Ch. 12. 17. & 19. 33. & 21. 40.
d Ver. 26, 43, 46.
e Gen. 17. 7—14. Exod. i—xiv. Deut. 4. 20. & 11. 2—4. Ps. lxxviii, cxiv, cvi, cxxxvi. Is. 63. 7—14. Jer. 32. 20, 21. Ezek. 16. 3—14. & xx. Neh. 9. 9—11.
f Exod. 6. 6. & 12. 31. & 13. 14, 16.
g Exod. 16. 2. Num. 14. 22, 34, 35. Ps. 78. 38. & 95. 10.
† Or *bore and fed them as a nurse.*
h Gen. 15. 19—21. Exod. 23. 23. Deut. 7. 1. Josh. xii—xxi. Ps. 78. 55.
i Judg. ii—xvi. 1 Sam. i—vii. Neh. 9. 27. 1 Kin. 6. 1.
k 1 Sam. viii—xxxi. Hos. 13. 11. 1 Chr. x.
cir. 1095.
l 1 Sam. 15. 28. & 16. 13. Ps. 2. 6. & 78. 70—72. & 89. 19, 20. 1 Sam. 13. 14.
m 2 Sam. 7. 12. Ps. 89. 35. & 132. 11. Is. 11. 1. & 9. 7. Jer. 23. 5. Luke 1. 32, 69. with ch. 2. 30. & 3. 22, 26. & 5. 30. & 7. 37. Mat. 1. 21. Tit. 2. 13.
n Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 5, 6. Mat. 3. 1—6. Mark 1. 2, 5. John 3. 23.
o Ch. 20. 24. 2 Tim. 4. 7.
p John 1. 20, 26, 27. Mat. 3. 11. Luke 3. 16. ch. 19. 4. Phil. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 2. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 5.
q See ver. 15, 16, 42. Ps. 147. 19, 20. Mat. 10. 6. & 22. 8, 9. Luke 14. 21. ch. 3. 26. ver. 42, 46, 47. ch. 28. 23.
r Ch. 3. 17. John 7. 26, 48. & 15. 21. & 16. 3. Luke 23. 34. & 24. 20. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 14. Rom. 11. 25.
s Ch. 15. 21. & 26. 22. & 28. 23. & 2. 16—36. & 4. 26—28.
t Mat. 27. 22, 23. Mark 15. 11, 13. Luke 23. 21, 23. John 19. 4—6. ch. 3. 13—15.
u Ch. 4. 30. 1 Cor. 15. 4. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Mat. 27. 59. Mark 15. 46. Luke 23. 53. John 19. 38. Is. 53. 9.
x Mat. 28. 6. John 2. 19. & 10. 17. ch. 2. 24, 32. & 3. 13, 26. & 4. 10. & 5. 31. & 10. 40. & 17. 31. Heb. 13. 20.
y Mat. xxviii. Mark xvi. Luke xxiv. John xx, xxi. 1. 3.
z Luke 24. 48. ch. 1. 8, 22. & 10. 41.
a Ch. 2. 39. Gen. 3. 15. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15. 2 Sam. 7. 12. Ps. 132. 11. Is. 4. 2. & 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. Ezek. 34. 23. Dan. 9. 2, 24—26. Mic. 5. 2. Hag. 2. 7. Zech. 6. 12. & 9. 9. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 2. Luke 24. 44. Gal. 3. 16.
b Ps. 2. 7. Heb. 1. 5. & 5. 5.
c Is. 55. 3. Ps. 89. 2—4, 19—29.
‡ Gr. *ta osia, holy* or *just things*, which word the Septuagint, in many places, use for that which in the Hebrew signifies *mercies*.
d Ps. 16. 10. ch. 2. 27, 31.
‖ Or *after he had in his own age, served the will of God.*
e Ps. 78. 70—72. ch. 2. 29. & 20. 24. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 1 Kin. 2. 10. 1 Chr. 29. 28.
f Ch. 2. 38. & 3. 26. & 4. 12. & 5. 31. & 10. 43. Luke 24. 47. Is. 53. 5, 11. & 59. 20. Jer. 31. 34. Dan. 9. 24. Zech. 12. 10. Rom. 3. 24—28. & 8. 3, 4. Gal. 2. 16. Heb. 7. 19. & 8. 12. & 9. 15. 1 John 2. 1, 2, 12.
g Ps. 32. 1, 2. Is. 1. 18. & 4. 4. & 44. 22. Rom. 8. 1—4. & 10. 4. & 3. 22. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Jer. 50. 20. Col. 1. 14. & 2. 10, 13.
h Heb. 9. 13, 14. & 10. 1, 11. Rom. 3. 19, 20. Gal. 2. 16. 13. 15. Is. 28. 14. & 29. 14. with Mat. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 41, 43. & 22. 7. & xxiv. Luke 19. 27, 42—44. & 21. 20—26. 1 Thes. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 17.
i Hab. 1. 5. Prov. 1. 30. & Acts

Verses 14—41. How long they staid, and what success the apostles had at Perga, is not recorded; but more is preserved of their labours at Antioch, the capital of Pisidia, which was their next remove.

1. On the sabbath-day, according to their custom, they went into the synagogue, and sat down, waiting a proper opportunity to deliver the message which they brought.

2. After the reading the law and prophets as usual, *the rulers of the synagogue*, probably acquainted with their public characters, and willing to hear what they had to say, *sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation*, or consolation, *to the people, say on. Note*, (1.) In public worship, the reading the Scriptures should always have a place. (2.) The preaching of the word, and expounding it with application to the hearts of the hearers, is one most essential end and use of our assembling on the Lord's day.

3. Paul declined not the invitation, but gracefully rising, and waving his hand that silence might be kept, he very affection-

ately and seriously addresses his brethren, entreating a patient and attentive audience.

(1.) He opens with reminding them of the peculiar favour which God had shown to their fathers. God had chosen the Jewish people in a covenant of peculiarity, and according to the promise made unto their fathers, had wonderfully multiplied and exalted them in Egypt, where they sojourned; and at last, when they were oppressed by Pharaoh, he brought them thence with a high hand, ver. 17. In the wilderness, amidst all their provocations, his patience bore with them, his bounteous hand fed them forty years, ver. 18. After destroying the accursed nations of Canaan, he gave them the country, by lot, for their inheritance, ver. 19. and, for about a space of four hundred and fifty years from their deliverance from Egypt, continued, in their emergencies, to raise them up divinely appointed officers, called judges, to save them from the hands of their enemies, until the times of Samuel the prophet, ver. 20. Afterwards, indulging them in their desire, he appointed Saul the son of Cis, a Benjamite, their king, whose reign, with Samuel's government, filled the space of forty years, ver. 21. And when he was rejected, then was David anointed to sit on Israel's throne, and raised from his low estate to that high dignity, a man to whom God bore the most honourable testimony, as one *after mine own heart*, approved and known to be faithful, *which shall fulfil all my pleasure*, and answer all my purposes and designs.

Herein the apostle seems to desire to conciliate the Jews to him, and engage their regard to his discourse; when it appears that, far from having any prejudice against the Jewish nation, as was suggested, or despising their peculiar honours, he dwells upon them with pleasure, in order to introduce the discourse of that Messiah, the Son of David, which was the great object he had in view.

(2.) As God had made to David a promise, that of his seed the Messiah should spring, the glorious hope of Israel, that promise he had now fulfilled in Jesus, the Saviour of his people from sin, misery, death, and hell, to introduce whose appearing John had preached *the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel*, inviting them to turn to that Messiah, whose forerunner he was, that by faith in him they might obtain remission of sins, (Mark i. 4. Luke iii. 3.) disclaiming that title himself, when the people were in doubt whether he were the Christ or not, but directing them to one presently to appear after him, so far transcending him in dignity, that he should count it an honour of which he was unworthy, to perform the meanest offices to him. This being then the main point in view, to bring them acquainted with him to whom John bore record, he pathetically urges them to consider the matter. *Men and brethren*, possessed of rational and immortal souls, *children of the stock of Abraham*, and of the promise made unto our fathers, *and whosoever among you feareth God*, whether Jews or proselytes, *to you is the word of this salvation sent*, and you are first called to partake of the inestimable blessings of the redemption which this Jesus hath obtained. *Note*, (1.) It is among the most invaluable mercies, to have the word of salvation sent to us. (2.) No condemnation will be so great and aggravated as theirs who reject the gospel word.

(3.) He plainly tells them of the great guilt and wickedness of the Jewish rulers, in rejecting, persecuting, and murdering the Lord's Christ. *They knew him not*, so fatally blinded were their minds by the prejudices which they had entertained, and the expectations they had formed of a temporal Messiah; *nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every sabbath-day*, in which the sufferings and death of the Messiah were at large foretold; but God so overruled their wickedness, that undesignedly *they have fulfilled* these Scriptures *in condemning him; and though*, even by the confession of his judge, his innocence was acknowledged, and *they found no cause of death in him*; yet, so malicious and enraged were they against him, *they desired Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him*, concerning his sufferings and death, even in the most minute particulars, *they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre*; brought to the dust of death, the lowest step of his humiliation. *Note*, (1.) Ignorance of the Scriptures is often found, where the sound of them in the ears is heard every sabbath-day. (2.) It will not excuse the sins of persecutors, that they did it ignorantly in unbelief, when they rejected the means of better information.

(4.) He insists at large on his glorious resurrection, as the grand foundation on which all the sure hope of salvation through Jesus was built. His enemies thought they had effectually defeated all his pretensions when they laid him in the grave; *but God raised him from the dead*, to their confusion, and as a token of the fullest approbation of his character and undertaking; a fact attested by a great cloud of witnesses, who had been most intimately acquainted with him before his death, and, during forty days, had many conferences with him, and ate and drank with him after his resurrection; the truth of which some of them had already sealed with their blood, and others in the face of death and danger still continued to declare. And to this resurrection of Jesus we now present bear testimony; proclaiming it as the most joyful tidings, that *the promise made unto the fathers*, of that Messiah in whom all nations of the world should be blessed, *he hath* now *fulfilled unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again*; whereby it appears that he was the glorious personage of whom David speaks; *as it is written also in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; from eternity the relation subsisted; and as God bore testimony to the dignity and divine character of his Son, at his baptism and transfiguration, so most eminently was Jesus *declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead*, Rom. i. 4. And that God raised him from the dead, no more to see corruption, is evident from Isa. lv. 3. where he saith, *I will give you the sure mercies of David*. Having there appointed his Son, according to the tenor of the everlasting covenant, *the leader and commander of the people*, and by an oath confirmed his promise, it became necessary, that he who by his suffering and death was to ratify the covenant, and obtain these mercies for his people, should rise again to make them *sure*, and ever live to maintain them in the possession of their invaluable privileges. In farther proof of which, *he saith in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption*, (Psal. xvi. 10.) which words can only be applicable to the Messiah; for as to David himself, it is evident, *after he had served his generation by the will of God*, discharging his high office with great fidelity for his people's good, *he fell asleep* in the arms of death, resting from all his labours, *and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption*, his corpse, like others, returning unto dust: *but he whom God raised*, even Jesus the Messiah, of whom David spoke in this psalm, exactly fulfilled it, *and* rising on the third day, *saw no corruption*, nor ever shall, God having exalted him to his own right hand in glory everlasting, to bestow these covenant mercies on all his redeemed people, until time shall be no more. *Note*, (1.) Like David we must learn not to live for ourselves, but for God's glory, and the good of mankind. (2.) To a faithful soul death is but a sleep, when he rests from his labours, and is in joy and felicity. (3.) The more we examine the Scriptures, the more confirmed shall we be, that Jesus is the Christ, in whom we see all the prophecies so eminently and exactly fulfilled.

(5.) He applies what he said to their hearts, as a matter in which they were most nearly concerned. *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins*; by his sufferings it is obtained, in his name it is declared, and by his authority bestowed; *and by him* through the merit of his obedience unto death, *all that believe are justified from all things*; discharged from the condemnation of the law, and the guilt of all their transgressions, be they ever

so many, great, or aggravated; *from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*, legal or ceremonial, none being able to fulfil the moral law in perfection, and the ceremonial prescribed no sacrifice for wilful transgression; and therefore all who looked for justification by the deeds of the law, were necessarily left under wrath and condemnation. *Note*, (1.) The great gospel promise and privilege is forgiveness of sins. In Christ Jesus there is a free and full pardon promised to the miserable and the desperate. (2.) It is impossible for a fallen sinner to be just before God by any obedience of his own, or by other means and method than that of his own appointment, even faith in the blood and righteousness of him who justifieth the ungodly. (3.) All who truly believe in Jesus are complete in him; all he did, all he suffered, is reckoned to our account, and God is therefore righteous and just in forgiving our sins, since he hath accepted one for all, *the just for the unjust*.

Lastly, He solemnly warns them of the danger of rejecting this salvation. *Beware therefore lest*, through your obstinate infidelity, *that* fearful and alarming threatening *should come upon you which is spoken of in* one of *the prophets*, (Hab. i. 5.) concerning the men of that generation in which he lived; *Behold, ye despisers*, and *wonder* at your own stupidity, and my vengeance ready to light upon you; *and perish*, be covered with shame, and hide yourselves in terrors at the approaching judgments; *for I work a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you*; such as the destruction of their temple and nation by the Romans, a judgment more terrible than ever before fell upon them by the hand of the Chaldeans. Or perhaps it may refer to the glorious work of redemption and mercy which should be extended to the Gentiles, whilst the Jews would be rejected for their wilful unbelief and impenitence; neither of which would they believe, though told them by persons of the most undoubted credit and authority.

42. ¶ And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the [k] Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them [*] the next sabbath. 43. Now, when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them [l] to continue in the grace of God. 44. ¶ And the next sabbath-day [m] came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. 45. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, [n] they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. 46. Then Paul and Barnabas [o] waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should [p] first have been spoken to you: but seeing [q] ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, [r] we turn to the Gentiles: 47. For [s] so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. 48. And when the Gentiles heard this, they [t] were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: [u] and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. 49. [x] And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. 50. ¶ But the Jews [y] stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. 51. [z] But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. 52. And the [a] disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

k Proselytes. Ver. 16, 26, 43.

* Gr. *in the week between*, or *sabbath between*.

l 2 Cor. 6. 1. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Heb. 12. 15. 1 Pet. 5. 12. ch. 11. 23. & 14. 22. & 20. 22, 24. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Jude 20, 21. 2 Pet. 3. 14, 17, 18.

m Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10.

n Job 5. 2. Eccl. 4. 4. ver. 50. ch. 14. 2, 19. & 17. 5, 13. & 18. 6. & 6. 9. Mat. 23. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 4.

o Ch. 4. 13. Eph. 6. 19, 20.

p Mat. 10. 6. ch. 3. 26. & 13. 26. Rom. 1. 16. Mat. 15. 24. & 22. 3, 4, 9. Rom. 9. 4, 5. John 4. 22.

q Exod. 32. 9. ch. 7. 51. John i, ii. Ps. 81. 11, 12.

r Exod. 32. 10. Deut. 32. 21. Rom. 10. 19. Is. 55. 5. Mat. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 28, 41, 43. ch. 1. 8. & 18. 6. & 28. 28.

s Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15. Luke 24. 47. ch. 1. 8. with Is. 49. 6. & 42. 6, 7. ch. 9. 15. Eph. 3. 6, 8. Ps. 98. 2, 3. Luke 2. 32.

t Luke 2. 10, 11. Rom. 15. 8—12.

u Ch. 2. 47. Rom. 8. 28—30. & 9. 23. & 11. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 19. John 10. 16. Is. 56. 8. & 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 54. 1, 3.

x Is. 2. 3. ch. 6. 7. & 19. 4, 20. & 12. 24. Col. 1. 6, 23. 2 Thes. 3. 1.

y See ver. 43, 45. ch. 21. 10. 2 Tim. 3. 11. Mat. 10. 23.

z Mat. 10. 14. ch. 14. 6, 11. & 18. 6.

a Ver. 48. ch. 2. 46. & 5. 41. Eph. 3. 13. Phil. 2. 17, 18. 1 Pet. 4. 13. 14. & 5. 10.

Verses 42—52. Nothing could be more kindly spoken than the discourse of the apostle, and more respectful to the Jewish people. But we are told,

1. The ill reception many of the Jews gave to his sermon. They went *out of the synagogue*, in open contempt of the apostle, and of the doctrine of Christ which he preached; intimating thereby an avowed resolution never to hear him again, or regard ought that he could say. And justly are they abandoned to their infidelity, who obstinately reject the counsel of the Lord against their own souls, and will not even give the gospel a candid hearing.

2. The Gentiles hereupon, the proselytes of righteousness, who attended the Jewish worship, *besought*, that if the Jews refused to receive the gracious message, *these words might be preached to them the next sabbath*. They longed for that salvation which the others slighted.

3. Though the generality of the Jews turned their backs on the apostles and their preaching, many were affected by what they heard, both of the native Jews, and religious proselytes, and they *followed Paul and Barnabas* that they might in private have some farther conference with them on a matter so important; and glad to see them thus impressed, they conversed freely with them on the subject, to carry on the good work begun in their hearts, warmly exhorting and persuading them by every powerful argument, *to continue in the grace of God*, faithfully embracing, and boldly professing the gospel doctrines, depending on the Spirit's influence, and waiting in the use of all appointed means upon the Lord. *Note*, (1.) They who truly receive the word of Christ, will follow his ministers, and long for farther instruction in righteousness. (2.) Continuance in the grace of God must prove we are truly partakers of it.

4. The next sabbath the auditory was immense. Probably in the week days the apostles had improved every opportunity to spread the truths of God; and as the Gentiles were graciously received by them, they flocked together on the sabbath; and not only the religious proselytes, but many of those who were before idolatrous, invited by curiosity, or from better motives, assembled *to hear the word of God*.

5. *When the Jews*, who were enemies to the gospel, *saw the multitudes*, and among them many of the idolatrous Gentiles, whom they abhorred, *they were filled with envy* that to them the word of God should be spoken, and that these new preachers should grow so popular; *and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming*; with the utmost rage and passion they disputed against the doctrines of the gospel, abused and vilified the preacher, and blasphemed the holy name of Jesus, who was the great subject of the apostle's discourse. *Note*, It is no new thing to hear the glorious truths of Christ, and his salvation treated with virulence and blasphemy by men of corrupt minds.

6. *Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold*; far from being inti-

midated by such opposition, they appeared inspired with greater zeal, and showed more undaunted courage in delivering their message, *and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you;* in respect to the privileges of your birth, and the command of our Master, who sent us forth to publish his gospel, beginning at Jerusalem, and sending the first calls to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; *but seeing ye put it from you,* and wilfully reject and vilify this great salvation of the Messiah, *and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life,* which can only be obtained by that faith in him and his gospel which you despise, and are unworthy to hear any more, *lo, we turn to the Gentiles,* leaving you of this place to your obstinate impenitence and infidelity, and henceforth proclaiming the salvation which is in Jesus Christ to the heathen; and herein we act by divine warrant, and in exact correspondence with the Scriptures. *For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth,* Isa. xlix. 6. *Note,* (1.) The more obstinately sinners oppose the word of God, the more bold and zealous should his ministers be in maintaining the truths of his gospel. (2.) They who reject God's ministers, and their message, pronounce sentence on themselves, *as unworthy of eternal life.* (3.) Christ is the Sun of Righteousness arisen on this benighted world; in him we see the way to present and eternal salvation opened; and all, to the ends of the earth, are invited to look to him, and be saved.

7. *When the Gentiles heard this,* that the salvation which the apostles preached extended to them, according to God's express word and warrant, *they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord,* praising him for sending the light of his truth among them; *and as many as were ordained to eternal life,* who not only, like the stony ground hearers, expressed a transitory joy in what they heard, but were in God's eternal and all-wise decrees appointed unto glory, to stand amidst the shining ranks of the church triumphant, they *believed* to the saving of their souls. *And the word of the Lord,* which was with such gracious effect preached in the capital, *was published throughout all the region,* both by the apostolic labours, and the Gentile converts, who longed to engage their brethren to share with them in this common salvation. *Note,* (1.) The gospel is glad news to the sinner that sees and feels the need of that pardon and grace therein promised. (2.) They who have tasted the preciousness of God's word, cannot but glorify him for his unspeakable gift. (3.) Eternal life is the gift of God; and in their hearts who are ordained to partake of it, doth he work the work of faith with power. (4.) If we have ourselves received the knowledge of Jesus, and his rich grace, we shall delight to spread abroad the savour of his name.

8. The unbelieving Jews, filled with malice and enmity against the apostles, *stirred up the devout and honourable women,* who were proselytes, and most zealous for Judaism, *and the chief men of the city,* probably by their means, representing the apostles as dangerous men; *and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. Note,* (1.) Wherever the gospel is preached with success, there the ministers of it may expect the devil's rage. (2.) None persecute so bitterly as those who are devout, and make profession of religion. (3.) The best of men have been expelled with ignominy from places where their successful labours provoked the enmity of those who should have protected and honoured them; but such reproach is their highest honour; such suffering their truest preferment.

Lastly, Being thus violently driven out of the city, *they shook off the dust of their feet against them,* in detestation of their wickedness, and as a testimony against their persecutors in the judgment-day, according to their Master's order, Luke ix. 5. *and they came to Iconium,* the chief city of Lycaonia, a neighbouring province. *And the disciples,* whom they left behind, though deprived of these faithful teachers, and beholding these persecutions, far from being disheartened, *were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost;* blessed with the most abundant consolations in their souls, mightily enriched with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and making a bold and noble profession of their faith, amidst all opposition. *Note,* (1.) Wo to the place against which the rejected ministers of Jesus shake off the dust of their feet; Sodom's vengeance shall be lighter than the doom of that city. (2.) As our tribulations for Christ abound, he can, and usually doth, cause our consolations to abound also.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 46.

We have in this chapter a further account of the progress of the gospel, by the ministry of Paul and Barnabas, among the Gentiles. Here is, 1. *Their successful preaching time at Iconium, and their being driven thence by the violence of their persecutors,* ver. 1—7. 2. *Their healing of a lame man at Lystra, and the difficulty they found to restrain the people from worshipping them as gods,* ver. 8—18. 3. *The outrage of the people against Paul, at the instigation of the Jews; the effect of which was, that they stoned him, as they thought, to death; but he was wonderfully restored to life again,* ver. 19, 20. 4. *The visit which Paul and Barnabas made to the churches which they had planted, to confirm and put them into order,* ver. 21—23. 5. *Their return to Antioch, from whence they were sent forth; the good they did by the way, and the report they made to the church of Antioch of their expedition,* ver. 24—28.

1. AND it came to pass in * Iconium, that they went both together [a] into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that [b] a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. 2. [c] But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil-affected against the brethren. 3. Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, [d] which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, [e] and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. 4. [f] But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. 5. And [g] when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, 6. [h] They were ware of *it,* and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: 7. [i] And there they preached the gospel.

* A city eastward of Antioch in Pisidia; the capital of Lycaonia, at present called Cogni.

a Mat. 10. 27. ch. 13. 5, 14, 46. & 17. 1, 2, 10. & 18. 4, 6, 7, 19. & 3 26.

b Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. ch. 13. 48.

c Ver. 19. ch. 13. 45, 50. & 17. 5, 13. & 18. 6. Jer. 26. 11. Amos 7. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 16.

d Ch. 20. 24. ch. 2. 22. & 19. 11. Mark 16. 20. Heb. 2. 4. John 14. 12.

e Ch. 20. 32. Rom. 1. 16. & 15. 19.

f Luke 2. 34. John 7. 43.

g Ps. 2. 1, 2. & 83. 5. John 7. 48. 2 Tim. 3. 11. Mat. 5. 11. & 10. 18, 22.

h Mat. 10. 17, 23. ch. 8. 1.

i Ch. 8. 4. & 11. 19. Gal. 6. 9. Eph. 3. 8, 9. 2 Tim. 4. 2.

Verses 1—7. Though the apostles were so ignominiously treated by the Jews at Antioch, yet they did not desist from their accustomed manner of visiting their synagogues first at Iconium, and making them the offer of the gospel.

1. *They went both together into the synagogue,* as mutual fellow-helpers, and that out of the mouth of two witnesses every word might be established; *and so spoke, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed;* so powerful was their preaching, and so mightily did the Spirit of God bless their ministrations, to the conviction and conversion of their hearers.

2. This success, as usual, exasperated the infidel Jews, who spirited up the Gentiles, *and made their minds evil-affected*

against the brethren, by representing them as dangerous men, who were carrying on some bad design. Persecutors would thus always cover malignity under specious pretences.

3. Though the apostles saw the prejudices and rancour entertained against them and their new converts, they were not disheartened, but *abode long time speaking boldly in the Lord*, in his glorious cause, and supported by his power and Spirit, *which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands*, as an attestation to the truth of the gospel which they preached. *Note*, (1.) The gospel is *the word of Christ's grace*, containing the richest discoveries of free, boundless, and undeserved mercy to the sinful sons of men. (2.) They who go forth in the strength of the Lord will not be dismayed at the frowns of their enemies.

4. Notwithstanding the malice of the Jews, a strong party was formed for the apostles, and the city was divided, and for a time the persecution was restrained. At last, the Jewish party prevailing, an assault was made both of the Gentiles and Jews, supported by the magistrates, in order to seize the apostles, and *use them despitefully*, treating them with every kind of ignominy, *and then to stone them*, as blasphemers and miscreants unworthy to live. *Note*, (1.) If the gospel make a division in a place or city that was before at peace, it is not to be imputed to any tendency which the gracious message hath to create such disturbance, but to the enmity of the natural heart against God, which cannot bear to see the power of gospel grace in the conversations of others: and far better is it to bear reproach and persecution, as the troublers of the false peace of sinners, than to suffer them to swim securely down the stream into the gulf of perdition. (2.) If the enemies of the truth are so unanimous in opposition, shall the friends of the gospel be less united in the glorious cause?

5. The apostles got intelligence of this conspiracy, and to escape from the hands of these blood-thirsty men, *fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: and there they preached the gospel*, not desisting from their labours, though compelled to fly for their lives. Thus the enmity of their persecutors contributed but the more to spread that gospel which they opposed.

8. ¶ And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, * [k] being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: 9. The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had [l] faith to be healed, 10. Said with a loud voice, [m] Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. 11. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, † The [n] gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. 12. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. 13. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, ‡ brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and [o] would have done sacrifice with the people. 14. *Which* when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard *of* they [p] rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, 15. And saying,

* He had no muscular power in his feet; or perhaps he was what is termed club-footed.

k Ch. 3. 2. & 8. 23. John 5. 5. Luke 13. 16.

l Mat. 9. 22. Mark 9. 23, 24.

m Mark 3. 5. ch. 3. 6, 8. Is. 35. 6.

† Calmet thinks this was a corrupt Greek dialect: Jablonski thinks it was that of the Cappadocians which was mingled with Syriac.

n Ch. 8. 10. & 28. 6.

‡ Lystra was under the guardianship of Jupiter Custos.

o Dan. 2. 46. Rev. 19. 10. & 22. 8. ch. 10. 25. Hos. 4. 9.

p Mat. 26. 65. Gen. 37. 29, 34. Is. 36. 22. & 37. 1.

Sirs, [q] why do ye these things? We also are men [r] of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these [s] vanities unto the [t] living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: 16. [u] Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. 17. [x] Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. 18. And with these sayings [y] scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

q Ch. 10. 26. Rev. 19. 10. & 22. 9.

r Ch. 10. 26. Jam. 5. 17.

s 1 Cor. 8. 4. 1 Sam. 12. 21. 1 Kin. 16. 13. Is. 44. 9—20. Jer. 10. 14, 15. Amos 2. 4. Rom. 1. 21. Eph. 4. 7.

t Jer. 10. 10. John 5. 26. ch. 4. 24. Exod. 20. 11. Rom. 1. 20. Jer. 32. 17. Zech. 12. 1. ch. 17. 25. Gen. 1. 1. Ps. 146. 6. & 124. 8. Rev. 14. 7.

u Ps. 81. 12. ch. 17. 30. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. Ps. 147. 20. Eph. 3. 5. & 2. 12.

x Rom. 1. 20. Ps. 19. 1, 2. & 36. 5, 6. & 145. 9. Mat. 5. 45. Lev. 26. 4. Deut. 11. 14. & 28. 12. Job 5. 10. Ps. 65. 10. & 68. 9, 10. & 147. 8. Jer. 14. 22.

y Jer. 13. 23, 27. Is. 48. 4.

Verses 8—18. During their stay at Lystra we are told,

1. Of a notable cure performed by Paul on a man lame from his birth. In the assembly where Paul was preaching, he sat attentive to his discourse, when the apostle *stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving*, by the spirit of discernment, *that he had faith to be healed*, and was persuaded of the power with which the apostles were endued to cure his lameness, incurable as it was by any human means; he *said with a loud voice*, that all present might hear and take notice of the miracle, *Stand upright on thy feet; and* instantly *he leaped and walked*, restored to perfect strength. *Note*, (1.) They who love the word of God, though they are lame, and cannot walk, will be carried to hear it. (2.) The pains which some take to attend God's worship, though lame and infirm, will rise up to condemn their sloth and negligence who, though so much better able to go, indulge themselves at home. (3.) When Jesus speaks to the impotent soul in his word, then, though helpless to all good before, our hearts exult with holy joy, and rise to run the way of his commandments.

2. Astonished at what they had seen, the idolatrous Gentiles who were present, concluded, according to the notions of their pagan theology, that the gods were come down to them in the likeness of men, and in an ecstasy of joy at this supposed honour done them, in their own language expressed aloud the sentiments of their hearts; and, agreeably to the absurd ideas which they had received of their gods, *they called Barnabas, Jupiter*, being probably the elder man, and his stature more majestic; *and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker*, Mercury being the god of eloquence, and reputed the messenger who went on the errands of Jove and the superior deities. *Then the priest of Jupiter which was before their city*, reputed their patron god, or whose temple stood in the suburbs, *brought oxen and garlands unto the gates*, the place of concourse, where Paul and Barnabas were speaking to the people, or to the door of the house where they lodged, *and would have done sacrifice with the people*, crowning them with their garlands, and offering their sacrifices before them.

3. With horror and indignation, when the apostles perceived their design, *they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things?* Far from suffering the people to continue in so dangerous a mistake, though it brought them such honour, they desired to renounce all such vain-glory, and with earnestness remonstrated against a design so impious and idolatrous. Far from assuming divinity, *we also are men of like passions with you*, subject to all the infirmities of humanity, and corrupt and sinful worms of the earth, as the rest of mankind, *and preach unto you*, as ministers and ambassadors of Christ, which is the highest honour we claim, *that ye should turn from these vanities*, these absurd, useless, un-

profitable deities, which are mere nothings, creatures of the fancy, which never existed, and whose worship is the height of folly, as well as impiety; and that ye should be brought *unto* the worship and service of *the living God*, who alone is worthy to be feared and adored, as the fountain of life, and the great Creator of all; *which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein*, visible or invisible: *who in time past*, in his mysterious ways of providence, which are all righteous and just, *suffered all nations to walk in their own ways*, with much long-suffering bearing with their provocations. *Nevertheless he left not himself without witness*, but gave them sufficient evidences of his wisdom and goodness, of his eternal power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20. *in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness*, which gifts of his beneficence should have led our hearts up unto him, and left us without excuse in our ignorance of him, neglect, and unthankfulness: to persist therefore in these abominations of idolatry, now the gospel light was come unto them, would be peculiarly criminal. *Note*, (1.) All our temporal mercies should lead up our hearts to God, and looking above all second causes, the great Author of all should be constantly seen in all the bounties of his providence, in every drop of dew that waters the earth, and every blade that breaks the clod. (2.) The goodness of God to us should engage our hearts towards him, and if we have lived in ignorance before, we are called to improve what better light he now graciously communicates. (3.) Our gratitude is due to God not only for the food he bestows, but for the gladness of heart which he gives to make use of his blessings.

4. *With these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them*; all their expostulations and entreaties with difficulty prevailed upon them to desist, so foolishly obstinate were they in their mistaken persuasion.

19. ¶ And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, [z] and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing [a] he had been dead. 20. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. 21. ¶ [b] And when they had preached the gospel to that city, * and had † taught many, they returned again to [c] Lystra, and *to* Iconium, and *to* Antioch, 22. [d] Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them [e] to continue in the faith, and that we must [f] through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. 23. And when [g] they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. 24. And after they had passed throughout [h] Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. 25. And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia: ‡ 26. And thence sailed to [i] Antioch, from whence they had been [k] recommended to the grace of God for the work which they [l] fulfilled. 27. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they [m] rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had [n] opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. 28. And there they abode long time with the disciples.

z 2 Cor. 11. 25. ch. 7. 58. & 13. 45. 2 Tim. 3. 11. Heb. 13. 12.
a 2 Cor. 1. 8. & 4. 10. & 11. 23.
b Luke 2. 10, 11. Mark 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19, 20.
* Viz. Derbe, a city in the same province.
† Gr. *discipled many.*
c Ver. 1, 6. ch. 13. 14, 15. 2 Tim. 3. 11.
d Ch. 15. 32, 41. & 18. 23.
e Ch. 11. 23. & 13. 43. Col. 1. 23. Jude 3, 20, 21.
f Mat. 10. 38. & 16. 24. Luke 22. 28, 29. & 24. 26. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. & 3. 12.
g Tit. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 4. 14. ch. 8. 18. & 1. 26. & 6. 6. & 13. 3. & 20. 32. 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7. The words may imply that Paul and Barnabas led and directed in the elections.
h Ch. 13. 13, 14.
‡ A sea-port town in Pamphylia.
i In Syria. Ch. 11. 19, 26. & 13. 1. & 15. 38.
k See ver. 23. ch. 20. 32. & 13. 1—13.
l 1 Cor. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 2. & 4. 2, 5. Col. 1. 25. & 4. 17. Eph. 4. 12.
m Ch. 4. 11. & 15. 4, 12. & 21. 19.
n 1 Cor. 16. 9. 2 Cor. 2. 12. Col. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 7, 8. 2 Thes. 3. 1.

Verses 19—28. How fickle is the mind of vain men! how soon are they, who have no foundation, carried about with every wind! They who are deified to-day, are thus often detested to-morrow. It becomes us, if we would have abiding honour, to seek that which cometh from God only.

1. The apostles are brought into the most imminent danger, and Paul stoned and left for dead. The Jews, their implacable enemies, followed them from Iconium and Antioch, on purpose to counteract their labours; and with diabolical malice to prevent, to their utmost, the progress of the gospel. And soon they found means to *persuade* the wavering multitude that these men were deceivers, turbulent and seditious; and exasperated them so highly, that seizing Paul, against whom they bore the bitterest grudge, as the chief preacher, *they stoned him*, in a popular tumult, *and drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him*, lamenting over him, praying he might be restored to life, or with an intent to bury him, *he rose up*, quickened by miraculous power; *and*, notwithstanding the late wounds and bruises he had received, *he came into the city*, strengthened in his body, and not daunted in his mind by all that he had endured. *Note*, (1.) True disciples will not forsake their persecuted ministers, but own them in the face of every reproach and danger. (2.) God's faithful servants, though brought to the gates of the grave, shall not die till their work is done.

2. The *next day Paul departed with Barnabas for Derbe*; and when, as usual, they had preached the gospel, and *taught*, their ministry being blessed to the conversion of *many*, they returned back again to the cities of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, *confirming the souls of the disciples*, settling them on Christ the great foundation, that no troubles felt or feared, no caresses or temptations might move them away from the hope of the gospel; *and exhorting them to continue in the faith* of Jesus, in the belief of his office, glory, and gospel, and in the bold and open profession of his name; *and saying, that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*, for which therefore they must prepare, nor count as if some strange thing happened unto them, since all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must share this common lot. *Note*, (1.) They who have received the gospel-word have still need of farther confirmation, that they may be built up in their most holy faith: and ministers must labour to establish the professors, as well as to awaken the careless. (2.) Nothing but faith can enable us to overcome the snares, the allurements, and discouragements of this present evil world: they who would stand in the evil day, must continue to hold fast on Christ. (3.) The way to heaven lies through much tribulation; but let us look to the end, and keep the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in view, and then we shall count all the sufferings of the present time as light afflictions that are but for a moment.

3. They *ordained elders*, or presbyters, *in every church*, to lead their devotions, minister the sacraments, preach the word, and watch over the flock of God committed to their charge; men of gravity and piety, selected from the other disciples, and judged best qualified for the arduous work of the ministry; and having *prayed with fasting* for the supplies of grace and the divine benediction upon them, *they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed*; both the elders and their congregations: begging that the Lord, who had begun the good work, would perfect the same; nourishing them up in the words of sound doctrine, and

preserving them unto his everlasting kingdom. *Note*, (1.) The work of the ministry cannot be undertaken with too great solemnity; and they who feel the weight of it, will not fail importunately to seek, by prayer, for more than human power, to carry them through. (2.) We may comfortably and confidently commit to the divine keeping, those who have faithfully obeyed the calls of divine grace, for none shall pluck them out of the Saviour's hand. (3.) The best parting of friends is in prayer to the Lord; mutually commending ourselves to his care and love.

4. The apostles continued their journey to Antioch in Syria, passing through Pisidia, till they came to Pamphylia, where they preached the word at *Perga*, a city of that province, and *Attalia*, another town on the sea-coast, and from thence they sailed to Antioch, *from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled;* and now were returned from their successful expedition, bringing back a full answer to the prayers that had been put up at their departure. *And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them*, ascribing nothing to themselves, but giving him the glory, to whom alone the praise of all was due: *and how he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles*, great multitudes of whom had been converted unto the faith of Jesus. *And there*, at Antioch, *they abode long time with the disciples;* comforting, establishing, strengthening them. *Note*, (1.) Whatever good is done by our preaching, we must remember that all the efficacy proceeds not from us, but from the grace of God. (2.) The way into the kingdom of grace and glory lies through the door of faith, which God alone can open.

CHAP. XV.—ANNO DOMINI, 46.

Unhappy divisions here first appear in the Christian church, but they are soon allayed. Here is, 1. *A controversy raised at Antioch by the Judaizing teachers, about circumcising the Gentile converts, and causing them to observe the ceremonial law*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *A consultation held with the church at Jerusalem about this matter, and the sending of delegates thither for that purpose*, ver. 2—5. 3. *An account of what passed in the synod that was convened upon this occasion*, ver. 6. *What Peter said*, ver. 7—11. *What Paul and Barnabas discoursed of*, ver. 12. *And lastly, what James proposed for the settling of this matter*, ver. 13—21. 4. *The result of this debate, and the circular letter which was written to the Gentile converts, directing them how to govern themselves with respect to the Jews*, ver. 23—29. 5. *The delivering of this determination to the church at Antioch, and the satisfaction it gave them*, ver. 30—35. 6. *A second expedition designed by Paul and Barnabas to preach to the Gentiles, in which they quarrelled about their assistant, and parted upon it, one steering one course, and the other another*, ver. 36—41.

1. AND[a] certain men which came down from Judea taught the [b] brethren, *and said*, [c] Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2. [d] When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto [e] the apostles and elders about this question. 3. And being [f] brought on their way by the church, they passed through [g] Phenice and Samaria, [h] declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. cir. 52.

4. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and *of* the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. 5. ¶ But there rose up [i] certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.*

a Ver. 5. ch. 20. 30. & 21. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 1. Rev. 2. 9.
b Ver. 19, 23.
c Gen. 17. 10—14. Lev. 12. 3. John 7. 22. Gal. 5. 2—4. ver. 5. Phil. 3. 2. Col. 2. 8, 12, 16. Tit. 1. 10.
d Ch. 11. 25, 26, 30. & 13. 1. & 14. 4. Gal. 2. 1, 9.
e Ch. 1. 13, 26. & 12. 1. John 16. 13. Prov. 15. 22. & 11. 14. & 24. 6.
f Ch. 21. 5. 2 Tim. 4. 11. Tit. 3. 13. Rom. 15. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 6, 11.
g Ch. 11. 19. & 8. 14.
h Ch. 14 27. & 13. 43, 52. & 21. 19, 20.
i Said they. Ver. 1. ch. 21. 20. & 6. 7. with 26. 5.
* There is a strange proneness in us to make our own opinion and practice a rule and a law to every body else; to judge of all about us by our own standard, and to conclude, that, because we do well, all do wrong who do not just as we do.

Verses 1—5. The peace of that happy society at Antioch, which was the envy of the devil, begins to be interrupted by some, who sowed the seeds of controversy, the bane of the Christian church.

1. *Certain men came down from Judea*, not sent by the apostles, but instigated by their own pride and prejudices, *and taught the* Gentile *brethren*, saying, *Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved;* as if their faith in Christ, and adherence to the gospel was insufficient, unless they also submitted to this distinguishing ordinance, and the other rites of the ceremonial law. The Jewish Christians, it seems, themselves were *zealous for the law*, chap. xxi. 20. and were permitted to observe the Jewish ritual as a thing in its nature indifferent, and from which the destruction of the temple, and the dissolution of the Jewish polity, would soon emancipate them; but not satisfied with being themselves indulged in this practice, they wanted to enslave the consciences of the Gentile converts under the same yoke: and that on peril of their damnation if they rejected it. *Note*, Men are strangely disposed to make their own opinion and practice the standard for others, and to enforce their fancies and inventions as of essential consequence; liberally denouncing their anathemas, and consigning to the pit of destruction all who will not conform to their mode of thinking and worship, and submit their consciences to their yoke; but when we are making God's word our rule, and, according to our best light, following his will, we need little regard these rash denunciations.

2. Paul and Barnabas boldly withstood these Judaizing teachers, and disputed against them as the corrupters of genuine Christianity; and when a growing dissension seemed to threaten this flourishing church, *they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question*, that the matter being discussed in a full assembly of all the chief ministers of the church, the pretensions of these corrupters might be confounded, and the liberty of the Gentiles confirmed.

3. The two great apostles of the Gentiles hereupon departed, being respectfully attended part of the way by some chief brethren of the church; and, as they passed through Phenice and Samaria, *they caused great joy unto all the brethren, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles;* for to a faithful soul nothing is matter of more pure unfeigned delight, than to hear that others are made partakers of the same grace which we have tasted.

4. *The church* of Jerusalem, and *the apostles* Cephas, James, and John, and *the elders*, or presbyters, received these distinguished messengers with high respect, and expressed their full approbation of their conduct, when they heard what they had done, and their success among the Gentiles: but *certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed* in Jesus as the Messiah, and made profession of faith in him, still retained many of their former tenets, and were bigoted to the ceremonial law; they *rose up* therefore, insisting, that it was needful for them not only to believe in Jesus, but also to be circumcised, and keep the law,

in order to obtain acceptance with God; thus most highly derogating from the free grace of God, and the great doctrine of justification by faith alone.

6. [k] And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. 7. ¶ And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, [l] Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8. And God, [m] which knoweth the hearts, [n] bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us: 9. And [o] put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10. Now therefore why tempt ye God, [p] to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11. But we believe [q] that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as [r] they. 12. ¶ Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, [s] declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. 13. ¶ And [t] after they had held their peace, [u] James answered, saying, [x] Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me: 14. Simeon hath declared how God at the first [y] did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16. [z] After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17. [a] That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18. [b] Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19. Wherefore my sentence is, [c] that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles [d] are turned to God: 20. But that we write unto them, that they abstain from [e] pollutions of idols, and *from* [f] fornication, and *from* [g] things strangled, and *from* blood. 21. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being [h] read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.

k Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Prov. 11. 14. & 15. 22.

l Ch. 10. 20, 34—48. & 11. 12—18.

m Ch. 1. 24. 1 Chr. 28. 9. & 29. 17. Ps. 7. 10. Jer. 11. 20. & 17. 10. & 20. 12. Heb. 4. 13. Rev. 2. 23.

n Ch. 10. 43—45. & 11. 15. & 2. 4. & 4. 31.

o Ch. 10. 15, 28. & 11. 17. & 12. 24. & 13. 48. & 14. 1, 27. 1 Cor. 1. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 1. 22. Rom. 3. 29, 30.

p Mat. 23. 4. Gal. 5. 1.

q Eph. 1. 7. & 2. 7, 8. Col. 1. 14. Rom. 5. 20, 21. & 6. 23. & 8. 1—4. & 10. 4. Rev. 5. 9. Gal. 2. 16. Tit. 2. 11. & 3. 4—7.

r Our fathers, Ver. 10.

s Ver. 4. ch. 11. 6. & xiii. xiv. & 14. 27. & 21. 19.

t 1 Cor. 14. 30, 40.

u Not Mat. 4. 21. ch. 12. 1. but Mark 3. 18. & 15. 40. Jam. 1. 1. ch. 12. 17.

x See ch. 13. 15, 26. & 22. 1. & 23. 1.

y Ver. 7. 12. Luke 1. 78. Tit. 2. 11, 14. Rom. 11. 36. Is. 43. 20, 21.

z Amos 9. 11, 12. Is. 54. 1—5. & 42. 1, 4, 6. & 43, 6. & xlix. lx. Ezek. xl—xlviii. Is. 2. 2, 3. Mic. 4. 1.

a Gen. 9. 27. & 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 19. 23. & 42. 1, 6, 7. & 45. 22, 24. & 49. 6. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20—23. Mal. 1. 11. Joel 2. 32. Rom. 11. 29.

b Heb. 4. 13. Is. 41. 22, 23. & 44. 7. & 46. 10. Eph. 1. 11. ch. 17. 26.

c Ver. 10, 24. Gal. 5. 1—4. Rom. 15. 2. ver. 28.

d 1 Thes. 1. 9. Eph. 2. 1, 4—10. Tit. 3. 5. Is. 55. 7.

e Exod. 20. 3. & 34. 15. 1 Cor. 8. 1—10. & 10. 14, 20, 21. ch. 21. 25. Rom. 14. 14. ver. 29. 1 John 5. 21. Col. 3. 5.

f 1 Cor. 5. 1. & 10. 8. Eph. 4. 17. 1 Thes. 4. 3, 5, 7. Heb. 12. 15. & 13. 4.

g Gen. 9. 4. Lev. 3. 17. & 17. 14. & 7. 26.

h Neh. 8. 1. ch. 13. 15, 27. Luke 4. 16.

Verses 6—21. The first general council that had yet sat to decide on the unhappy disputes which were beginning to arise in the church, is here with great seriousness assembled, to hear, consider, and determine. After much disputing on the subject, we have,

1. Peter's speech on the occasion. He had heard what had been said on both sides of the argument, and therefore, as one of the most respectable personages in that assembly, rises to deliver his opinion.

He reminds them how God had sent him several years before to preach the gospel to Cornelius and the Gentiles who were with him, and had thereby led them by faith to Jesus Christ for life and salvation. The same gifts had been bestowed on them as on the Jewish converts, and God had himself herein testified his acceptance and approbation of them; making no difference between them, *purifying their hearts by faith*, as justified and sanctified by the blood, (the righteousness and grace of Jesus,) without the least need of circumcision and the ceremonial observances. Since, therefore, God had so evidently decided the matter, it was the highest presumption, and no better than tempting God, arraigning his wisdom and authority, to pretend a right to counteract what he had done, and repeal what he had determined; and it was a great injury to the Gentile brethren, to put that yoke of ceremonial institutions upon their neck, that had been so burdensome to themselves and their fathers, and which was now absolutely useless, since the salvation by Jesus Christ was alike free to Jew and Gentile, and both were to be saved by grace through faith, without the least respect to circumcision, or any legal institutions: *We* therefore, says Peter, expect to be *saved even as they*, and they as freely as we. *Note*, (1.) The salvation of the gospel is a common salvation, free from all terms and conditions whatsoever, bestowed by grace, and accepted by faith alone. (2.) They who have the real faith of the gospel, will certainly evidence its purifying efficacy upon their hearts. (3.) All who hold the head Christ, and walk in holiness as Christ also walked, however in some sentiments they may differ from us, are cordially to be embraced by us as brethren.

2. Paul and Barnabas, instead of ten thousand arguments, related simply *the miracles and wonders which God had wrought among the Gentiles by them, whilst all the multitude kept* a profound *silence*, listening attentively to so wonderful and pleasing a narrative; wherein it evidently appeared, both by the *miracles* which God enabled them to work, and by the *success* he gave them in the conversion of the Gentiles, that he approved their labours, and bore testimony to the acceptance of these Gentile converts. What need could there be, that they should be burdened with the works of the law, who *had received the Holy Ghost by the hearing of faith?* (See Gal. iii. 2.)

3. On their closing their discourse, James, the last speaker in this council, sums up the debate, and delivers his opinion.

[1.] After a respectful address to them, as men of reason and consideration, and brethren in the Lord, he reminds them of what Peter had said, by whose preaching first God *did visit the Gentiles* with the knowledge of his gospel, and the gifts of his grace, *to take out of them a people for his name*, to be to the praise of his glory.

[2.] He observes, that God herein exactly fulfilled his own word in the mouth of his prophets, which had so long ago foretold this great event, *as it is written*, (Amos ix. 11.) *After this I will return*, and recover the scattered remnant of Israel, *and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down:* in and by the Divine Messiah, who, when the house of David was reduced to the lowest state of want, and contempt, should arise to set up that spiritual and everlasting kingdom, of which David's house and kingdom were the figures: *and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up*, great and glorious, *that the residue of men*, even the nations who had before been left of God to walk in their own ways, *might seek after the Lord*, submitting

to the Messiah's sceptre, and becoming obedient to the gospel word; *and all the Gentiles*, whether proselytes or idolaters, converted to the faith of Christ, *upon whom my name is called*, as elect vessels, separated for his glory, *saith the Lord, who doeth all these things*, whose word is faithful, whose power alone could effect this wondrous conversion in the heathen world, and who in so doing testified his acceptance of the Gentile converts.

[3.] He resolves the matter into God's eternal purpose. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world;* what he decreed from eternity he had foretold, and now fulfilled; and they might be fully assured, all his counsels were holy, and good, and therefore to be acquiesced in by them without a moment's hesitation.

[4.] He delivers his opinion concerning what he judges proper to be done on the present occasion. *My sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God,* by the imposition of the unnecessary yoke of legal observances on their consciences; *but that,* to avoid all offence to the believing brethren among the Jews, and to remove whatever would prevent their communion with the Gentile converts, *we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollution of idols;* from eating or drinking any thing offered to idols: *and from fornication,* and all impure embraces; *and from things strangled, and from blood;* for as fornication, though so common and allowed among the Gentiles, must be abstained from as a moral evil; other things, though indifferent in themselves, were then needful to be observed, in order to promote mutual love and communion between the Jewish and Gentile brethren. For as the writings of Moses, in which these things are forbidden, had been of old read every sabbath-day, and the Jewish converts still retained a high veneration for the law; they owed them this indulgence to their long received usage in these indifferent matters. *Note,* Great allowances are to be made for the prejudices of education: and therefore in indifferent matters we should show to each other a spirit of mutual charity and forbearance, desiring to please every man his neighbour for his good to edification.

22. ¶ Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the [i] whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely,* Judas surnamed [k] Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: 23. And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: 24. Forasmuch as we have heard, that [l] certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law; to whom we gave no *such* commandment: 25. It seemed good unto us, being assembled [m] with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved [n] Barnabas and Paul; 26. Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27. We have sent therefore Judas and [p] Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same things by mouth. 28. For it seemed good [q] to the Holy Ghost, and to us, * to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29. [r] That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled,† and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. 30. So, when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle: 31. *Which* when they had read, they rejoiced for the ‡ consolation. 32. And Judas and Silas, being [s] prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and [t] confirmed *them.* 33. And, after they had tarried *there* a space, they were [u] let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles. 34. Notwithstanding, it pleased Silas to abide there still. 35. Paul also and Barnabas [x] continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

i Ch. 8. 1. ver. 3. Mat. 18. 17. ver. 23.

k Perhaps not Joses Barsabas, ch. 1. 23. but his brother.

l Ch. 8. 1. ver. 1, 10 Gal. 2. 4. & 5. 12. Tit. 1. 11. 1 John 2. 19. 2 Cor. 11. 3. Jer. 23. 16.

m Ch. 2. 46. & 4. 32 Rom. 15. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 10.

n Ver. 2, 35. Gal. 2. 9.

o Ch. 13. 50. & 14. 19. Judg. 5. 18.

p Ch. 16. 25. & 17. 4, 15. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1.

q 1 Cor. 7. 25, 40. John 16. 13.

* This assembly is commonly called 'the first general council;' it appears indeed to have also been the last where properly it could be said, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."

r Ch. 16. 4. & 21. 25. ver. 20. 1 Cor. viii, x. Exod. 34. 15. Lev. 3. 17. & 17. 14. & 19. 26. Deut. 12. 16, 23. & 15. 23. 1 Sam. 14. 32. Rom. 1. 24, 26. 1 Cor. 5. 1, 9, 11. & 7. 2. Heb. 13. 4.

† The ancients were accustomed to kill many animals by strangling. They also mixed the blood of animals with many of their dishes.

‡ Or *exhortation.*

s Ch. 13. 1. 1 Cor. 12. 28. ch. 14. 22.

t Ver. 41. ch. 14. 22. & 18. 23. Eph. 4. 12, 13.

u Gen. 26. 29. Exod. 4. 18. 1 Cor. 16. 11. Heb. 11. 31.

x Ch. 5. 42. & 13. 1. & 11. 19, 26.

Verses 22—35. The matter being now brought to a conclusion, and the assembly concurring in their approbation of the opinion which James had delivered, we have,

1. The choice of two persons from the brethren at Jerusalem, eminent for their gifts and graces, Barsabas and Silas, to accompany Paul and Barnabas, to Antioch, with letters containing the decree of the council, both as a testimony of respect towards their Gentile fellow-christians, and as helpers to establish the work begun among them.

2. The letters themselves contained,

[1.] A most respectful address. *The apostles, and elders, and brethren, send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia:* they assume no authoritative style, nor sounding titles, but stretch out the hand of fellowship giving them the result of their consultations.

[2.] They recite the cause on which their council was held, marking with just reprobation the disturbers of the church's peace. *We have heard, that certain which went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment;* they pretended that they acted under the apostolic commission and authority, but this is here utterly disclaimed. *Note,* (1.) Nothing so fatally *subverts* the soul, as the insisting upon any thing as necessary to our acceptance and justification before God, besides faith only. (2.) Many pretend a mission from God and his church, whose pretensions, when examined, are found utterly false and delusive.

[3.] They make honourable mention of the bearers of their epistle, whom they with one accord agreed to send. *It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,* for whom they expressed their highest regard, and testified the most entire approbation of their conduct; *men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;* a noble evidence of their approved fidelity. *We have sent therefore, Judas and Silas, who,* lest any cavil should be raised about the meaning or intention of the contents of our letters, *shall also tell you the same things by mouth.*

[4.] They plainly determine concerning the disputed point. *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost,* according to his word in the prophets and the intimations of his will in the conversions already

wrought among the Gentiles by his power; *and to us*, assembled in his name, and under his influence, *to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication.* The avoiding fornication is *necessary* for Christians at all times; the other things were merely temporary prohibitions, enjoined for a particular purpose, in order to prevent offence, and to remove all cause of disunion between them and their Jewish brethren; but these were not things of moral and perpetual obligation, but were to cease when, the Jewish polity being destroyed, all the ceremonial institutions would be at an end.

[5.] They bid them a kind *farewell*, wishing them all prosperity in body and soul, and recommending them to submit to their decisions; not with proud anathemas if they disobeyed, but with the more apostolic language of kind entreaty and affectionate persuasion: *If ye keep yourselves* from these things, *ye shall do well:* it will be to the glory of God, the peace of the church, and the furtherance of the gospel.

3. The bearers no sooner arrived, than they assembled the multitude, and delivered the epistle, who read with pleasure the determination of the controversy so much to the satisfaction of the Gentile brethren; *and Judas and Silas being prophets also themselves*, endued with eminent gifts of wisdom, and knowledge, *exhorted the brethren with many words*, to persevere in the faith and obedience of the gospel, *and confirmed them* in the doctrines of truth which they had embraced. Where the gospel is truly and powerfully preached, the occasional assistance of new ministers is still advantageous, and serves to help forward the work of God.

4. After some considerable stay, the messengers from the apostles were *let go in peace*, with the thanks of the church for all their kind and useful labours, and had the satisfaction to see peace perfectly re-established, which could not but be glad news to Jerusalem. Silas however chose still to continue at Antioch, where Paul and Barnabas, and many others, with great success, taught and preached the *word of the Lord*. *Note*, Where God opens a great door of usefulness, there a double obligation lies upon his ministers to improve the opportunity, and to labour more abundantly in the blessed work.

cir. 53.

36. ¶ And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, [y] Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they do. 37. And Barnabas determined to take with them [z] John, whose surname was Mark. 38. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, [a] who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. 39. And [b] the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other:* and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto [c] Cyprus; 40. And Paul chose Silas, and departed, [d] being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. 41. And he went [e] through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

y Ch. 13. 4, 13. & 14. 1, 21, 23. Rom. 1. 11. 2 Cor. 11. 28.

z Ch. 12. 12, 25. & 13. 5. Col. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 11. Phil. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 13.

a Ch. 13. 13. & 14. 26.

b Ch. 14. 15. Jam. 5. 17. Ps. 8. 4. & 39. 5. Rom. 7. 14, 23.

* Yet Paul speaks with esteem and affection both of Barnabas and Mark, in his epistles written after this event.

c Ch. 4. 36. & 11. 19. & 13. 4. & 27. 4.

d Ch. 14. 26. & 13. 3. & 20. 32. 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7.

e Ch. 16. 4. Gal. 1. 21.

Verses 36—41. The best of men are but men at the best, and liable to the same passions as others. The sacred historians generously record their own faults, that we should not think of them more highly than we ought to think.

1. The zealous Paul proposes to his faithful associate Barnabas a second expedition among the Gentiles, and particularly with a view to visit their brethren in all the places where they had preached the word, to see how they stood, to communicate a second blessing to them, and to exhort, encourage, rebuke, and quicken them, according to their several needs. *Note*, Those lie especially near a minister's heart, to whom, under God, he hath been a spiritual father: and if providence removes him for a while from them, he cannot but be anxiously concerned for their welfare, and long for their establishment.

2. A disagreement unhappily arose between Paul and Barnabas on this occasion. Barnabas readily consented to the proposal, but determined to take his nephew John Mark, partial probably to him on account of his relation. Paul warmly opposed it, and would by no means consent, thinking him unworthy of that honour *who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work*, intimidated by the danger, or weary of the fatigue, or diverted by some worldly motive from the service of the gospel. They who have proved themselves unfaithful should be tried, ere they are again trusted.

3. The issue of the contention was so sharp that they parted. Both were obstinate, both heated with the dispute, and, whichever was in the right in the subject of the contention, both were, it should seem, wrong in the hasty unyielding spirit, with which it was managed. *Note*, (1.) Though we may see good men upon a time unhappily betrayed into a temporary fit of passion, we must beware not to make their evil a plea in our own excuse. (2.) Truly wise and good men may differ in some opinions, sentiments, and views, and contend too warmly for their own. Let us not be offended thereat: it is the infirmity of this mortal state, where darkness and imperfection will still be found. It is reserved for the felicity of the heavenly state, to be entirely of one heart and one mind.

4. Though they disputed about a circumstance of little importance, perhaps, (and such hath often bred the sharpest contentions,) yet both heartily persisted in their former gracious purpose: and even their separation was overruled for the furtherance of the gospel. *Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God;* which seems to intimate, that they thought Paul in the right in refusing Mark, and favoured him with a particular mark of their approbation. *And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches*, and establishing them in the faith and practice of the gospel.

Whatever just cause of displeasure Paul might now have against Mark, we find with pleasure, that afterwards he showed him the most cordial regard, and professed the highest opinion of him, (2 Tim. iv. 11. Col. iv. 10.) We should learn therefore to judge with much temper and candour, even of those who may have taken a wrong step, lest their future conduct should make us grieve for the severity with which we treated them: and though they have justly deserved sharp rebuke, when they again approve their fidelity, and testify their repentance, we should forget all that is past, give them the right hand of fellowship, and trust and honour them as before.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 53.

This history henceforward chiefly records the travels, labours, and sufferings of Paul. Here is, 1. *The beginning of his acquaintance with Timothy, and taking him to be his assistant,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The visit he made to the churches for their establishment,* ver. 4, 5. 3. *His call to Macedonia, and his coming to Philippi, with his entertainment there,* ver. 6—13. 4. *The conversion of Lydia,* ver. 14, 15. 5. *The casting of an evil spirit out of a damsel,* ver. 16—18. 6. *The accusing and abusing Paul and Silas for it, their imprisonment, and the indignities done them,* ver. 19—24. 7. *The miraculous conversion of the jailer to the*

faith of Christ, ver. 25—34. 8. *The honourable discharge of Paul and Silas by the magistrates*, ver. 35—40.

1. THEN came he to [a] Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, [b] named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father *was* a Greek: 2. Which was [c] well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and [d] circumcised him, * because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. 4. And as they went through the cities, [e] they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. 5. [f] And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

a Ch. 14. 6.
b Rom. 16. 21. Phil. 2. 19. 1 Thes. 3. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 5. & 3. 10, 14. ch. 17. 14. & 19. 22. & 20. 4.
c Ch. 6. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 15.
d 2 Cor. 9. 20, 21. with Gal. 2. 3.
* Doddridge observes that, to judge rightly of Paul's conduct in this affair, we must recollect that he always openly avowed that the Gentiles were free from the yoke of Mosaic ceremonies, and that the Jews were not in conscience obliged to observe them at all, except in cases where the omission would give offence.
e Ch. 15. 2, 6, 20, 24, 29.
f Gal. 5. 1. Col. 1. 23. & 2. 2. Jude 20, 21. ch. 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 6. 7. & 15. 41. & 9. 31. & 11. 21. & 12. 24. & 13. 48, 49. & 19. 20.

Verses 1—5. We have here an account of Paul's travels, and his acquaintance with Timothy, who under his tuition afterwards grew so eminent.

1. Paul's first visit was to Derbe and Lystra, where the Lord had provided for him an assistant and companion in his travels, *a certain disciple*, a young man named Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess, his father a Gentile. His exemplary conduct and excellent parts had gained him a great character among the brethren at Lystra and Iconium; Paul therefore was desirous to engage him to go with him, and the zealous youth readily consenting, *he took and circumcised him;* not as necessary to salvation, or as an obligation on him to observe the ceremonial law, that having been settled by the apostolic decree; but as a matter in itself indifferent, and because he knew the prejudices the Jews who believed not would entertain against him, because they knew his father was a Greek, and that unless he were circumcised, they never would admit him to preach in any of their synagogues, or converse with him, which might greatly obstruct the usefulness of his ministry. In condescension therefore to the prejudices of his countrymen he took this step, and to the Jews became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews; a proof of his warm affection towards his kinsmen after the flesh, though persecuted by them as their inveterate enemy.

2. *As they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained by the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.* Though he had for a particular reason circumcised Timothy, he meant not to lay any stumbling-block in the way of the Gentile converts thereby, but asserted their entire liberty from all the legal institutions, according to the copies of the apostolic decree which he delivered to them. *And so were the churches established in the faith;* in the great doctrines of justification by faith alone, and of acceptance with God through Jesus Christ, without any respect to circumcision or the Mosaical ordinances: *and increased in number daily*, the Lord, by the ministrations of Paul and his young assistant, adding to the church such as should be saved. And that is the supreme joy of the faithful ministers of Christ, and a fresh bond to quicken their zeal and diligence, when Christ is pleased to make them see this travail of their soul.

6. Now, when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden [g] of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in [h] Asia, 7. After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8. And they, passing by Mysia, came down to [i] Troas. 9. ¶ And a [k] vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, [l] Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10. And after he had seen the vision, [m] immediately we† endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. 11. Therefore, loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next *day* to Neapolis; 12. And from thence to [n] Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia,‡ *and* a ° colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. 13. And on the [p] sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, [q] where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and [r] spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. 14. ¶ And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of [s] Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us:* [t] whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15. And when [u] she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have [x] judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she [y] constrained us.

g Ver. 7. Mat. 9. 38. ch. 20. 23. & 13. 2. Is. 30. 21.
h Rev. 1. 4, 11. 2 Tim. 1. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 1. ch. 19. 10.
i Ver. 11. ch. 20. 5. 2 Cor. 2. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 13.
k Ch. 2. 17. & 10. 3, 10—17, 30. Is. 30. 21. Num. 12. 6.
l Ch. 8. 26. & 10. 33.
m Ch. 10. 29. & 26. 19. Eccl. 9. 10. Ps. 119. 60. Rom. 12. 11. 2 Cor. 2. 13.
† Luke appears to have now joined Paul and Timothy.
cir. 54.
n Ch. 20. 6. 1 Thes. 2. 2. Phil. 1. 1.
‡ More correctly: *Philippi, a city of the first part of Macedonia.* This is confirmed by ancient medals and inscriptions.
o Chiefly inhabited by Romans. Ver. 21.
p Ch. 13. 42. & 18. 4.
q Ch. 21. 5. & 20. 36. ver. 16.
r Mark 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Col. 1. 23.
s Rev. 1. 11. & 2. 18.
t Ch. 10. 2. Eph. 1. 17. Luke 24. 45. John 6. 44, 45.
u Ver. 33. ch. 10. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 16. ch. 8. 12.
x Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. Gal. 6. 10.
y Gen. 19. 3. & 33. 11. Judg. 19. 21. Luke 24. 29. Mat. 10. 11. Heb. 13. 2.

Verses 6—15. We have here,

1. Paul's travels continued through Phrygia and Galatia. He had purposed to go on through the proconsular Asia; but by a secret impulse of the Holy Ghost, he was forbid, other work being provided for him. His next remove was to Mysia, a people despicable to a proverb; but the grace of Jesus knows no respect of persons. From thence they had designed to go into Bithynia, another province of Lesser Asia, *but the Spirit suffered them not*, under whose guidance they directed all their motions. Therefore passing by Mysia, without making any stay, they came to Troas, near the place where the ancient city of Troy had stood; and here it is supposed, Luke, the writer of this history, joined Paul and his company, as henceforward he usually says, *we*, as one of those who travelled with the apostle.

2. At Troas, the Lord in a vision directed Paul which way to bend his course. An angel, in the garb of a Macedonian, stood by him, and entreated him to come over into Macedonia and help them, by his prayers and preaching. Hereupon, assuredly concluding this was a divine call to preach the gospel unto them, he and his fellow-travellers immediately prepared for their voyage, and came to Samothracia, a little island lying in the Archipelago, or Ægean sea; and the next day they arrived at Nea-

polis, a port on the confines of Macedonia; and continuing their course, they reached Philippi, the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony, governed by the Roman laws and magistrates. *Note,* (1.) When we see an evident call of God to a place, we may go to our work with confidence, assuredly gathering that God hath there a people to praise him. (2.) They who are sent on God's work, must run at his bidding and make no delay. (3.) Chief cities usually afford the greatest field of usefulness, and the gospel sent thither becomes a more general blessing.

3. The first days of their arrival seemed to promise but little success: they abode there *certain days,* perhaps unnoticed, and unable to find a door of utterance. There seems to have been no synagogue of the Jews in this place, but some devout women, whether Jews or proselytes, resorted to an oratory without the city, near the river-side, where they used to meet for prayer on the sabbath-day; thither the apostle and his fellow-travellers went, and joined their devotions, taking an opportunity to preach to them the gospel, and lead them to the knowledge of the great salvation which is in Jesus Christ.

4. A blessing attended their labours. *A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple,* either of silk or cloth, or the purple die, a native *of Thyatira,* a city of Asia, but who was now settled at Philippi, and *worshipped God,* as a proselyte of the gate, *heard us,* with great seriousness *whose heart the Lord opened* by the powerful efficacy of his grace, *that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul,* and received the truth in the light and love of it. And as she made immediate profession of her faith, she was *baptized and her household;* whereupon she besought Paul and his friends, saying, *If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord,* seeing ye have received me into your number, show me the confidence you place in me, and *come into my house, and abide there:* so desirous was she of testifying her gratitude to those from whom she had received so great spiritual blessings, and solicitous to enjoy as much as possible of their conversation, that she might grow more established in the truth; *and she constrained us;* unwilling to be burdensome, they were at first backward to accept her invitation; but at last, overcome with her importunity, they consented. *Note,* (1.) One soul turned to God is a great acquisition, and well worthy to be recorded. (2.) Providence sometimes brings us far from our native home, with views we little thought of, and so orders the place of our abode as to be greatly subservient to the salvation of our souls. (3.) Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; they who sit under a preached gospel are in the Lord's way. (4.) The heart, by nature, is close shut against the light of truth by ignorance, blindness, prejudice, and error: it is God's almighty power and grace alone which can open a way for the entrance of his gospel, and make it effectual to the conversion of the soul. (5.) They who have received a blessing from God's ministers, and owe to them, under God, their souls, think they can never sufficiently show their gratitude to them for their labours of love. (6.) We cannot but desire the approbation of those who are eminently good, and wish so to act, as that they may judge us *faithful to the Lord.*

[z] 1 Sam. 28. 7. ch. 19. 24, 25. Deut. 18. 10. Is. 8. 19.

16. ¶ And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel [z] possessed with a spirit † of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, [a] These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

† Or of *Python.*

[a] Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. ch. 8. 18, 19. Mark 1. 24. & 5. 7. Luke 4. 41. She cried thus, to make people think Paul and Silas devilish diviners as well as herself.

[b] Mark 1. 25, 34. & 16. 17. Col. 2. 15. ch. 3. 6. & 9. 34.

18. And this did she many days. But Paul, [b] being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.‡ 19. ¶ And when her masters saw that [c] the hope of their gains was gone, [d] they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the ‖ market-place unto the rulers, 20. [e] And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, 21. And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. 22. [f] And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them.* 23. [g] And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely. 24. Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the [h] stocks.

‡ The age in which we live is undoubtedly, for the most part, by God's mercy, delivered from the terrible spectacle of human beings evidently possessed by evil spirits; but evil still exists among us, although in a less avowed and terrible form; and it still but too frequently and too effectually draws the heart of man from the service of his Maker.—*Townsend.*

[c] 1 Tim. 6. 10. ch. 19. 25, 26. Phil. 3. 19. & 2. 21.

[d] 2 Cor. 6. 5. Mat. 10. 17. & 24. 9.

‖ Or *court.*

[e] Ch. 17. 6. & 18. 12, 13 1 Kin. 18. 17. Esth. 3. 8. with Rom. 12. 2. Jam. 4. 4. John 15. 18, 20.

[f] 2 Cor. 11. 25. 1 Thes. 2. 2. Phil. 2. 13. ver. 23. Mark 13. 9. Mat. 10. 17, 18.

[g] Luke 21. 12. & 10. 30. Rev. 2. 10. 2 Cor. 11. 23. Eph. 3. 1, 13.

[h] Ps. 105. 18. Jer. 20. 2.

Verses 16—24. A singular occurrence soon made the preachers of the gospel the more taken notice of.

1. There was a damsel possessed with *a spirit of divination;* for, in these times of ignorance and idolatry, the devil used many such deluding instruments, who pretended to foretell future events, and to return oracular answers to those who foolishly put their trust in such jugglers: and as they paid for consulting them, this maid being reputed of extraordinary skill, *brought her masters much gain by her soothsaying.* And when Paul and his companions went out of the city to their oratory, this damsel for several days followed them, crying, *These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation;* and this was either a testimony extorted by the divine power, to leave the men of Philippi more inexcusable for rejecting what themselves deemed to be oracular, or, as others suggest, the devil designed to prejudice the cause of Christ, as if these preachers were promoting the same interests, and influenced by the same spirit, as this soothsayer. *Note,* (1.) It is the honour of ministers, that they are servants of the most high God. (2.) There is no way of salvation but that which the gospel points out to us; without it, we must for ever lie down in ignorance, guilt, and misery.

2. Grieved at her continual clamours, and justly apprehensive lest there should seem to be a confederacy between them and her, or sorry that Satan, by her means, should deceive and delude the people of Philippi, *Paul turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her,* and instantly Satan's power was broken, *and he came out the same hour.*

3. Her masters, highly exasperated to find all their gains gone, and her soothsaying at an end, caught Paul and Silas, the two most active persons, and, dragging them violently along to the forum, where the magistrates sat to administer justice, preferred a heavy complaint against them, covering their private revenge with the pretence of zeal for the public welfare, saying, *These men being Jews,* the refuse of the earth, and the pests of society, *do exceedingly trouble our city,* fomenting riots and disturbances, and interrupting the peace of the people; *and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans;* their doctrines and practices being utterly oppo-

site to, and subversive of, the worship of our gods, the manners of our country, and the laws of the empire. *Note,* (1.) The love of money is the root of all evil. (2.) Revenge and malice often wear the cloak of religious zeal, to conceal their malignity. (3.) They who are the preachers of the gospel of peace have often thus been branded as the disturbers of society, and as the firebrands of discord.

4. The giddy multitude, inflamed by a charge so invidious, rose up in a popular tumult, ready to tear them to pieces; and the magistrates, without form of trial, swimming with the stream, rent off their clothes, and commanded the lictors, their officers, *to scourge them* with rods severely, as the most infamous malefactors, 1 Thess. ii. 2. and not content with this cruel treatment, after the many and deep stripes they had laid on them, they committed them to the town prison, strictly charging the jailer *to keep them safely*, that they might not escape, whilst they consulted what farther to do with them. And he, an instrument, savage as his masters could desire, failed not to execute the charge with abundant severity, thrusting them into *the inner prison*, the place allotted to the vilest criminals; and to prevent all possibility of escape, as well as to add to the miseries of these innocent sufferers, *he made their feet fast in the stocks. Note,* Christ's servants must prepare for sufferings, and not stagger at any reproach which for his sake they may be called to bear.

i Ps. 119. 62. ch. 5. 41. Mat. 5. 10, 11. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 1. 8.

k Ch. 4. 31. & 5. 19. & 12. 7. Mat. 28. 2.

l 1 Sam. 31. 4, 5. 2 Sam. 17. 23. Mat. 27. 5.

m Exod. 20. 13. 1 John 3. 15.

n Ch. 2. 37. & 9. 6. Luke 3. 10.

o Bloomfield shows that the inquiry of the jailer can only mean, "How can I attain eternal salvation?"

o John 3. 16, 36. & 6. 40, 47. 1 John 5. 10. Mark 16. 16. Gen. 17. 7. Is. 45. 22.

p Mark 16. 15. Eph. 3. 8. 1 John 1. 1—3. Col. 1. 28.

q Ch. 8. 37, 39. Luke 19. 9. ver. 15. ch. 10. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 16.

r Luke 5. 29. & 19. 6.

s Ch. 8. 39. Is. 61. 10. Rom. 5. 2, 10. Phil. 3. 3.

25. ¶ [i] And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26. [k] And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. 27. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, [l] he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, [m] Do thyself no harm; for we are all here. 29. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul [n] and Silas, 30. And brought them out, and said, [o] Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* 31. And they said, [o] Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32. [p] And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and [q] was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34. And when he had brought them into his house, he [r] set meat before them, and [s] rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Verses 25—34. The misery, pain, and wretched condition in which these two innocent prisoners might be supposed to lie, would lead us to expect many a doleful groan: but, wonderful to tell! we find them happier in their filthy prison than their persecutors on beds of down.

1. *At midnight Paul and Silas prayed,* committing themselves cheerfully to God, and looking up to him for strength to bear whatever more might be laid upon them; remembering, no doubt, their persecutors, and begging God to forgive them, not forgetting their inhuman jailer; *and* they not only prayed, but *sang praises unto God,* rejoicing in their bonds, that they were counted worthy to suffer for their Master's name, and were filled with such divine consolations as made them forget all the horrors of a prison, and brought down to that dreary mansion a taste of heavenly felicity; *and the prisoners heard them;* so loud, so hearty, were their praises, not ashamed of their Master's name and service. *Note,* (1.) Prayer is an ease to the heart in every affliction, and joint sufferers should unite their supplications. (2.) Our trials should never untune our hearts from praise; in the midst of all, we have much, very much, for which we should be thankful. (3.) Psalm-singing is a blessed gospel ordinance, and we should never be ashamed of being heard in our families, though foolish and wicked men may ridicule the service.

2. God miraculously gives a token of his presence with them, and of his acceptance of their prayers and praises. *Suddenly there was a great earthquake,* a testimony of God's displeasure against their persecutors, and of his appearance on behalf of his suffering ministers, *so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed;* an intimation to the prisoners that the gospel which these faithful preachers declared, was designed to deliver their souls from the more grievous bondage of guilt and corruption.

3. The jailer himself becomes a convert.

(1.) Awaked by the terrible shock, and starting from his bed, he saw, with astonishment, the prison doors wide open, and supposing all the prisoners fled, for whose escape his own life must pay, in the first transports of despair he drew his sword, to put an end to his life, in order to avoid a more dreaded public execution.

(2.) Paul who, probably by a divine revelation, knew the fatal resolution the jailer was about to take, with a loud voice stays his uplifted arm, saying, *Do thyself no harm; for we are all here.* Paul and Silas thought not of escaping, and the rest were held by an invisible power, fast as the chains which bound them. *Note,* The gospel word is, *Do thyself no harm;* all God's warnings, rebukes, and calls, are purely to rescue us from the ruin into which we were running, and to save us from sin, the cause of all our miseries.

(3.) The jailer, whose conscience the convictions of sin had now shaken more terribly than the earthquake the prison's foundations, *called for a light, and sprang in* eagerly; *and came trembling,* under the most fearful sense of his dreadful guilt, *and fell down before Paul and Silas,* with deepest respect and veneration, *and brought them out* of the horrid dungeon where they were, *and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* He now felt all the wickedness of his past conduct, particularly his cruel behaviour to these messengers of God, and confounded at his provocations, eagerly begs their forgiveness and direction, how he may obtain pardon at the hands of God. *Note,* (1.) God's Spirit works in different ways on different persons; some, like Lydia, are gently led to Christ; others pass first through the most dreadful terrors, sometimes brought to the gates of despair, and even tempted to self-murder; and yet even this works together for their good, in order to make Christ more precious to their souls. (2.) They who have despised and ill-used God's ministers before, when seized by convictions of sin, will entertain very different apprehensions of them, and address them with very different language. (3.) To a soul convinced of sin, all other considerations are swallowed up in that one great concern, *What must I do to be saved?*

(4.) Paul and Silas have an immediate answer ready for his question. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be*

saved, and thy house; the salvation which they preached being free for him, though an idolatrous Gentile and bitter persecutor; and his family also would be admitted to share his blessing. *And they spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in the house,* who were assembled on this joyful occasion. *Note,* (1.) The gospel proposes a free salvation in Jesus Christ to the chief of sinners. (2.) Nothing but faith in a Redeemer can bring true peace to a guilty conscience, or obtain the salvation which a sinner needs. (3.) Masters of families, who know the Lord themselves, cannot but be desirous that all under their roof may share their blessings, and be brought with them to the knowledge of the truth.

(5.) Filled now with gratitude and love, the jailer, deeply affected with the blessed truths which he heard, *took them, and washed their stripes,* to supple and ease the wounds which their severe scourging had made in their backs, *and was baptized, he and all his, straightway,* desirous to come under the bonds of the covenant with his family, and to make public profession of Christianity. Which done, he brought Paul and Silas into his house, and *set meat before them,* to refresh them after the fatigues and fasting which they had endured; *and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house,* who rejoiced with him in the salvation which they had now embraced, or *over all his house,* going from one room to another in a transport of joy. *Note,* (1.) Believing in Christ is called *believing in God,* for he is very God: and on his being so, our everlasting hopes depend. (2.) Joy is the happy fruit of faith; they who see a reconciled God blotting out all their transgressions, cannot but rejoice in his salvation.

35. ¶ And [t] when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go. 36. And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and [u] go in peace. 37. But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, [x] being Romans,* and have cast *us* into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily; [y] but let them come themselves and fetch us out. 38. And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they [z] feared, when they heard that they were Romans. 39. [a] And they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and desired *them* to depart out of the city. 40. And they went out of the prison, [b] and entered into *the house of* Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

t Ps. 30. 5. 2 Cor. 1. 8, 9. Deut. 32. 30. Gen. 22. 14.

u Ex. 4. 18. Judg. 18. 6. 1 Sam. 1. 17. & 20. 42. & 25. 35. & 29. 7. 2 Kin. 5. 19. Mark 5. 34. ch. 15. 33.

x Ch. 22. 25—28.

* See note on Ch. 22. 25.

y Mat. 10. 16, 17. Eph. 5. 15. Mic. 7. 9, 10. Ps. 37. 6.

z Ch. 22. 29. John 11. 48. & 19. 8. Mat. 14. 5. & 21. 46. & 26. 5.

a Is. 45. 14. Dan. 3. 26, 27. & 6. 23. Mat. 8. 34.

b Ver. 14. ch. 4. 23. & 12. 12, 17. 2 Cor. 1. 3—7. & 4. 8. 1 Thes. 3. 2, 3.

Verses 35—40. We have here,

1. The message of the magistrates to these prisoners. In the morning, when their passion was cooled, they probably reflected upon the illegality of their proceedings; and if they felt the earthquake, this might still more alarm their fears. Therefore they sent their sergeants to the jailer, with orders to dismiss the prisoners, willing to hush up the matter, without farther animadversion.

2. The jailer, glad to convey this message to his guests now rather than his prisoners, informed them they were at liberty to depart, and advises them to haste away, lest perhaps the present mind of these magistrates should change, and he wishes that all blessings and happiness may attend them.

3. Paul appears in no haste to go. His own innocence required vindication; and for the sake of the disciples, he meant to assert his civil rights and privileges, and therefore bid the sergeants carry back this message to their masters, *They have beaten us openly,* cruelly and ignominiously, though *uncondemned,* without even a form of trial; *being Romans,* whose privileges, as citizens, are not thus insolently to be trampled upon; *and have cast us into prison,* as if we were the vilest slaves and criminals, *and now do they thrust us out privily?* as if we wanted a clandestine escape, and had broken from prison? *nay verily,* we will accept of our liberty on no such terms; *but let them come themselves, and fetch us out,* acknowledging our innocence publicly, removing the reproach they have cast upon our characters, and taking shame to themselves for their illegal and tyrannical procedure, that they may act more gently for the future. Our civil rights are thus often a barrier against the fury of persecutors: the fear of the law often restrains those who are withheld from injuring us by no fear of the Lord.

4. The magistrates, justly apprehensive of the consequence, if Paul should cite them before the tribunal of their superiors for their illegal proceedings, *came* very submissively, *and besought them* not to take advantage of the law against them, but to forgive the injuries they had received; *and brought them out* of the prison, publicly acknowledging hereby their innocence, *and desired them to depart out of their city,* that there might be no farther disturbance. Thus hath the violence of persecutors often involved them in proceedings which they were unable to vindicate, and which have at last brought shame and confusion upon their own heads.

5. Being thus honourably discharged, *they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia,* their former hostess; *and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them,* with an account of God's wondrous appearance for them, and the success of the gospel, even in their prison; encouraging them therefore to stand fast in the confidence of support under all their trials, *and* hereupon they *departed,* to spread the gospel through the other provinces of Greece, leaving behind them a very flourishing church, which, from these small beginnings, rose to singular eminence.

CHAP. XVII.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

Here is a farther account of the travels of Paul, and his services and sufferings for Christ. We have him, 1. *Preaching and persecuted at Thessalonica, another city of Macedonia,* ver. 1—9. 2. *Preaching at Berea, where he met with an encouraging auditory, but was driven thence also by persecution,* ver. 10—15. 3. *Disputing at Athens, the famous university of Greece,* ver. 16—21. *and the account he gave of natural religion, for the conviction of those that were addicted to polytheism and idolatry, and to lead them to the Christian religion,* ver. 22—31. *together with the success of this sermon,* ver. 32, 33, 34.

1. NOW, when they passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to [a] Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2. And Paul, [b] as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3. [c] Opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; [d] and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. 4. [e] And some of

a Now Salonichi. Ch. 20. 4. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1. Phil. 4. 16. 2 Tim. 4. 10.

b Ch. 3. 26. & 13. 14, 46. Luke 4. 16. ver. 10, 17. ch. 14. 1. & 18. 4, 19. & 19. 8.

c Luke 24. 26, 27, 41, 46. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. Ps. xxii, lx, lxix, lxxii. Is. iv, xl, xliii, xlix, l, lii, liii. ch. 18. 28.

d Said he, ch. 15. 5.

e Ch. 14. 1. & 28. 24. & 4. 23 Ps. 119. 63.

them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the [f] devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.* 5. ¶ [g] But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, [h] These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7. Whom Jason hath received: and [i] these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus. 8. And [k] they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

[f] Proselytes. Ch. 13. 43. & 16. 14. ver. 17.

* These were proselytes of the gate, who though they did not submit to the law of Moses, yet had renounced idolatry and immorality, and worshipped the true God only.

[g] Ver. 13. ch. 13. 45, 50. & 14. 2, 19. & 18. 12. & 19. 25. Judg. 9. 4.

[h] 1 Kin. 18. 17. ch. 16. 20. & 24. 5. Luke 23. 2.

[i] Ch. 24. 5. John 19. 12. Luke 23. 2. Ezra 4. 12, 15. Esth. 3. 8. Dan. 3. 12. & 6. 13.

[k] Mat. 2. 3. John 11. 48. ch. 5. 17, 24.

Verses 1—9. As the style of this chapter and the following changes from *we* to *they*, it hath been conjectured, that Luke staid at Philippi till Paul returned thither, chap. xx. 5, 6. His farther travels are here recorded.

1. He with his companions, Silas, and Timothy, passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia; whether he preached in either of these places is not said; his route was directed probably under a divine impulse to Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia. Not discouraged by his ill usage at Philippi, he was bold in his God, to speak the gospel unto them also, 1 Thess. ii. 2. and, as his manner was, having found there a synagogue of Jews, he went in unto them, to make them the first tender of the gospel word. Three sabbath-days successively *he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures;* and as they admitted the sacred authority of Moses and the prophets, he appealed to their writings in proof of the doctrines which he advanced, *opening* their scope and intention; *and* particularly by the texts which related to the Messiah, *alleging* from them, *that Christ*, far from being the temporal king and earthly conqueror, which they expected, *must needs have suffered*, in order to obtain spiritual and eternal redemption for his people, *and* must have *risen again from the dead*, in proof of his having completed the work which he had undertaken; evidently proving from the scriptures, that these things must be accomplished in the Messiah; *and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ*, in whom all the prophecies concerning the Messiah were fulfilled, and in no other; and that therefore this must be he that should come, nor must they look for another.

2. His preaching was powerful and convincing, and the Spirit of truth sent it home to the consciences of many of his hearers. *Some of them*, who were Jews, *believed*, and made immediate profession of the truth which they had embraced; *they consorted with Paul and Silas*, as casting in their lot with them, and ready to share their weal and wo; *and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.* Thus the foundations were laid of a most flourishing church; multitudes of Gentiles, as well as proselytes, being converted by the great apostle's labours, 1 Thes. i. 9.

3. Nowhere could they find rest from the malice of their inveterate enemies. *The Jews which believed not, moved with envy* at the success of Paul's preaching, and the respect paid to him by the Gentiles, as well as by many of their own synagogue, *took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company*, a profligate mob, the scum of the earth; and by these they *set all the city on an uproar*, raising a riot against the preachers of the gospel, *and assaulted the house of Jason*, where Paul and his companions lodged, *and sought to bring them out to the people*, that they might expose them to the exasperated populace. *And when they found them not*, they having prudently withdrawn for their security, *they drew Jason and certain brethren*, who were at his house, *unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also*, spreading their pestilential errors, to the destruction of all peace and good neighbourhood, and sowing the seeds of discord and sedition, to the ruin of the state, *whom Jason hath received* into his house, countenanced, and abetted. *And these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar*, and evidently show their disaffection and disloyalty to his government, *saying, that there is another king, one Jesus*, who is the universal *Lord of all*, to whom every knee must bow, in opposition to Cesar our only lord and emperor. *And they troubled the people and rulers of the city when they heard these things*, lest some rebellion was really meditating, or lest the jealous emperor Claudius should entertain suspicions of their negligence, however innocent they knew the apostles to be, and however satisfied they were of the injustice of the accusation. *Note*, (1.) They who are the enemies and disturbers of the people of God, are usually the vilest of mankind, abandoned profligates, lost to all sense of justice and virtue. (2.) If men offend, the magistrates are to judge; but to make the rabble judges and executioners, is to place madness on the seat of justice. (3.) It hath been a common accusation, that the gospel turns the world upside down, and creates all disturbances; but they who bring the charge, will not see that they themselves are the troublers, and that their own passions and perverseness occasion the very evils of which they complain. (4.) The kingdom of Jesus is far from interfering with the civil government: nay, it is one essential part of it, to be submissive to the powers that be; so malicious is the accusation of those who would insinuate its dangerous tendency to the peace of kingdoms.

4. The magistrates, on inquiry, finding no ground for the accusation, discharged Jason and his friends, on security taken for their appearance, if required. And thus ended this threatening affair, through the moderation of the rulers, without any farther ill consequence.

10. ¶ [l] And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea:† who, coming *thither*, went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11. These were [m] more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that [n] they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. 12. [o] Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. 13. ¶ But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, [p] they came thither also, and stirred up the people. 14. [q] And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. 15. And

[l] Ch. 9. 25. & 23. cir. 55. 23, 24. Josh. 2. 15, 16. ver. 14. Mat. 10. 23.

† A city of Macedonia, not far from the Thermaic gulf, to the west of Thessalonica.

[m] Dan. 5. 12, 14. Ps. 16. 3. Prov. 12. 26. & 17. 27.

[n] Ch. 11. 1. & 2. 41. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13. & 5. 21. 1 John 4. 1. Is. 8. 20. & 34. 16. Luke 16. 29. John 5. 39. & 7. 17.

[o] Ch. 2. 41. & 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 6. 7. & 9. 42. & 12. 24. & 13. 48, 50. & 14. 1. & 18. 19. & 19. 17.

[p] Ch. 14. 2. & 13. 50. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16.

[q] See ver. 10. Mat. 10. 23. ch. 14. 6. & 18. 1.

they that conducted Paul brought him unto * Athens: and, receiving a commandment [r] unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

* The chief city of Greece, famed for learning.

r Ch. 18. 5. ver. 4, 10. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1.

Verses 10—15. Though, to avoid the present storm, Paul and his companions were obliged to fly from Thessalonica, the Lord had work for them to do elsewhere.

1. *The brethren sent them away by night unto Berea,* to conceal them from the fury of their persecutors: and no sooner were they arrived, than they took the first opportunity of going into the synagogue of the Jews to preach the gospel to them, evilly entreated, as they had so lately been by them at Philippi and Thessalonica. True charity is never weary of well-doing, nor tired out with repeated provocations.

2. These Jews of Berea *were more noble than those in Thessalonica,* freer from prejudices, more candid inquirers after truth, of more enlarged sentiments, and ready to give a fair hearing to those who differed from them in opinion; and therefore *they received the word with all readiness of mind,* embracing it most cheerfully, as soon as they were convinced of the truth; *and* not taking the matter upon trust, but they *searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so;* comparing diligently Paul's preaching with the Scriptures to which he appealed, and examining carefully the passages which he explained, that they might comprehend their genuine meaning. *Note,* (1.) The doctrines of the gospel fear no scrutiny; we wish for nothing more, than that our readers would seriously examine whether these things are so. (2.) Searching the Scriptures should be our daily business and delight; and their minds will be filled with noble and exalted sentiments and principles, who follow in simplicity these sacred oracles.

3. Great was the effect of Paul's preaching on minds so disposed to examine candidly into what they heard. *Many* of the Jews *believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few.*

4. The restless malice of the Jews will not suffer the apostle to rest in peace in any place. Hearing of the success of the word of God at Berea, *they came thither also and stirred up the people,* using every calumny to incense the mob against them.

5. The brethren at Berea, knowing that against Paul the malice of the Jews was principally levelled, sent him away, *as it were unto the sea,* to prevent farther search. *But Silas and Timotheus abode still* at Berea, to confirm the disciples, and carry on the work of God.

6. Paul, with those that accompanied him, took the road to Athens, the most renowned university of Greece; and when the brethren returned, he sent orders to Silas and Timothy to follow him speedily.

16. ¶ Now, while Paul waited for them at Athens, [s] his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city † wholly given to idolatry: 17. [t] Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with ‡ them that met with him. 18. Then certain philosophers of the || Epicureans, and of the * Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this † babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he [u] preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. 19. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, ‡ whereof thou speakest, *is?* 20. For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. 21. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)

s 2 Pet. 2. 8. Exod. 32. 19. Ps. 119. 158.

† Or *full of idols.*

t See ver. 2—4, 10. Mark 16. 15. 1 Tim. 2. 7.

‡ Heathens.

|| Who taught, that God neither made nor governs the world, and that pleasure is the chief good.

* Who taught, that men ought never to be distressed at any thing.

† Or *base fellow.*

u 1 Cor. 2. 2. & 15. 1—4. ver. 3. ch. 22. 15. & 26. 23.

‡ Some suppose that the Athenians understood that Paul, when he spoke of the *Anastasis,* or resurrection of Christ, meant a goddess so named; but this is doubtful. The mention of *gods,* in the plural, ver. 18. may be a general expression.

Verses 16—21. While Paul waited at Athens for the arrival of his fellow-labourers, we are told,

1. With what grief and indignation he beheld the idolatry of the inhabitants, and what zeal burned in his bosom on seeing these abominations. Unable, therefore, to contain any longer, he entered the synagogue; beginning, as usual, with the Jews and devout proselytes, disputing mildly with them, and answering all their objections against that Messiah which he preached unto them; and not resting there, he daily talked with those he met in the places of public concourse, remonstrating against their absurd idolatry, and seeking to turn them from these stocks and stones which they worshipped, to the service of the living God. *Note,* When we have Christ's cause at heart, we shall be ready to speak a word for him in all companies, and have his interests constantly uppermost.

2. The philosophers, with which this seat of Grecian literature abounded, could not silently pass by unnoticed this zealous disputant; and therefore some of the Stoics and Epicureans, their two most famed sects, though in opinions utterly opposite, united their forces against him. Some of them with infinite contempt said, *What will this babbler say?* prating at this strange rate: others, with indignation at his attempt to introduce what they thought new deities, *He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods,* or foreign demons, *because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection* (ἀναστασιν) which they took to be a goddess, according to their dark and blinded apprehensions.

3. In order to hear at large what he had to say for himself, they invited him to Areopagus, a hill dedicated to Mars, where the supreme court of the judges sat, who determined all matters, civil or religious; and a number of philosophers being assembled, they said, *May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean.* Among all the volumes that crowded their libraries, the writings of Moses and the prophets probably were unknown to them: and since their professed research was after truth, they desired if, like the mysteries of their gods, no secrecy was enjoined, that they might hear a plain and full discussion of the doctrine which he maintained and inculcated. And in this matter, curiosity seems to have prompted them more than any real desire of being informed. It being the character of the Athenians in general, that they, and the strangers who resorted thither, *spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.* *Note,* It is a miserable abuse of precious time, thus to spend it in gaping after news and novelty; which, instead of real wisdom, can only produce superficial talkativeness.

22. ¶ Then Paul stood in the midst of [y] Mars-hill, and said, *Ye* men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are [z] too superstitious. 23. For as I passed by, and beheld your [a] devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO [b] THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore

y Or *the court of the Areopagites,* which, among other matters, took cognizance of religion, ver. 19.

z Jer. 50. 38. Is. 57. 5.

a 2 Thes. 2. 4.

b The God of the Jews. Eph. 2. 12. Ps. 147. 20. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

ye ignorantly worship, him declare I
unto you. 24. [c] God, that made the
world and all things therein, seeing that
he is Lord of heaven and earth, [d] dwell-
eth not in temples made with hands;
25. [e] Neither is worshipped with men's
hands, as though he needed any thing,
seeing he [f] giveth to all life and breath,
and all things; 26. [g] And hath made
of one blood all nations of men for to
dwell on all the face of the earth, and
[h] hath determined the times before ap-
pointed, and the bounds of their habita-
tion; 27. [i] That they should seek the
Lord, if haply they might feel after him,
and find him, though he be not [k] far from
every one of us: 28. For [l] in him we live,
and move, and have our being; as certain
also of your own [m] poets have said, For
we are also his offspring.* 29. Forasmuch
then as we are the offspring of God, [n] we
ought not to think that the Godhead is
like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven
by art or man's device. 30. [o] And the
times of this ignorance God winked at;
but now [p] commandeth all men every
where to repent: 31. Because [q] he
hath appointed a day, in the which he
will judge the world in righteousness by
that man whom he hath ordained; *where-*
of he hath [r] given assurance unto all
men, in that he hath raised him from the
dead.

c Gen. 1. 1. Exod. 20. 11. ch. 4. 24. & 14. 15. Ps. 33. 6. & 24. 1. & civ, cxlviii.
d Ch. 7. 48. 1 Kin. 8. 27. John 4. 23. Is. 66. 1.
e Ps. 50. 8. & 16. 2. Job 22. 2. & 35. 6.
f Gen. 2. 7. Num. 16. 22. & 27. 16. Job 12. 10. & 27. 3. & 33. 4. Prov. 24. 12. Is. 42. 5. & 57. 16. Dan. 4. 35. Zech. 12. 1. Rom. 11. 36.
g Gen. 3. 20. Rom. 5. 12. 1 Cor. 15. 22, 47.
h Deut. 32. 8. & 30. 20. Job 14. 5. ch. 15. 18.
i Rom. 1. 20. & 2. 4. ch. 14. 17. Ps. 19. 1—6.
k Jer. 23. 23, 24. 1 Kin. 8. 27. Ps. 139. 1—13.
l Col. 1. 17. Rom. 11. 36. Heb. 1. 3.
m Tit. 1. 12.
* It would appear from this, and other passages, that Paul was versant in the writings of the Heathens as well as of the Jews.
n Is. 40. 18. Rom. 1. 20, 23, 25. Ps. 106. 20.
o Ch. 14. 16 Ps. 81. 12.
p Rom. 13. 11. Eph. 3. 5, 6. Tit. 2. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 14. & 4. 3. Luke 24. 47.
q Ch. 10. 42. Rom. 2. 16. John 5. 22. Mat. 24. 36. & 25. 31—46. Rom. 14. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 1.
r Or *offered faith.* 1 Cor. xv. Rom. 8. 9. ch. 2. 24.

Verses 22—31. Never was discourse more admirably suited to the auditory, than this. Having now to do not with Jews, who admitted revelation, but with idolatrous philosophers, who, amidst their innumerable deities, were without God in the world, the apostle sets himself to lead them to the knowledge of Him, whom they ignorantly worshipped.

1. In the midst of a numerous audience of senators, philosophers, and others, who desired to hear what he had to say, he begins with a general remark, which he had made during his abode among them: *Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious,* (δεισιδαιμονεστερους,) *more addicted to the worship of gods* than other people: which he mentions, not perhaps with a view immediately to upbraid them with it, as their crime, but to engage their attention to his discourse, as persons of more than ordinary professed devotion.

2. He informs them, that he had particularly observed on one of their altars, this inscription, *TO THE UNKNOWN GOD;* which, though a confession of their ignorance, intimated a desire to know and worship him; and some have thought that this altar was dedicated to the God of Israel, whose name, *Jehovah,* the Jews never pronounced.

3. He tells them that this God, whom they ignorantly worshipped, him declared he unto them. Not as a setter forth of *strange* gods, to add to their numerous other deities, nor of *new* gods; but to bring them to the knowledge of him who was the only living and true God, and to direct them how he was acceptably to be served; whom they with blind devotion adored, though unknown. So prudently and persuasively does he introduce and urge the glorious truths he had to deliver, even from the idolatry which he condemned.

4. He describes the God he preached as the great Creator, Governor, and Lord of all, the Author of life and being to every creature, and who filleth heaven and earth with his presence. *He made the world, and all things therein,* which sprung not from a fortuitous concourse of atoms, nor subsisted from eternity, as the different sects of philosophers taught, but was the work of the Almighty, and spoken into being at his word: who, *seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth,* the author and owner of all, *dwelleth not in temples made with hands,* nor can his immensity be circumscribed by these narrow bounds: *neither is worshipped,* or *served with men's hands, as though he needed any thing,* images, shrines, temples, or offerings, to increase his felicity; who is in himself infinitely blessed and glorious, and incapable of receiving any addition to his self-sufficient happiness; *seeing* all that the creature possesses come from him; for *he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;* their being, with all the supports and comforts of it, they receive from him, but can add nothing to him; *and hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth,* who are originally descended from the same pair, which should stain the pride of pedigree: and teach us to love as brethren, *and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations,* having fixed in his eternal purpose the various events, and the periods of time in which each should happen; appointing to nations and individuals their place and abode on this habitable globe. And in all the dispensations of his providence, the end he purposes is, *that they should seek the Lord,* engaged by all the kindness and bounties of his providential hand, *if haply,* amidst the darkness, blindness, and ignorance of their fallen minds, *they might feel after him, and find him,* groping as the blind, through the creatures, and rising from the consideration of the visible objects, around them, to the knowledge of his eternal power and Godhead: *though he be not far from every one of us,* filling heaven and earth with his presence, and exerting in every place his perpetual agency, *for in him we live, and move, and have our being:* brought into being by his power, supported by his providence, and preserved by his care; *as certain also of your own poets have said,* particularly Aratus, *For we are also his offspring. Note,* (1.) He who gave us our being, has a full right to dispose of us according to the good pleasure of his will: to murmur at our lot, is to rebel against his providence. (2.) Our times are in God's hand; the number of our days is with him; he hath appointed us our bounds, which we cannot pass. (3.) Though God hath revealed enough of his glory to leave the world without excuse, yet such is the blindness of fallen man, that the wisest of men knew not God, nor ever would have known him, but for the *foolishness of preaching,* even that preaching which the wisdom of this world still brands as folly. (4.) We can never enough be thankful for that blessed book of God, that teaches more substantial wisdom in one page, yea, in one line, than is contained in all the volumes of poets and philosophers.

5. As the consequence of the doctrine which he advanced, he infers the absurdity of idolatry, and exhorts them to turn unto the living God. *Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God,* created by him, and in his image, *we ought not* to put so gross an affront upon him, as *to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device,* however rich the materials, or exquisite the workmanship. *And the times of this ignorance God winked at* with wondrous patience and long-suffering, bearing with these abominations, and leaving the Gentiles as neglected, without the light of revelation; *but now,* in the riches of his grace, overlooking all that is past, he is pleased to make a revelation of himself and his designs to the world in general, and *commandeth all men every where to repent;* engaging them thereunto by the most engaging promises of

pardon and acceptance through a Redeemer, and warning them by all the awful judgments which will descend on the heads of those who persist in their impenitence and idolatry, *because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* The day is fixed in the eternal counsels; the judgment will be impartial and strict, from the fullest knowledge of the characters of men; the Person is appointed to whom all judgment is committed; his resurrection from the dead gives the fullest assurance to all who will inquire into the evidence of the fact, with its connections, of God's approbation of him, and his appointment to this high office; and as there can be no exception to his sentence, there lies no appeal from his bar. An awful scene, which we cannot too often place before us, and under which our daily conduct should be influenced, that we may be found of him in peace at that day.

32. ¶ And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some [s] mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this *matter*. 33. [t] So Paul departed from among them. 34. [u] Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed: among which *was* Dionysius [v] the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

s Ch. 2. 13. Gen. 19. 14. 2 Chr. 36. 16.

t Hos. 4. 17. Rev. 22. 11.

u Rom. 11. 5. ch. 13. 48. Mat. 20. 16. Luke 12. 32.

v Ver. 19. John 7. 48—52. & 19. 38—42. Phil. 4. 22.

Verses 32—34. We have here an account of the effects of Paul's preaching to this philosophic audience.

1. Some ridiculed his strange notions; and on the mention of *the resurrection of the dead,* so contrary to the maxims of philosophy, they mocked at the absurdity of such an assertion; whilst others, deferring to determine upon the matter for the present, promised to give it a second hearing at their leisure. *Note,* (1.) We are not to think the worse of the sacred truths of God because profane philosophers or wits ridicule and make a jest of them. (2.) They who put off the concerns of their souls, which demand present attention, to some future day, usually find something else constantly to engage them, till it is too late.

2. The apostle's words were not, however, wholly ineffectual. Though the generality persisted in their scientific ignorance and philosophic pride, yet, when Paul departed, and the assembly broke up, *certain men clave unto him;* immediately commencing a connection with him, *and believed* that gospel which he preached unto them; *among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite,* a member of the supreme court of judicature before whom Paul appeared; *and a woman* of note and distinction, *named Damaris; and others with them,* who, by the power of divine grace, were effectually *turned from idols to serve the living and true God.*

CHAP. XVIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 56.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Paul's coming to Corinth, his private converse with Aquila and Priscilla, and his public reasonings with the Jews, from whom, when they rejected him, he turned to the Gentiles,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The great success of his ministry there, and the encouragement Christ gave him, in a vision, to continue his labours there,* ver. 7—11. 3. *The molestations which, after some time, he met with there from the Jews, but Gallio, the Roman governor, refused to intermeddle in the cause,* ver. 12—17. 4. *The progress Paul made through many countries, after he had continued long at Corinth, for the edifying and watering of the churches which he had founded and planted; in which circuit he made a short visit to Jerusalem,* ver. 18—23. 5. *An account of Apollos's improvement in knowledge, and of his usefulness in the church,* ver. 24—28.

1. AFTER these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to [a] Corinth; 2. And found a certain Jew, named [b] Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews* to depart from Rome;) and came [c] unto them. 3. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and [c] wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers. 4. [d] And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. 5. And [e] when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and [f] testified to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* Christ. 6. And [g] when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, [h] he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: [i] from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

a The richest city of Greece, and capital of Achaia. 1 Cor. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 20.

b Ver. 18, 26. Rom. 16. 3. 2 Tim. 4. 19. 1 Cor. 16. 19.

* On account of their seditious temper.

c Ch. 20. 34. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 9. & 12. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8.

d Chr. 3. 25. & 13. 5, 14, 46. & 14. 1. & 17. 1—3, 11. & 19. 8. Luke 4. 16.

e Ch. 17. 14, 15. Job 32. 18. ch. 17. 16. & 20. 22. Rom. 1. 9.

f John 15. 27. ch. 1. 8. & 2. 36. & 13. 38, 39. & 17. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 12.

g Ch. 13. 45. 1 Pet. 4. 4. 1 Thes. 2. 14—16.

h Ch. 13. 51. Mat. 10. 14. & 27. 25. Neh. 5. 13. Lev. 10. 12. 2 Sam. 1. 16. Ezek. 3. 18, 19. & 33. 4, 9. ch. 20. 26.

i Ch. 13. 46, 47. & 28. 28. Mat. 21. 43. & 8. 11. Deut. 32. 21, 46.

Verses 1—6. At Athens Paul seems to have made no long stay. Probably the pride of philosophy promised little success to the gospel which he preached. He therefore next visited Corinth, a city famous through all Greece for trade and opulence.

1. The apostle, unwilling to be burdensome for a maintenance, highly as he was entitled to the most liberal provision, worked for bread at his trade of tent-making; all the Jewish students being brought up to some handicraft business. Aquila, a converted Jew, with his wife Priscilla, who were of this occupation, being banished from Rome, with all the other Jews, by the jealous emperor Claudius, had settled at Corinth. To them, whom he found excellent people, and deeply versed in the things of God, he applied for work, and disdained not to labour for a subsistence. A noble instance of that disinterested zeal which burned in his bosom, and made him willing to undergo any hardship, to prevent the least prejudice which might arise, however unreasonably, against the gospel that he preached! *Note,* Those who are seeking a service would do well to settle with those from whom they are likely to reap good to their souls.

2. Whilst he laboured six days for a maintenance, every sabbath, with indefatigable diligence and zeal, he visited the synagogue, where *he reasoned* with the Jews and Grecian proselytes, proving from the scriptures the doctrines which he preached with unanswerable arguments, and silencing all their objections; *and persuaded* them to embrace the salvation which was in Christ Jesus: and, with respect to many, not without success. And being still more animated by the coming of Silas and Timothy, who brought him the glad tidings of the establishment and increase of the churches which he had planted, he urged with greater warmth and earnestness the grand truth, that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah, and that there was no salvation out of him, grieved to behold the obstinate infidelity of the Jews, and mightily constrained with love towards them, and desire after their conversion. *Note,* A true zeal for Jesus, and love for immortal souls, will give warmth, energy, and spirit to our discourses.

3. When he found all his labours for them rejected with scorn, and returned with reviling; that they opposed with de-

termined obstinacy what they could not answer, and blasphemed that Divine Redeemer whom he preached unto them; with just indignation *he shook his raiment, and,* abandoning them to their wilful impenitence, *said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean:* having given you solemn warning, and laboured to rescue you from that guilt and ruin which ye are terribly and surely bringing upon your souls: *from henceforth,* since all my words are ineffectual, and rejected by you, *I will go unto* the Gentiles, not doubting but they will give the gospel-word a more welcome reception. *Note,* (1.) They who wilfully oppose the gospel, exasperated instead of convinced, go on often to add blasphemy to impenitence. (2.) It is a comfort to a faithful minister at least to be conscious that he is free from the blood of all men. (3.) Wo unto those against whom the very ministers of grace shall rise up in judgment to accuse and condemn them.

7. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, * *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. 8. [k] And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians [l] hearing believed, and were baptized. 9. ¶ [m] Then spake the Lord to Paul † in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: 10. [n] For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for [o] I have much people in this city. 11. And he ‡ continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

* A proselyte.

k 1 Cor. 1. 14. ch. 16. 14, 15.

l Rom. 10. 17. Is. 55. 3. Mat. 28. 19. Mark 16. 15.

m Ch. 16. 9. & 23. 11. Jer. 1. 9, 17—19. Ezek. 2. 6. Is. 58. 1. & 62. 1.

† Some circumstances seem to have discouraged Paul.

n Mat. 28. 20. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Jer. 1. 9, 18. Rom. 8. 31. Is. 41. 10, 14.

o 2 Tim. 2. 19. John 10. 16. ch. 6. 7.

‡ Gr. *sat.*

Verses 7—11. Having solemnly warned the Jews of the danger and ruin which would be the consequence of their impenitence, he departed.

1. From the synagogue he went to the house adjoining, which belonged to one named Justus, a proselyte, whither those who desired to hear him might resort. And though the generality of the Jews rejected his preaching, yet he saw rich fruits of his labours; Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, being converted to the faith, with all his house: and a great number of the Corinthians, hearing the gospel, *believed and were baptized. Note,* (1.) Though some reject the gospel, it is a great comfort to a minister's soul to see others not only hear it with attention, but embrace it with affection. (2.) Not many nobles and rulers are called; yet here and there one, to leave the rest at least inexcusable.

2. Amidst all Paul's discouragements the Lord is with him to support and comfort him, and by a vision in the night animates him boldly to persevere, saying, *Be not afraid* of the opposition and malice of the Jews; *but speak and hold not thy peace;* with all diligence, fidelity, and zeal, declaring the gospel, deterred by no menaces or opposition of the most malignant persecutors; *for I am with thee,* to support, to protect, and prosper thee, in all thy labours; *and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee,* restrained by a secret over-ruling hand from injuring your person, or silencing your ministry: *for I have much people in this city,* whom I have ordained unto eternal life, and who shall be called and converted by thy ministry. *Note,* (1.) If God be with us and for us, we need not be intimidated by the many or the mighty who may rise up against us. (2.) They who are labouring for Christ, though they be not visited with night visions, shall find internal divine supports ministered to them amidst all their tribulations. (3.) Where God hath a people, he will send to them his gospel, and all that the Father hath given his Son *shall* come unto him.

3. Encouraged by this declaration, the apostle continued at Corinth a year and six months, with unwearied diligence and fervent zeal preaching the gospel, and seeing numbers daily added to the church of such as should be saved, God opening to him a great door and effectual, though there were many adversaries, 1 Cor. xvi. 9.

12. ¶ And when Gallio ‖ was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews [p] made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat, 13. Saying, [q] This *fellow* persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. 14. And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, [r] If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O *ye* Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: 15. But if it be a question of words and names, and *of* your law, [s] look ye *to it;* for I will be no judge of such *matters.* 16. [t] And he drave them from the judgment-seat. 17. Then all the Greeks took [u] Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment-seat. And Gallio [x] cared for none of those things.

cir. 56. ending

‖ Gallio was the elder brother of the celebrated philosopher L. A. Seneca, who describes him as a mild and amiable man.

p Ch. 8. 1. & 6. 12. & 13. 50. & 14. 2, 19. & 16. 20. & 17. 5, 13. & 19. 9.

q Ch. 17. 7. & 6. 13. & 24. 5, 6. & 25. 8.

r Ch. 25. 11. & 23. 29. & 25. 18, 19.

s Mat. 27. 4. John 18. 31. Luke 12. 14.

t Rev. 12. 16. Rom. 13. 3, 4.

u Perhaps not he 1 Cor. 1. 1.

x Amos 6. 6. Phil. 2. 21.

Verses 12—17. Though God had promised to save the apostle from hurt, he doth not engage to exempt him from the malicious efforts of his enemies.

1. The Jews, as they had elsewhere done, raised an insurrection, and in a popular tumult dragged Paul before Gallio the proconsul, who was the brother of the famous Seneca, and is said to have been of the most sweet and gentle disposition, and universally beloved. Their accusation against the apostle was, that *this fellow,* so contemptuously do they speak of him, *persuaded men to worship God contrary to the law;* and because they were allowed the exercise of their religion, by the edicts of the Roman emperor, they pretend it was highly criminal for any Jew to worship God any other way than they did.

2. Paul was just going to make his defence, and show the falsehood as well as malignity of the accusation: but Gallio, understanding it was merely a religious matter, refused to interfere, and dismissed the cause, saying, *If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness,* where any injury had been done, or theft or immorality committed, *O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you,* and do you justice, indecently clamorous as you are: *but if it be a question of words and names, and of your law,* whether Jesus, whom Paul preaches, be your Messiah, and what obligation there lies on him, or those whom he teaches, to worship God after the law of Moses, *look ye to it,* and end such disputes among yourselves, *for I will be no judge of such matters,* it is no concern to me how any man worships God, whilst he approves himself a good subject, and disturbs not the peace of the state. *And he drave them from the judgment-seat,* expressing his displeasure at their troublesome and impertinent clamours. *Note,* Magistrates are bound to right the injured; but where the accusation is evidently frivolous or malicious, such causes should be discountenanced and dismissed.

3. Exasperated at their disappointment, the unbelieving Greeks took hold of Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, Paul's friend, 1 Cor i. 1. and fellow-labourer, and to vent their re-

sentment, *they beat him before the judgment-seat*, in the face of the governor. *And Gallio cared for none of these things*, rather choosing to wink at the affront and injustice, than embroil himself with an enraged populace.

Some suppose that Sosthenes was not yet a convert, but headed the accusation against the apostle; and that, as the Jews were in general hated, the profane Greeks, seeing the governor favourable to Paul, were encouraged to put this insult upon them in the person of their chief ruler. Whichever was the case, the behaviour of Gallio was justly to be blamed; for, whether Sosthenes was a good or a bad man at that time, such illegal proceedings deserved animadversion; but he seems to have been too indifferent about the matter, and merely to have consulted his own ease.

cir. 57.
18. ¶ And Paul *after this* tarried *there* yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn *his* head in Cenchrea: * [y] for he had a vow.† 19. And he came to [z] Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. 20. When they desired *him* to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; 21. But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this [a] feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, [b] if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. 22. And when he had landed at [c] Cesarea, and gone up and saluted the church, he went down to [d] Antioch. 23. And, after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of [e] Galatia and Phrygia in order, [f] strengthening all the disciples.

* Now *Kenkri*. It was the port of Corinth, and situated on the east side of the isthmus.
y Ch. 21. 24. Num. 6. 18. 1 Cor. 9. 20.
† It is generally considered, although our commentator differs from the opinion, that it was Aquila, not Paul, who is here referred to as having shorn his head.
z The chief city of Lesser Asia. Ch. xix. 1 Cor. 16. 8. Eph. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 3. Rev. 1. 11.
a Passover. Exod. 12. 6. Deut. 16. 1. & 16. 21. & 20. 16.
b 1 Cor. 4. 19. Rom. 1. 10. Jam. 4. 15. Phil. 2. 19, 23, 24. Heb. 6. 3.
c Ch. 8. 40. & 10. 1. & 12. 19. & 21. 8. & 23. 33.
d Ch. 11. 19, 26. & 13. 1.
e Gal. 1. 2. & 4. 14. 1 Cor. 16. 1. ch. 16. 6.
f Ch. 14. 22. & 15. 32, 41. Is. 35. 3. 1 Thes. 5. 14. & 3. 2, 13.

Verses 18—23. After a long abode at Corinth, and seeing abundant success of his labours, we have here,

1. The apostle's departure. Having taken a solemn farewell of the brethren, he set sail for Syria, Priscilla and Aquila accompanying him, *having shorn his head in Cenchrea; for he had a vow:* willing, as far as was lawful, to comply with the Jews, that he might gain them the more readily to hear him. And now the time of his vow of Nazaritism, under which he had bound himself, being expired, his head was shaved according to the law, Numb. vi. 1—21. *Note*, In all indifferent matters we should become all things to all men, in order, if it please God, that we may by any means gain some to the knowledge of Christ.

2. His arrival at Ephesus, the chief city of the proconsular Asia. There, as his custom was, he entered into the synagogue of the Jews, and *reasoned* with them concerning the great truths of Christianity. But his stay was very short, as he hastened to Jerusalem; and therefore, leaving Aquila and Priscilla there, though they, and probably the other Jews, desired him to make some longer abode with them, they could not prevail with him, he having urgent business which called him to Jerusalem, where he intended to keep the approaching feast, probably the passover. But with God's permission he engaged to return to them again, and make some longer stay among them, to dispense that gospel which they seemed desirous to hear. *Note*, As all our motions are under the Divine Providence, and our times are in his hands, a gracious soul determines nothing absolutely, but adds to all his purposes, *if it please the Lord.*

3. Sailing from Ephesus, he arrived at Cesarea, where landing, he went up to Jerusalem, and saluted the church, inquiring of their welfare, gladdening them with the tidings he brought, and maintaining communion with his brethren the apostles, who might still make that the chief place of their resort. And such friendly visits of Christ's ministers are a great comfort and mutual encouragement to each other.

4. From Jerusalem he departed for Antioch, the most famed Gentile church, from whence he had been at first sent forth, and whither now the second time he returned with still more joyful accounts of the progress of the gospel. After some time spent there, he proceeded on a third visitation, going over *all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples*, confirming them in the faith, encouraging them to persevere, and suggesting the strongest motives and arguments to engage them to take up the cross, and patiently in well-doing to approve their fidelity to their blessed Lord and Master.

24. ¶ [g] And a certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* [h] mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25. [i] This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and, being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, [k] knowing only the baptism of John. 26. And he began to speak [l] boldly in the synagogue: whom when [m] Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and [n] expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. 27. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren [o] wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who when he was come, [p] helped them much which had [q] believed through grace; 28. For he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, [r] shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

g 1 Cor. 1. 12. & 3. 5. & 16. 12. Tit. 3. 13.
h Ch. 7. 22. Col. 3. 16. Ps. 119. 11.
i Mat. 22. 16. Rom. 12. 11. Ps. 69. 9. Col. 1. 28, 29. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 2.
k Ch. 19. 3. & 8. 16. Mark 1. 2—11. Mat. iii. Luke iii. John i. 19—36.
l Ch. 14. 3, 29, 31. & 13. 46. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Is. 58. 1.
m Ver. 2, 3. Rom. 16. 3.
n 1 Cor. 12. 21. Col. 3. 16.
o Ch. 9. 27. 1 Cor. 16. 3. 2 Cor. 3. 1. Rom. 16. 1, 2.
p 1 Cor. 3. 6, 10. & 5. 10. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Eph. 3. 7.
q Rom. 12. 3. Eph. 2. 8.
r Luke 24. 27, 44. ch. 17. 3. & 26. 22, 23. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. Heb. i—x.

Verses 24—28. Whilst the apostle was on his travels, under a promise of returning to Ephesus, the Lord was raising up in that place an eminently useful minister in the person of Apollos.

1. The account given of him is, that he was a Jew by birth, a native of Alexandria in Egypt, a man of singular abilities, possessed of a fund of solid learning, and endued with a most persuasive faculty of elocution, deeply read in the Scriptures, and every way highly qualified for the work of the ministry. *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord*, and, as far as John's ministry went, embraced the principles of the doctrine of Christ; *and*, so far as his knowledge reached, *being fervent in spirit*, and impressed with a warm zeal for God's glory, and the good of men's souls, *he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord*, with much study and pains, according to his best light; *knowing only the baptism of John*, who spoke of the approaching Messiah, and exhorted all men to prepare for his reception. *And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue*, with great freedom of speech and intrepidity of mind, fearless of the faces of men. A noble pattern for our imitation! And happy is it for that people to whom the Lord is pleased to send such a helper, whose heart, enriched with grace, zealously longs for their salvation, and whose gifts of wisdom and elocution enable him in the most engaging and

powerful manner to urge the truths he preaches upon the conscience.

2. Aquila and Priscilla with pleasure heard him, and observing his simplicity and zeal, they invited him to their lodging; and, being far more experienced and enlightened Christians, *they expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*, which it seems he never had an opportunity of being informed of before, having probably lived at Alexandria till now; and he immediately embraced the gospel, as soon as he heard it. Herein we may observe, (1.) The gracious conduct of Aquila and Priscilla. Though far more experienced in the truths of God, they attended the ministry of Apollos, encouraged him in his work, and helped him greatly by their private conversation with him. Older Christians should thus be ready to assist young ministers with their advice, and countenance them in their labours. (2.) The great teachableness of Apollos. Though a man so ingenious, learned, and eloquent; he disdained not to sit as a scholar at the feet of a poor tent-maker and his wife, and to learn of them the good ways of God. Thus should young ministers covet the acquaintance of more aged and wiser Christians: and much, very much, may be learned from conversing with poor old men and women, despicable as they may appear in the eyes of scientific pride. (3.) Whatever our attainments are, we should never think ourselves too wise to learn. They who know most will covet to know more, and have their ears open to those who can expound to them the way of God *more perfectly*.

3. When, after some stay at Ephesus, Apollos was *disposed to pass into Achaia*, to preach the gospel there, particularly at Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla recommended him by letter to the brethren as an able and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus, and, when he came thither, *he helped them much which had believed through grace*, establishing their faith, comforting their hearts, and building them up on that foundation which Paul had laid; *for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly*, in their synagogues and before all the people, *showing by the Scriptures*, with the most convincing arguments, and closest application, *that Jesus was Christ*, the true, expected Messiah, by faith in whom alone, salvation could be obtained. *Note*, (1.) Faith is the gift of God; it is by his grace alone that we are enabled to receive the salvation which is in his Son. (2.) Though we have true faith, yet we need help and quickening, that we may be more confirmed and established in the truth. (3.) They who are put in trust with the gospel should be able to defend the great truths which they preach, and from the Scriptures, with all zeal and meekness, to convince gainsayers and confirm the faithful.

CHAP. XIX.—ANNO DOMINI, 57.

We have here Paul's return to Ephesus, according to his promise, and his imparting the Holy Ghost to some who had known only John's baptism; preaching the gospel to the Jews three months, and being persecuted by them, he turns to the Gentiles, preaching the gospel to them in the school of one Tyrannus during two years, and confirming his preaching by miracles, ver. 1—12. 2. *What was the fruit of his labour*, ver. 13—20. 3. *What projects he had of further usefulness*, ver. 21, 22. *and what trouble at length he met with at Ephesus from the silversmiths, which forced him thence to pursue the measures he had laid; how a mob was raised by Demetrius to cry up Diana*, ver. 23—34. *and how it was suppressed and dispersed by the town-clerk*, ver. 35—41.

1. AND it came to pass, that, while [a] Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through * the upper coasts, [b] came to Ephesus: and, finding certain disciples, 2. He said unto them, Have [c] ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, [d] We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.† 3. And he said unto them, Unto what [e] then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4. Then said Paul, [f] John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5. When they heard *this*, they were baptized [g] in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6. [h] And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7. And all the men were about twelve.

[a] Ch. 18. 2—28. 1 Cor. 3. 5—7.

* Phrygia, Galatia, Pontus, Bithynia, Lydia, Lycaonia, &c.

[b] Ch. 18. 19, 21.

[c] Ch. 10. 44. & 8. 17. ver. 6.

[d] 1 Sam. 3. 7. ch. 8. 16.

† Rather, *whether the Holy Ghost be given.* The same words are so translated John 7. 39.

[e] Ch. 18. 25. Mat. iii. Mark i. Luke iii. John i, iii.

[f] Mat. 3. 11. & 11. 3. Mark 1. 4, 8. Luke 3. 16. John 1. 26. ch. 1. 5. & 11. 16. & 13. 24. 25.

[g] Mat. 28. 19. Rom. 6. 3, 4. Gal. 3. 27. ch. 8. 16.

[h] Ch. 6. 6. & 8. 17. & 2. 4. & 10. 44, 46. & 13. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 6.

Verses 1—7. Whilst Apollos was at Corinth, labouring in the vineyard which Paul had planted, he was travelling through Phrygia and Galatia towards Ephesus, where he arrived.

1. He found there certain disciples, who had been baptized either by John or some of his followers, with a reference to the Messiah as ready to appear, and who, till now, seem to have been out of the way of receiving farther information concerning him. Paul therefore inquired of them, as they made profession of their faith, *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed* in his miraculous gifts? They own they had not, nor even heard that any such were bestowed by him, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.* They knew there would be an abundant effusion of his mighty influences according to the promise in the days of the Messiah; but as yet, they had received no intelligence that any such extraordinary gifts had been bestowed. The apostle with some surprise then asked them, *Unto what then were ye baptized?* on what account, in whose name, or to the profession of what doctrine? *They said, Unto John's baptism*, in the faith of the Messiah, who was quickly to be revealed. *Note*, (1.) Though we may not look for the miraculous powers, we may, we must, be partakers of the mighty influences of the Spirit in our hearts. If we make profession of our faith, we should therefore seriously inquire into its reality, and whether the Holy Ghost witnesses to his own work in our souls. (2.) They who are baptized, and have received the outward and visible sign, should often examine themselves, whether they possess the inward and spiritual grace; else the washing of water will be a merely unprofitable ceremony.

2. Paul hereupon sets himself to explain the true intent of John's baptism. *John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance*, engaging and encouraging men to turn to God, from the views of the riches of his grace, shortly about to be displayed in the kingdom of the Messiah, *saying unto the people, that they should believe in him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ*, as the only Saviour from guilt and misery. And *when* the people, who attended John's ministry, *heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*, as devoted to the Messiah's service, who was then just appearing, and professing their faith in him. This Messiah was now come; had accomplished the work of redemption; was exalted to the right hand of God; and had already poured out his Spirit in a miraculous manner upon his disciples.

3. When the apostle had thus informed them of the grand intention of John's baptism, and they gladly embraced his word, *he laid his hands upon them*, and *the Holy Ghost came on them*, enduing them with miraculous gifts, *and they spoke with tongues*,

and prophesied, as the disciples did at the first effusion of the Spirit. They were twelve in number, and probably designed for the ministry of the word at Ephesus, for which they were hereby eminently qualified.

8. ¶ And he went [i] into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. 9. [k] But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that [l] way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. 10. [m] And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in [n] Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. 11. [o] And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12. So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.*

i Ch. 3. 26. & 13. 5, 14, 46. & 14. 1. & 17. 1—3, 11. & 18. 4, 28. & 26. 22, 23. & 28. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. & 2. 2. ch. 13. 14, &c. Eph. 3. 8.
k Ch. 13. 45, 46. & 16. 17. 2 Tim. 1. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 2. ch. 18. 4, 25, 28. & 17. 17. & 28. 23. Is. 8. 14.
l Ch. 9. 2. & 24. 14. ver. 23. ch. 28. 22.
m Ch. 20. 18—21, 31. Ps. 19. 3. Rom. 10. 18. & 15. 19.
n Ch. 16. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 1. Rev. 1. 4, 11.
o Mark 16. 17, 20. John 14. 12. Heb. 2. 4. ch. 5. 12, 15. & 14. 3, 10. & 16. 18. 2 Kin. 4. 29.
* These articles could not convey virtue from the apostle, but were mere tokens of the almighty power of God.

Verses 8—12. Paul having thus opened his ministry, and produced such authentic evidences of his mission, we find him,

1. According to his custom in the synagogue, where, during three months, he continued speaking boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, preaching his gospel, *and disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God,* reasoning with them on the subject, rectifying their mistaken notions, answering their objections, earnestly and affectionately urging them to accept the proffered grace of the Redeemer, and commence subjects of that happy kingdom which the adored Messiah was come to erect here below, that they might be admitted hereafter to partake of his glory in a better world.

2. When, after so long a season, the generality seemed but more rivetted in their pride and prejudices, and hardened in their sins, not only obstinately rejecting the gospel themselves, but seeking to prejudice others against it, *speaking evil of that way before the multitude, he* then *departed from them,* abandoning them to their determined infidelity, *and separated the disciples* from such incorrigible blasphemers, erecting them into a Christian society, and laying the foundation of the Ephesian church, afterwards so renowned; *disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus,* whither all, both Gentiles and Jews, might resort to him, and hear the gospel which he preached defended by the most convincing arguments. Two years he continued there his daily labours, *so that all they that dwelt in Asia,* who resorted on various accounts to this famed city, first or last, *heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks,* either from Paul himself, or from those who spread the report of his preaching on their return into the country; as perhaps some of his assistants made excursions into parts adjacent, and helped to spread abroad the glad tidings.

3. In confirmation of the doctrine which Paul preached, and to give greater weight to his discourses, *God wrought special miracles* by his hands, such as were not only out of the common course of nature, but which none of the other apostles had wrought; so that even *handkerchiefs* or *aprons,* either such as he wore at his trade, or which were sent to him, *were brought from his body unto the sick;* and with such miraculous efficacy were they as it were impregnated by his touch, that the diseases were instantly cured, and the devil dispossessed. An emblem of the greater cures which the gospel he preached was designed to work, even to deliver the souls of sinners from their more fatal spiritual maladies, and to rescue them from the bondage of sin and Satan.

13. ¶ Then certain of the vagabond Jews, [p] exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We [q] adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14. And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which [r] did so. 15. And the evil spirit answered and said, [r] Jesus I know, and Paul I know; † but who are ye? 16. [s] And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus: [t] and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18. And many that believed came, and [u] confessed, and shewed their deeds. 19. Many of them also [x] which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all *men:* and they counted the price of them, and found *it* ‡ fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. 20. [y] So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

cir. 59.
p Mat. 12. 27. Mark 9. 38. Luke 9. 49. ch. 8. 18, 19.
q Mat. 26. 63. Mark 5. 7. 1 Kin. 22. 16. Josh. 6. 26. 1 Sam. 14. 24.
r Mat. 8. 29. ch. 16. 17.
† *Jesus I acknowledge, and Paul I know.*—SCHOLEFIELD.
s Ps. 7. 15, 16. & 9. 15, 16. & 140. 8—11.
t Ch. 5. 5, 11. & 13. 12. Ps. 64. 9. & 58. 10. Luke 7. 16. Phil. 2. 9—11. Heb. 2. 8, 9.
u Mat. 3. 6. Josh. 7. 19. Jer. 3. 13. & 31. 18. Ezek. 16. 63. & 36. 31.
x 2 Chr. 33. 6. Mat. 3. 8. Is. 30. 22.
‡ Of what value the coin here mentioned was cannot be determined. It is generally supposed to have been the drachm, which in value was rather less than 8*d.* English.
y Ch. 6. 7. & 12, 24. Is. 55. 11. 1 Thes. 1. 5. 2 Thes. 3. 1. ch. 16. 5.

Verses 13—20. We have here,

1. The profane attempt of certain vagabond Jews, exorcists, who pretended by charms to cure diseases and tell fortunes. Observing the admiration in which the apostle was held through the astonishing miracles he performed, they undertook to do the same, and to cast out devils as well as he, supposing that the name of Jesus, invoked and pronounced by way of charm, would enable them to perform the same cures. *And there were seven sons of one Sceva a Jew, and chief of the priests,* who was probably at the head of one of the twenty-four courses, *which did this,* leading this strolling life, and pretending to perform these feats of conjuration. Accordingly, having a patient brought to them, possessed of a devil, they began their exorcisms over him, saying, *We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth,* solemnly commanding you, by that name which Paul proclaims, to depart immediately.

2. Far different was the effect of their adjuration from their expectations, instead of obeying their commands, the evil spirit, using the man's organs of speech, insultingly replied, in contempt of their word, *Jesus I know, and Paul I know;* too well he knew the divine power of the one, and the authority with which the other was invested; *but who are ye?* a vagabond crew, without power or authority; *and the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them* with fury and rage, *and overcame them, and,* in spite of all their efforts, *prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded,* their clothes torn from their back, and heartily beaten, bruised, and bloody, the just derision of the spectators. *And,* as this was transacted publicly, *it was known to all the Jews and Greeks dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all,* dreading the power of these infernal spirits, nor

daring any more to mock God by such incantations, lest he should let loose these furies upon them; *and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified*, it evidently appearing that he alone could dispossess these fiends of darkness, and therefore he was regarded with highest honour, and his name mentioned with reverence.

3. Seeing these exorcists thus shamefully defeated, many who had beforetime used the like magic arts and charms, but now by the grace of God were brought to faith in the Lord Jesus, *came and confessed their deeds*, with shame and confusion of face before God and man; *and brought their books together*, out of which they had learned their spells and methods of divination, fortune-telling, casting of nativities, interpreting dreams, discovering lost goods, laying spirits, and the like diabolical arts, *and burned them before all men*, in detestation of such wickedness, and to prevent their falling into the hands of others: *and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver;* for scarce and curious were these manuscripts: *so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* *Note*, (1.) They who are brought to the faith of the gospel, will be instantly led to sacrifice their dearest and most beloved iniquities, with holy indignation at the remembrance of them. (2.) They who know the evil of sin, will be careful to remove every temptation thereunto out of their own and others' way. (3.) True converts desire to take shame before all men, and to give to the Lord Jesus the glory due unto his name in the most substantial proofs of their real conversion to him.

21. ¶ After these things were ended, Paul purposed [z] in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to [a] go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I [b] must also see Rome. 22. So [c] he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season. 23. [d] And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. 24. For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made ‡ silver shrines for Diana, brought no small [e] gain unto the craftsmen; 25. Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know [f] that by this craft we have our wealth. 26. Moreover, ye see and hear, that not alone [g] at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that [h] they be no gods which are made with hands: 27. So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and [i] the world worshippeth. 28. And when they heard *these sayings*, [k] they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, [l] Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians. 29. [m] And the whole city was filled with confusion: and, having caught [n] Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the [o] theatre. 30. And when Paul would have entered in [p] unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. 31. And certain of [q] the chief of Asia, § which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him* that he would not adventure himself into the theatre. 32. [r] Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. 33. And they drew [s] Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting ‖ him forward. And Alexander [t] beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. 34. But when * they knew that he was a [u] Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, [x] Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians. 35. And when the † town clerk had appeased the people, he said, *Ye* men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is ‡ a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which [y] fell down from Jupiter? 36. Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. 37. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. 38. Wherefore, if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, ‖ the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. 39. But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a § lawful assembly. 40. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. 41. [z] And when he had thus spoken, he [a] dismissed the assembly.

z Rom. 1. 13. & 15. 25. ch. 16. 6, 7, 10. & 20. 22. Ps. 143. 10.
a Ch. 18. 21. & 21. 15. & 20. 22.
b Ch. 23. 11. & 28. 16. Rom. 15. 25. Gal. 2. 1.
c Ch. 16. 9, 10, 13. & 18. 5. Rom. 16. 23. 2 Tim. 4. 20.
d 2 Cor. 1. 8. Ch. 9. 2. & 13. 50. & 14. 4, 5. & 17. 5. ver. 9.
‡ Models of her temple, for strangers to buy. This celebrated temple was 425 feet long, and 220 broad; and had 80 columns, each 60 feet in height.
e Ch. 16. 16. 1 Tim. 6. 5, 10. Isa. 56. 11, 12.
f Ch. 16. 16, 19. Rev. 18. 16, 19. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. Phil. 2. 21. ver. 24.
g Ch. 18. 19—26. & 10. 20. & 12. 2. Gal. 4. 8. 1 Thes. 1. 9.
h Ps. 115. 4—8. Isa. 34. 9—20. Jer. 10. 3—5, 9, 14, 15. Ch. 14. 15. & 17. 23. 1 Cor. 8. 4—6. & 10. 20. & 12. 2. Gal. 4. 8. 1 Thes. 1. 9.
i Rev. 13. 3. & 17. 2. Mat. 7 13. 1 John 5. 19. ch. 14. 16.
k Job 5. 2. Prov. 27. 4, 5. Ch. 7. 54. & 5. 17. & 13. 45, 50. & 14. 2. Ps. 2. 2.
l Jer. 50. 38. Rev. 13. 4.
m Ch. 16. 19, 20. & 17. 8. & 21. 27.
n Ch. 20. 4. & 27. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 14. Rom. 16. 23. Col. 4. 10. Phile. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 14.
o Places where the people met for public sports, where men were devoured by beasts, &c. 1 Cor. 15 32.
p To give account of the Christian faith, Ch. 14. 15—18. & 17. 22—31. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4.
q See Ch. 16. 6. ver. 10. Rev. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 1.
§ Or, *Asiarchs.* These were officers of a religious class, who presided over the public games instituted in honour of the gods.
r Ver. 30. Ch. 21. 34.
s 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Tim. 4. 14.
‖ As their advocate to the people.
t Ch. 12. 17. & 13. 16. & 21. 40. & 24. 10.
* The heathen mob.
u An enemy to idols. Rom. 2. 22.
x Ver. 28. Jer. 50. 38. Isa. 57. 5. Rev. 13. 4.
† Or, clerk of the public sports, who registered the victories, &c.
‡ Gr. *devoted*, or *consecrated to.*
y *The priests said*, as ch. 15. 5. & 17. 3.
‖ Or, *the court days are kept.*
§ Or, *ordinary.*
z Prov. 15. 1, 2. & 25. 15. Eccl. 9. 17. Judg. 8, 1, 2.
a Ps. 65. 7. & 34. 19. Gen. 22. 14. Deut. 32. 36.

Verses 21—41. Just as Paul thought of departing from Ephesus, an unexpected storm arose.

1. After a stay of about three years at Ephesus, from his first coming thither, he resolved to visit the churches he had planted in Macedonia and Achaia, purposing from thence to go to Jerusalem; and, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, determined afterwards to see Rome also, the seat of empire, and there preach the glorious gospel of Christ. He sent therefore Timotheus and Erastus before him, to give them notice of his intentions, and prepare their collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem; whilst

he himself stayed a while in Asia, carrying on the blessed work which was there begun.

2. During his stay, *there arose no small stir about that way*, the way of Christ which Paul preached; the occasion and consequences of which are here related.

(1.) The ringleader, who stirred up the tumult, was one *Demetrius, a silversmith*, whose most gainful branch of business lay in making silver models of the temple of Diana, with her image in miniature within, which the superstitious worshippers used to carry home with them, for the gratifying the curiosity of their neighbours, or for the purposes of devotion. This man, calling his fellow-craftsmen together, harangued them on the danger in which their trade stood, from whence all their wealth arose; and this through the preaching of Paul, who, instead of paying the least regard to their shrines, or the great Diana and her temple, persuaded and turned away the people, almost throughout all Asia, from the worship of their goddess, *saying, That they be no gods which are made with hands*, despising the images and deities to whom their ancestors had ever paid such veneration: and, in consequence thereof, not only their craft was in danger, and that was a point which he knew lay near their hearts; but he pretends a higher motive for his present application to them, even his zeal for the great goddess Diana, the object of their own and of universal adoration, who was now likely to grow into contempt, and her magnificent temple to be abandoned, if this new religion should be suffered to gain ground; and therefore it was high time for them to bestir themselves, and oppose the growing evil. *Note*, (1.) Pomp and numbers are still on the side of idol-worship in the papal church, falsely called Christian. (2.) They who make gain of their religion, and follow it as their craft, evidently show to whom they pay their adorations, not to God, but Mammon.

(2.) This harangue had its desired effect. The craftsmen, inflamed to fury with the apprehension that both their gain and their goddess were in danger, with wild uproar filled the streets, shouting, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*. The mob readily joined them, and the whole city immediately became a scene of tumult and confusion.

3. Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions, falling in their way, they seized them, and hurried them to the theatre, where the public games were celebrated, and criminals thrown to wild beasts, and compelled to fight them; see 1 Cor. xv. 32. intending probably thus to despatch these fellow-labourers of the apostle. Paul, nobly prodigal of life in defence of the gospel and of his suffering friends, would fain *have entered in to the people*, and attempted to reason with them on their wickedness: *but the disciples*, justly apprehensive of the imminent danger to which he would be exposed, earnestly dissuaded him, and insisted upon his not going: which was also further enforced by a message from *certain of the chief of Asia*, who presided over the public games, and had the direction of the theatre, *which were his friends*, and consulted his safety, and thereby desired *that he would not adventure himself into the theatre*, where all their influence and authority might be unable to restrain an enraged populace from some fatal acts of violence. *Note*, The lives of great and good men are precious; though they are prodigal of them, and willing to spend and be spent in the service of Christ, their friends should be more careful of them than they are of themselves.

4. The mob, now prodigiously increased, roared out, *some one thing, some another; for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together:* and some of them *drew Alexander out of the multitude*, to call him to an account, *the Jews putting him forward;* either helping to expose him to the rage of the people, being equally enemies to the Christian name; or, if he was one of their body, encouraging him to declaim against Paul, and excuse them, who were alike hated on account of their known aversion to idolatry. *And Alexander beckoned with his hand*, desiring silence, *and would have made his defence unto the people;* either for himself and the Christians, if he was of their number; or rather, being a Jew, he intended to throw the odium upon the apostle, and exculpate his countrymen. But no sooner was it known that he was a Jew, the professed enemy of idol-worship, than they stopped their ears, and would not hear a word; but *all with one accord, about the space of two hours*, continued crying and shouting, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!* as if their noise and riot proved the truth of her deity. Thus often is the cause of God and truth run down by those who madly refuse to hear the voice of reason.

5. The *town-clerk*, or rather, the chief magistrate, who presided over the public games, with difficulty at last silenced the uproar, and remonstrated against the tumult, saying, *Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana*, devoted to her service, and by their charter engaged to take care of her temple and worship; *and of the image which fell down from Jupiter*, which therefore is not of the gods made with men's hands, against whom Paul declaims. *Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against*, being universally received among us as certain, *ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly* against the persons whom ye have seized. *For ye have brought hither these men* as criminals, *which are neither* proved to be *robbers of temples, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess*, treating her with no opprobrious language, nor guilty of any sacrilege. *Wherefore, if Demetrius and the craftsmen which are with him*, who have fomented riot, *have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies*, where justice will readily be done them; *let them implead one another*, and submit to the decision of the proper judges. *But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters*, of more general concern, relative to the state of religion, *it shall be determined in a lawful assembly* convoked for that purpose. *For*, so far from deciding at present upon the merits of the cause, *we are in danger of being called in question for this day's uproar*, if complaint be carried to the emperor against us; *there being no* just *cause, whereby we may give an account of this concourse*, if we should be summoned before our superiors.

And when he had thus spoken, to soothe and quiet the inflamed multitude, *he dismissed the assembly*, enjoining them peaceably to retire to their own homes. *Note*, (1.) God hath a variety of ways to rescue his people out of their troubles, and can raise them up friends from quarters where they least expected them. (2.) It is a constant and universal rule to do nothing rashly; for whatever is done in a passion, we shall infallibly wish undone. (3.) The terror of the law is usually a greater restraint than the fear of God. Happy were it for us if we remembered, whenever inordinate passion begins to swell in our bosom, that we are liable to be called in question for the uproar, and should therefore check the rising storm.

CHAP. XX.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter we have, 1. *Paul's travels through Macedonia, Greece, and Asia, and his coming at length to Troas*, ver. 1—6. 2. *A particular account of his spending one Lord's day at Troas, and his raising Eutychus to life there*, ver 7—12. 3. *His progress, or circuit, for the visiting of the churches he had planted, in his way towards Jerusalem, where he designed to be by the next feast of Pentecost*, ver. 13—16. 4. *The farewell sermon he preached to the presbyters of Ephesus, now he was leaving that country*, ver. 17—35. 5. *The very sorrowful parting between him and them*, ver. 36 37 38.

1. AND [a] after the uproar was ceased,

[a] Ch. 19. 23—41.

[b] Ch. 21. 6. ver. 37. Rom. 16. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 26.
[c] 2 Cor. 7. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 3. 1 Cor. 16. 5.
[d] Ch. 14. 22. & 15. 41. & 16. 5. Col. 1. 28.
[e] To rob him of the money he carried up to Jerusalem, or to kill him. 2 Cor. 8. 19. & 7. 5. Rom. 15. 26. ch. 9. 23. & 26. 21.
[f] Ch. 17. 10. & 19. 29. & 27. 2. Col. 4. 10. Philem. 24.
[g] Not ch. 19. 29. but 1 Cor. 1. 14. Rom. 16. 23. 3 John 1.
[h] Ch. 16. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Heb. 13. 23.
[i] Eph. 6. 21. Col. 4. 7. 2 Tim. 4. 12. Tit. 3. 12.
[k] 2 Tim. 4. 20. ch. 21. 29.
[l] Ch. 16. 8. 2 Cor. 2. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 13.
[m] Ch. 16. 12. Phil. 1. 1.
[n] Exod. 12. 18, 19. & 13. 6, 7. & 34. 18.

[b] Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*, and [c] departed for to go into Macedonia. 2. And when he had gone over those parts, and [d] had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, 3. And *there* abode three months. And when the Jews [e] laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. 4. And there accompanied him into Asia, [f] Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and [g] Gaius of Derbe, and [h] Timotheus; and of Asia, [i] Tychicus [k] and Trophimus. 5. These, going before, tarried for us at [l] Troas. 6. And we sailed away from [m] Philippi after the [n] days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days: where we abode seven days.

Verses 1—6. Soon after the uproar, which Demetrius had raised, was ceased, Paul determined to proceed on his journey, as he had before purposed.

1. After an affectionate parting with the brethren, Paul departed for Macedonia to visit the churches he had planted; and, having gone over those parts, and given them *much exhortation* to persevere, amidst all opposition, in the profession of the faith which they had embraced, he came into Greece, into Achaia, where he abode *three months*, employed in the same profitable manner, confirming and strengthening the faithful: and from thence was purposing to sail for Syria, in order to go directly to Jerusalem; but, by intelligence or inspiration, having learnt that the Jews intended to waylay, murder, and rob him of the collection which the churches had made for their poor brethren in Judea, he changed his route, and returned through Macedonia.

2. The companions of his travels into Asia were *Sopater of Berea*, Rom. xvi. 21. *of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus;* and now Luke the historian, who had probably been left in those parts before, to carry on the work so prosperously begun, seems to have joined the apostle's train. The rest *going before, tarried for* Paul and Luke, and those who accompanied them *at Troas;* whither they followed immediately after the passover, sailed from Philippi; and in five days joined their companions at Troas, where they staid seven days.

[o] John 20. 1, 19, 26. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Rev. 1. 10.
[p] Ch. 2. 42, 46. 1 Cor. 10. 16. & 11 23—28.
[q] 2 Tim. 4. 2. ver. 31. 1 Cor. 15. 10.
[r] Luke 22. 12. ch. 1. 13. & 9. 39.
[s] Mat. 26. 40, 41. Jon. 1. 5.
[*] The words of the Evangelist decidedly indicate that Eutychus was killed by the fall.
[t] 1 Kin. 17. 21. 2 Kin. 4. 32.

7. ¶ And upon the [o] first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together [p] to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and [q] continued his speech until midnight. 8. And there were many lights in the [r] upper chamber, where they were gathered together. 9. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into [s] a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.* 10. And Paul went down, [t] and fell on him, and embracing *him*, said, [u] Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. 11. When he therefore was come upagain, and [v] had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, [w] even till break of day, so he departed. 12. And [x] they brought the young man alive, and [y] were not a little comforted.

[u] Mat 9. 24. John 11. 11, 44. ch. 8 40, 41.
[v] Ver. 7.
[w] Ver. 7, 9.
[x] Ver. 10.
[y] Isa. 40. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 4. Eph. 6. 22. 1 Thes. 3. 2.

Verses 7—12. Seven days the apostle abode at Troas, desirous to spend one Lord's day with the disciples before he went on his journey. And a blessed day, no doubt, it was to the church in that place.

1. According to their established custom, *upon the first day of the week*, which had succeeded to the Jewish sabbath, and in memory of the Lord's resurrection, and the descent of the Holy Ghost, was consecrated henceforward to God's more immediate service in all acts of religious worship, and for the public administration of the ordinances, *the disciples came together to break bread*, commemorating, as they constantly did every week, the sacrifice and sufferings of their Lord. *Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow:* and having much to say, and being probably not likely ever again to have another opportunity of speaking to them, his warm heart led him on, so that *he continued his speech until midnight*, unwearied in exhortation, and addressing himself to those who counted the longest of his discourses short. *And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together;* they were content to put up with this mean inconvenient place of meeting; and, as no deeds of darkness were found among them, they took care the place should be well illumined, to confute the malicious insinuations of their enemies. *Note*, According to the practice of the apostles and the primitive church, the first day of the week is appointed for the assemblies of the faithful disciples of Jesus to join in all acts of religious worship, hear his word, partake of his ordinances, and maintain communion with each other. They who neglect the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, evidently show that they have renounced Christianity, and have no part nor lot among the faithful in Christ Jesus.

2. A melancholy accident happened to a youth in the company, whose name was Eutychus. He sat in a window that was open; and the apostle lengthening his sermon so much more than usual, sleep overtook the young man, and falling backward through the window, which was three stories high, he was killed on the spot. A warning to those who sleep under sermons, where they have none of those things to plead which might be urged in his excuse.

3. Paul raises him again to life. It served for a momentary interruption to the assembly, but in the issue contributed to the furtherance of their faith and joy. The apostle immediately *went down and fell on him, and embracing him*, as Elijah stretched himself on the dead corpse of the widow of Sarepta's son, 1 Kings xvii. 21. *said, Trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him*, restored by divine power. Then he returned to the room where they had assembled, and after the administration of the Lord's supper, spent the remainder of the night, till break of day, in sweet communion and conversation; when, in the most affectionate manner, he took his leave. But, before they parted, *they brought the young man alive*, into the assembly; *and were not a little comforted*, as some reproach might have been cast upon them, had he thus died: but now it tended to the credit of the gospel. *Note*, (1.) They who know the sweetness and profit of Christian conference, are glad to improve every moment of the company of those faithful ministers whose discourse so greatly tends to quicken and comfort them. (2.) Providences that appear at first view very afflictive, God can, and often doth over-rule to the increase of our joy.

13. ¶ And we went before to ship, and sailed unto * Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. 14. And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. 15. And we sailed thence, and came the next *day* over against Chios; and the next *day* we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next *day* we came to Miletus. 16. For Paul had determined to [x] sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the [y] day of Pentecost.†

* Assos, Trogyllium, and Miletus, were maritime cities of Lesser Asia, on the east shore of the Mediterranean sea. Mitylene was a city of the isle of Lesbos. Lesbos, Chios, now Scio, and Samos, were noted islands near the shore.

x Ch. 18. 21. & 21. 4, 12. & 19. 21.

y Ch. 2. 2. Lev. 23. 15—21. Num. 28. 26—31. Exod. 23. 16, 17. & 34. 22, 23. with ch. 24. 17.

† It was a time of concourse, which would give him an opportunity of propagating the gospel among the Jews and proselytes.

Verses 13—16. Paul now without delay hastened to Jerusalem. His companions went by ship before to Assos, where they were to take in Paul, who for some important reasons, which we are not told, resolved to go thither afoot. There embarking, they all sailed for Mitylene, the chief city of the isle of Lesbos, from whence without stopping, they proceeded the next day as far as the isle of Chios, and the next, arriving at Samos, they made a short stay at Trogyllium, a harbour in the promontory of Mycele in Asia, and the next arrived at Miletus, sailing by Ephesus, *because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost;* and he apprehended the importunity of his Ephesian friends might have delayed him. *Note,* When the glory of God, and the business of our station, calls for our attendance, pleasant and delightful as it is to enjoy the company of our dear friends, we must forego that satisfaction.

17. ¶ And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the [z] elders of the church. 18. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, [a] Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, 19. [b] Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: 20. *And* [c] how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you;* but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, 21. [d] Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22. And now, behold, [e] I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23. [f] Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions ‡ abide me. 24. [g] But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that [h] I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which [i] I have received of the Lord Jesus, [k] to testify the [l] gospel of the grace of God. 25. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the [m] kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. 26. [n] Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from the blood of all *men:* 27. [o] For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. 28. [p] Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which [q] he hath purchased with his own blood. 29. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous [r] wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30. [s] Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. 31. [t] Therefore watch, and remember, that [u] by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. 32. And now, brethren, [x] I commend you to God, and to [y] the word of his grace, [z] which is able to build you up, and to [a] give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. 33. [b] I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. 34. Yea, ye yourselves know, [c] that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. 35. [d] I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, [e] It is more blessed to give than to receive.

z Or Presbyters. Ver. 28. 1 Tim. 4. 14. & 5. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 1, 3. 3 John 1. Jam. 5. 14.

a 1 Thes. 2. 1—10. & 1. 5, 9. 2 Tim. 4. 2. ch. 19. 1—20. & 18. 19.

b 1 Cor. 2. 3. & 15. 9. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 3. 18. 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. 2 Cor. 4. 7—11. & 6. 4—10. & 11. 23—29. & 7. 5. Jam. 1. 2.

c Ver. 27, 31. ch. 18. 28. & 2. 46. & 5. 42. Col. 1. 28.

d Ver. 24. Mark 1. 15. Luke 24. 47. ch. 26. 18. John 14. 6. & 17. 3. & 20. 31. & 3. 1, 16, 18.

e Ch. 18. 21. & 19. 21.

f Ch. 9. 16. & 21. 4, 11. & 14. 22. John 16. 33. 2 Tim. 3. 12. 1 Thes. 3. 3.

‡ Or *wait for me.*

g Ch. 21. 13. Rom. 8. 35. 1 Cor. 15. 31. 2 Cor. 1. 8. & 4. 8, 16. & 6. 4, 9. & 7. 4. & 12. 10. Gal. 6. 14. Eph. 3. 13. & 6. 20. Phil. 1. 12. & 4. 12. Col. 1. 24. 1 Thes. 2. 2. & 3. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 9. & 3. 11. & 4. 7, 16. Heb. 10. 34. & 12. 1.

h John 17. 4. 1 Cor. 9. 24. 2 Tim. 4. 7. Col. 4. 17.

i Gal. 1. 1. Tit. 1. 3. ch. 9. 15. & 22. 21. & 26. 17, 18. & 13. 1—4.

k Ver. 21. John 15. 27. ch. 1. 8. Heb. 2. 3, 4.

l Ch. 14. 3. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Luke 2. 10, 11. Rom. 5. 20, 21.

m Ver. 24. Mark 1. 1, 14, 15. ch. 28. 23. Mat. 13. 19, 52.

n Ch. 18. 6. 1 Thes. 2. 10—12. Ezek. 3. 18—21. & 33. 4—9.

o Ver. 20. Luke 7. 30. 1 Cor. 11. 23. Is. 8. 20. Ezek. 3. 17. Mat. 28. 20. John 15. 15. ch. 26. 22, 23.

p 1 Cor. 9. 27. 1 Tim. 4. 16. Heb. 13. 17. John 21. 15—17. ch. 13. 2. & 14. 23. Phil. 1. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.

q 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Rev. 5. 9. Heb. 9. 12, 14. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Is. 53. 10—12.

r Ver. 30. Mat. 7. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 1.

s Mat. 26. 21. 1 John 2. 19. Rev. 2. 6. ch. 1. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 20.

t 1 Pet. 5. 8. Mark 14. 38. Rev. 16. 15. & 2. 5. Heb. 13. 17.

u Ch. 19. 10. & 26. 7. 1 Thes. 2. 9, 10. 1 Thes. 3. 8. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Col. 1. 28.

x Ch. 14. 23, 26. & 15. 40. Jer. 49. 11.

y Ver. 24. Luke 2. 10, 11.

z John 15. 3. & 17. 17. ch. 9. 31. Col. 2. 2. Jude 20, 21. Heb. 13. 9. & 6. 12, 14.

a Jer. 3. 19. ch. 26. 18. Eph. 1. 18.

b Num. 16. 2, 15. 1 Sam. 12. 3, 5. 1 Cor. 9. 12 2 Cor. 7. 2. & 11. 9. & 12. 13, 14.

c 1 Cor. 4. 12. 1 Thes. 2. 9. & 4. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 8. ch. 18. 3.

d Ver. 20, 27. 1 Thes. 5. 14. Is. 35. 3. Rom. 12. 15. Eph. 4. 28. Heb. 13. 1, 3. & 12. 12, 13. Eph. 4. 28. 10. 8. Is. 32. 8.

e Prov. 19. 17. Heb. 13. 16. Mat.

Verses 17—35. Though Paul would not call at Ephesus, he greatly desired to see the elders of the church, and therefore sent for them to Miletus, who gladly attended him, where he addressed to them this most affecting and solemn discourse, that can scarce now be read by any gracious heart without a tear.

1. He opens with a noble appeal to them concerning his life and doctrine during the time he had sojourned among them.

(1.) As to his life. *Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,* how exemplary, holy, and unblameable his conversation had been; how uniform his conduct; how steady amidst all his trials; *serving the Lord with all humility of mind.* His Master's service was his one business; and, amidst all the honour which the Lord had put upon him, he sought no glory nor applause; but, with the lowliest thoughts of himself, and deepest condescension towards others, was ready to stoop to any service, even to the meanest, whereby the Saviour might be glorified, and the bodies or souls of men be benefited: *and with many tears,* in his

prayers for them, and affectionate discourses to them, deeply concerned for those who obstinately rejected the counsel of God against their own souls, tenderly sympathizing with the afflictions of the faithful, and lamenting over backsliders and apostates: *and* with many *temptations which befell me by the laying in wait of the Jews,* ever contriving his destruction: in all which his approved fidelity had been abundantly manifested, and his example remained for their imitation.

(2.) As to his doctrine. Ye know *how I kept back from you nothing that was profitable unto you,* not shunning with all simplicity and sincerity to declare the whole counsel of God; unawed by fears, undismayed by difficulties, uninfluenced by any worldly motives: *and have showed and taught you publicly* in the congregation, *and* privately *from house to house,* continually labouring to diffuse a sweet savour of Christ, and to communicate edification, encouragement, and consolation, wherever he went; *testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks,* with the most earnest affection and concern, *repentance toward God,* the necessity and nature of it, as implying a deep and humbling sense of sin, its evil, malignity, and danger: a genuine self-abhorrence in the view of its guilt and ingratitude, with an unfeigned and unreserved renunciation of it, and real conversion of heart to the love and service of a pardoning God; *and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,* directing sinners to him as the great object of all their hopes, describing the fulness, freedom, and all-sufficiency of his salvation, and urging them to trust in his blood, righteousness, and grace, for pardon, peace, adoption, and glory. *Note,* (1.) What was Paul's doctrine must be ours, if ever we would approve ourselves to God, and profit men's souls; under the influence of the Spirit desiring to lead them to a deep conviction of their ruin, and an humbling sense of their sin, and then to point out the glorious remedy provided in a crucified Jesus. (2.) They who have the care of immortal souls lying upon them can never be enough diligent. Their private conversation must breathe the same spirit as their discourses in the pulpit, and every company where they are found should be the wiser and better for them. (3.) No fear or shame should ever lead us to suppress a tittle of those glorious gospel truths which are so offensive to human pride; at least it should be our labour to deliver our own souls, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear.

2. He lets them know what a scene of sufferings was before him. He left them not to avoid the cross, but was about to encounter greater persecutions than ever. *And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem,* by the mighty constrainings of the Holy Ghost led thither, and fully determined in my own soul to follow his guidance and direction; *not knowing the things that shall befall me there;* the particular sufferings to which he should be exposed God had not revealed to him; *save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me;* either in general he had this notice given him, or in every city he passed through the divinely inspired prophets foretold the sufferings which awaited him: *but none of these things move me,* to terrify him from his duty, or shake his constant mind; *neither count I my life dear unto myself;* valuable as it was, he paid no regard to it, when the cause of Christ called him to brave death and danger, content to suffer whatever the Lord pleased to permit, *so that I might finish my course with joy,* accomplishing his blessed Master's work, and reaching the prize of his high calling: *and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God,* freely and openly publishing the unsearchable riches of Christ, and proving by the fullest evidence the truth he declared; displaying in the most reviving manner the sovereign, unmerited, boundless love, and effectual grace of God, manifested in the gospel of his dear Son towards sinners. *Note,* (1.) If our hearts are truly fixed on God, and our conversation in heaven, we shall look down upon the malice of men and devils as unable to hurt us, and fearless put our lives in our hands, when Christ calls for them. (2.) Life is our race, and death the goal, our one concern is to finish our course with joy, and that, by persevering fidelity approving ourselves to God, we may receive the crown of life and glory which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to all his faithful servants. (3.) Our ministry is received of the Lord, and to him must we shortly render up the solemn account. (4.) The grand subject of all our discourses, if we would fulfil that ministry we have received of the Lord, must be *the gospel of the grace of God,* in opposition to all the pride of duties and human self-sufficiency, labouring to make lost sinners know the necessity of a free justification through the blood and righteousness of a Redeemer, and, from a view of their utter impotence and corruption, to lead them to those supplies of grace and strength which can only be derived from him.

3. He informs them that he is now taking his last leave of them, and appeals to God for his freedom from the blood of all men. *And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God,* the doctrines, privileges, and duties thereof, *shall see my face no more,* nor ever again enjoy my personal ministry among you. *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.* He appeals therefore to them in the presence of God for his fidelity: the whole truths of the gospel, so far as God had revealed it to him, he had declared; and now, if any soul among them perished, their blood was on their own heads; he was free. *Note,* (1.) It is a singular satisfaction when we can make such an appeal to God, and those to whom we have ministered, for our simplicity and faithfulness in the discharge of our sacred trust. (2.) The whole counsel of God without reserve, must be declared: the truths of God need no concealment: and they show their ignorance of the spirit of the gospel, who, with timidity, mention its glorious privileges, pretending fear lest the sovereign, free, and boundless grace of God should be perverted to licentiousness. We must declare it: let men abuse it at their peril.

4. He gives them a solemn parting charge. *Take heed to yourselves,* that your own conversation may be exemplary, and your souls influenced by that gospel you preach to others; *and to the flock* committed to your charge, for whom you must give an awful account shortly before the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls; *over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers,* appointing you to your office, and furnishing you with gifts for the discharge of it; *to feed the church of God* with knowledge and understanding, and with wisdom and meekness to preside over them; *which he hath purchased with his own blood;* the inestimable value of their souls therefore is evident, when he who is very God became incarnate, and submitted to the death of the cross, to make atonement for their sins, and to purchase them for his own. Did Jesus bleed to redeem his people, and can we be his servants, and not desire to spend and be spent in the service of their faith? Surely a negligent minister, beyond all others, tramples under foot the blood of the Son of God.

5. He warns them of the dangers which they would be called to contend against, and exhorts them to be watchful. *For I know this,* by revelation, *that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you;* both persecutors will ravage, and false teachers more terribly seek to corrupt the faith, and ruin the souls of the people, *not sparing the flock,* using every vile art to seduce, insnare, and destroy them. *Also of your own selves shall men arise,* of those who now perhaps make a fair profession, and in whom you place confidence; *speaking perverse things,* departing from the simplicity of the gospel, broaching pernicious heresies, and introducing dangerous innovations, *to draw away disciples after them,* and erect themselves into heads of sects and parties; see 2 Tim. i. 15. ii. 18. *Therefore watch;* the greatest vigilance would be necessary, and being forewarned they were forearmed, and should with indefatigable diligence endeavour to

confirm the disciples' faith, and caution them against those deluders, that they may not by them be moved away from the hope of the gospel: *and remember* the example which I have set you, which you are called to imitate, *that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears,* so fervently and affectionately had he been concerned for them, carefully observing the first efforts of deceivers, jealous over the least appearances of a declension from the purity of the faith, and the simplicity of the gospel, lamenting with deepest sorrow when they staggered or fainted in their mind, and declined from their holy profession; and, ceaseless in his admonitions, he endeavoured to recover the fallen, and to warn others to be more watchful, taught by their sad examples. O that we, who are put in trust with the gospel, may be enabled to show such zeal, fidelity, and affectionate concern towards the souls of our people!

6. He solemnly commends them to the divine care and keeping. *And now brethren,* having admonished you of the dangers you must encounter, and knowing that more than mortal wisdom and strength is needful for you, that you may approve your fidelity to Christ, *I commend you to God,* to his power to protect, his wisdom to guide, his Spirit to comfort you; *and to the word of his grace,* to his written and revealed word, for your conduct and direction, or to the essential Word Christ Jesus, out of whose fulness they should receive grace, and by him be preserved and kept steadfast amidst all the wiles of deceivers and the opposition of persecutors; *which is able to build you up,* in faith, hope, and holiness, to establish you unto the end, *and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified,* preparing you for that kingdom which he hath prepared for you, and bringing you at last to an inheritance among his saints in light and glory everlasting. *Note,* (1.) Our keeping is not in our own hands: left to ourselves we must soon fall; but by grace we are saved. (2.) None may hope for a part among God's saints in heaven, who are not partakers of their grace upon earth, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. (3.) The gospel is the great means of producing, through the power of divine grace, true sanctification. (4.) The kingdom of glory is the *inheritance* of God's people, being chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, called by his word, and justified by faith; their title is indefeasible, and the possession secured; they can never perish, but shall have everlasting life.

7. He particularly reminds them of the deadness which he had shown to this world, and his labours, that he might not be beholden to any man for a provision, whilst he freely preached the gospel. *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel,* content with what he could obtain from his own industry, and burdensome to none of them for a maintenance. *Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered to my necessities;* entitled as he was to a liberal provision, he chose for the sake of the gospel to wave his right, and to work hard at his trade, by which he was enabled to earn a subsistence not only for himself, but also *to* help *them that were with me,* who were less able to provide for themselves: and this he did with a view particularly to the false teachers, that he might remove every shadow of objection which they would have been glad to urge against him. Thus, by an example, *I have showed you all things, how that so labouring,* as I have done, *ye ought to support the weak,* assisting the necessitous and relieving their wants, and removing every handle of prejudice which the deceivers might seek to instil into the minds of the weak brethren, as if they laboured for mercenary ends. *And,* to encourage them hereunto, he begs them *to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive;* it is more godlike, a mark of a more noble Christian spirit, to relieve the wants of others, and lay out ourselves for their good without a recompense, than to be burdensome to them for a maintenance.

36. ¶ And when he had thus spoken, [f] he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. 37. [g] And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him; 38. Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, [h] that they should see his face no more. And [i] they accompanied him unto the ship.

[f] Ch. 7. 60. & 21. 5. & 16. 13. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
[g] Gen. 33. 4. & 45. 14. & 46. 29. 1 Sam. 20. 41. Luke 15. 20.
[h] Ver. 25.
[i] Ch. 15. 3. & 17. 10. & 21. 5, 16. 1 Cor. 16. 11.

Verses 36—38. Having finished this most affecting discourse,

1. *He kneeled down and prayed with them all,* commending them solemnly to the Lord Jesus, and begging, no doubt, that they might be enabled faithfully to discharge the solemn trust committed to them, and observe the good counsel he had delivered. *Note,* (1.) Ministers must water the word sown with their prayers, that God may give the increase. (2.) Friends will do well to part in prayers, that if it please God they may meet here again in peace; and, if not, that they may together shortly unite their never-ending praises before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2. They parted with floods of tears and the most affectionate embraces. *They all wept sore,* deeply affected with his discourse, his prayer, and his departure from them; *and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him,* taking their last farewell of their dear pastor, with hearts full of love, and swelling with grief; *sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more.* To part was bitter; to part for a long while, would have been yet more irksome; but to part without the hope of ever meeting again among the living, this added peculiar anguish to the separation, and antedated the funeral sorrows; it was a kind of living burial. *And they accompanied him unto the ship,* willing to enjoy his company to the last moment, and to testify their deep respect and fervent love towards him. *Note,* Though our friends may be separated from us, so that we can see their face no more, it is our consolation, if we are united in one Jesus, that we shall assuredly meet in a better world, never to part again.

CHAP. XXI.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A journal of Paul's voyage from Ephesus to Cesarea,* ver. 1—7. 2. *The struggles he had with his friends at Cesarea, who mightily opposed his going up to Jerusalem, but could not prevail,* ver. 8—14. 3. *Paul's journey from Cesarea to Jerusalem, and the kind entertainment which the Christians there gave him,* ver. 15—17. 4. *In condescension to the prejudices of the Jews, and by the advice of the brethren, he purifies himself in the temple according to the law,* ver. 18—26. 5. *The turning of this very thing against him by the Jews, and the apprehending of him in the temple as a criminal thereupon,* ver. 27—30. 6. *The fair escape he had of being pulled to pieces by the rabble, and the taking of him into fair and legal custody by the chief captain, who permitted him to speak for himself to the people,* ver. 31—40.

1. AND it came to pass, that, after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto * Coos, and the *day* following unto * Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: [a] 2. And, [a] finding a ship sailing over unto [b] Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth. 3. Now, when we had discovered * Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and

* Coos, Rhodes, and Cyprus are islands in the east part of the Mediterranean sea.
[a] Ch. 27. 6. Jon. 1. 3.
[b] On the north-west of Canaan Ch. 11. 19. & 15. 3. Josh. 19 28, 29.

sailed into [b] Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden. 4. And, [c] finding disciples, [d] we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, [e] that he should not go up to Jerusalem. 5. And when we had accomplished those days, we departed, and went our way; and they [f] all brought us on our way, [g] with wives and children, till *we were* out of the city: and [h] we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. 6. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they [i] returned home again. 7. And when we had finished *our* course from Tyre, we came to † Ptolemais, and [j] saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

b Mat. 5. 24. & 15. 21. Mark 7. 24, 26. ch. 20. 3.
c Ch. 20. 6. Ps. 119. 63. & 45. 12. & 87. 4. Is. 23. 18.
d Ch. 20. 6, 7. Rev. 1. 10. John 20. 19, 26.
e Ch. 20. 23. ver. 11, 12.
f Ch. 15. 2. & 17. 10. ver. 16. ch. 20. 38.
g Gen. 18. 19. Josh. 24. 15. Prov. 22. 6. Eph. 6. 4.
h Ch. 16. 13. & 20. 36. & 7. 60.
i John 16. 32. & 16. 27.
† A city on the west of Canaan.
j Ver. 19. ch. 18. 22. & 25. 13. 1 Sam. 10. 4. & 13. 10.

Verses 1—7. With deepest reluctance he had, as it were by violence, torn himself from the embraces of his dear Ephesian brethren; and now, since God hath so ordained, he pursues his voyage.

1. He proceeds to Tyre. They came in a straight course to Coos; the next day to Rhodes, famed for its Colossus; and thence to Patara, whither the ship in which they sailed was bound, or was from thence to take a different course from that which they pursued; therefore providentially finding another ship ready to sail for Phenicia, they embarked, and leaving Cyprus on the left, arrived on the coast of Syria, and landed at Tyre, where the ship was *to unlade her burden.*

2. Seven days Paul and his companions halted at this famed mart, spending one Lord's day with the disciples which they found there, and improving his short stay for their edification and comfort. *Note,* When we travel, we should inquire after the disciples; their profession will make them singular, and they may be easily found.

3. There he received from some of the inspired prophets of the church, a warning of the dangers which were before him, and that if he meant to escape them, he must not go to Jerusalem; but his resolution was fixed, and his call evident, and therefore he departed at the expiration of the seven days.

4. They took a solemn farewell of him, when he thus determined to proceed, and *brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city,* willing to show the apostle and his companions the greatest honour and respect, and desirous that they and theirs might at the last moment improve the blessing of his presence and company: *and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed* for the blessing of God on this voyage, and upon those who were left behind. Then affectionately taking their leave of each other, the apostle and his friends proceeded on their course, and the Tyrian brethren returned.

5. From Tyre they sailed to Ptolemais, where Paul went on shore, desirous to salute the brethren, though he could stay but one day with them, yet one day of his company must have been a singular blessing and comfort to them. The visits of such men, though short, are highly to be prized.

8. And the next *day,* we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto [k] Cesarea; and we entered into the house of [l] Philip the evangelist, which was *one* of the seven, and abode with him. 9. And the same man had four daughters,

k A city on the west of Canaan. Ch. 8. 40. & 9. 30. & 10. 1. & 18. 22. & 23. 23.
l Ch. 6. 5. & 8. 5, 12, 26—40. Eph. 4. 11.

virgins, [m] which did prophesy. 10. ¶ And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named [n] Agabus. 11. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, [o] Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and [p] shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles. 12. And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, [q] besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13. Then Paul answered, [r] What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. 14. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, [s] The will of the Lord be done.

m Ch. 2. 17. Joel 2. 28.
n Ch. 11. 28.
o Ver. 33. ch. 20. 23. & 24. 27. & 25. 14. & 26. 29. Eph. 3. 1. & 6. 20. Phil. 1. 7, 13. 2 Tim. 2. 9. Heb. 10. 34. Col. 1. 24. with Mat. 16. 21.
p Ch. 28. 17. Mat. 20. 18, 19. & 27. 1, 2.
q Ver. 4. Mat. 16. 22.
r Ch. 10. 24. Rom. 8. 35. 1 Cor. 4. 9. & 15. 31. 2 Cor. 4. 10. & 11. 25. Gal. 6. 17. Phil. 1. 20. & 2. 17. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 4. 6.
s 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 25. & 16. 10, 11. Ps. 39. 9. Mat. 6. 10. & 26. 39, 42. Luke 11. 2. & 22. 42.

Verses 8—14. From Ptolemais they journeyed to Cesarea, where they designed to make some considerable stay.

1. At Cesarea, Philip, the evangelist, hospitably received them. He was one of the seven deacons, and after his successful labours among the Samaritans, and with the Ethiopian eunuch, was now settled in this great city. *He had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy,* endued with the miraculous gift of foretelling future events. (Joel ii. 28.)

2. There Paul receives a full prediction of the sufferings which were before him. *As we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus,* who had foretold the famine, (chap. xi. 28.) and now, probably on purpose, came with this prophetic intelligence. Taking up Paul's girdle, he bound his own hands, and then his feet therewith, to affect the spectators the more by this significant action, which he explained, as what should shortly happen to the owner of that girdle, whom the Jews should thus bind and deliver as a criminal to the Romans.

3. Paul's companions, as well as the brethren at Cesarea, hearing these melancholy tidings, united in dissuading him from going to Jerusalem; and with tears entreated him to consult the safety of that life, which, however ready he might be to part with, would be to them a loss irreparable.

4. Paul nobly replied to their entreaties, *What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart?* Their tears affected him more than all his own expected sufferings; they were a temptation to shake his courage; and it troubled him, both that they should show such timorousness, and dissuade him from what was his duty; and that he should be obliged to deny them any request; since he could not comply with them without grieving the Spirit, under whose influence he now acted, and therefore he dares defy the fury of all his persecutors; *for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus;* prepared, if God so pleased, to shed his blood in confirmation of the truth which he preached, and to glorify his Master, as a martyr in his cause. *Note,* (1.) The foolish fondness of our friends is often a more dangerous trial than the avowed opposition of our enemies. (2.) Faithful souls are unmoved with the fear of sufferings. Death is welcome if Jesus be but glorified thereby.

5. Perceiving his unshaken resolution, his friends desisted,

submitting to the will of God, and acquiescing in his determination, which they perceived proceeded not from any inflexibility of temper, but from the conviction that he acted agreeably to the call of God's Spirit. *Note*, Submission to God's will is not only our duty, but should be our delight, when we know that all he does is righteous, and that it will ultimately tend to our good, as well as his own glory.

15. And after those days we took up our carriages,* and went up to Jerusalem. 16. [s] There went with us also *certain* of the disciples of [t] Cesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of [u] Cyprus, an [x] old disciple, with whom we should lodge. 17. ¶ And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us [y] gladly. 18. And the *day* following Paul went in with us unto [z] James; and all the elders were present. 19. And when he had saluted them, [a] he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. 20. And when they had heard *it*, they [b] glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, [c] how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all [d] zealous of the law: 21. And they are informed of thee, [e] that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their* children, neither to walk after the customs. 22. What is it therefore? [f] the multitude must needs come together; for they will hear that thou art come. 23. Do therefore this that we say to thee: [g] we have four men which have a vow on them; 24. Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave *their* heads: † and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing, but *that* [h] thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. 25. As touching the Gentiles which believe, [i] we have written *and* concluded that they observe no such things, save only that they keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. 26. Then Paul took the men, [k] and the next day, purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

* Rather, *we put up our baggage*. The word denotes any thing that is carried, baggage, or baggage.

[s] See ver. 5. ch. 10. 48.

[t] See ver. 8.

[u] See ver. 3. ch. 11. 19. & 4. 36. & 13. 4. & 15. 39.

[x] Prov. 16. 31. & 22. 6. Ps. 92. 14. Job 5. 26.

[y] 1 Pet. 4. 9. Ps. 16. 3. Heb. 13. 1, 2. Ps. 119. 63.

[z] Ch. 15. 13 Gal. 1. 19. & 2. 9. Jam. 1. 1. ch. 15. 2, 6. & 20. 17.

[a] Ch. 14. 27. & 15. 12. & xvi—xx.

[b] Ch. 11. 18. Luke 7. 16. Ps. xcvi, xcviii, c, cv, cxiv.

[c] Ch. 2. 41, 47. & 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 6. 7. Mat. 13. 31. Ps. 72. 16, 17. John 12. 24.

[d] Ch. 15. 1. Rom. 10. 2. Gal. 1. 14. ch. 22. 3.

[e] Ch. 6. 14. Gal. 5. 1—14.

[f] Ch. 15. 12—22.

[g] Ch. 18. 18. & 24. 18. Num. 6. 2, 18, 19.

† It was not unusual among the Jews to defray the expenses of Nazarites in sacrificing on their being released from their vow. The charges of these four would be the price of eight lambs and four rams, with oil and flour.

[h] 1 Cor. 9. 20.

[i] Ch. 15. 20, 28, 29. 1 Cor. viii, x. Exod. 34. 15. Lev. 17. 14. & 3. 17. & 19. 26. Deut. 12. 16, 23. & 15. 23. 1 Sam. 14. 32. Gen. 9. 4. 1 Cor. 5. 1, 9, 11. & 7. 2. Heb. 13. 4. 1 Thes. 4. 3, 5, 7.

[k] Num. 6. 13—20. ch. 24. 18.

Verses 15—26.

1. The journey of Paul and his companions to Jerusalem. His resolution was taken, and they, if they cannot dissuade him from his purpose, are ready cheerfully to share the danger: they therefore packed up their baggage, which they perhaps carried on their backs, and marched forward accompanied by other brethren of Cesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an *old disciple*, venerable for his age, and his long standing in the profession of Christianity, *with whom we should lodge*, he having a house at Jerusalem, and during the festival lodgings were difficult to be obtained.

2. The brethren at Jerusalem gave him at his arrival a most hearty welcome. *And the day following, Paul went in with us unto James*, the only apostle who seems to have been at that time resident at Jerusalem; *and all the elders were present;* when, after friendly salutations passed, Paul gave them a particular and distinct account of all the churches which had been planted by his ministry, and the great success which God had given to his labours; which gave them the most singular satisfaction, and excited their warmest praises, *they glorified the Lord*, who had done such great things by him. *Note*, God must have the glory of all our success; for whatever our labours are, it is he who giveth the increase.

3. James, in the name of the rest, hereupon offers his brother Paul his advice, desiring him, in condescension to the prejudices of the Jewish brethren, to show his compliance with the ceremonial law. For though it was by no means to be imposed on the Gentile converts, nor was any justification before God in whole or in part to be expected from it; yet being still attached to those rites, to which from their infancy they had been taught to pay such reverence, as being of divine appointment, the Jewish converts in general were zealous for their observance: and as it was not sinful to comply with them herein, they judged it would be prudent in him to conform to them for the maintenance of mutual love and peace. The number of the disciples from the Jews was now increased to *many thousands*, or rather *myriads*, ten thousands: and many had imbibed prejudices against Paul, through the false reports of the Judaizing teachers, as if, not content with teaching the Gentiles that *they* were free from the ceremonial law, he had also dissuaded the Jews from conforming thereto, leading them to apostatize from the institutions of Moses, and to discontinue the usage of circumcision. What therefore was to be done in the present case? the multitude must soon know of his coming, and there was danger of their assembling together to complain of him, as prejudiced against him. To promote therefore Paul's usefulness, which might be impeded hereby; and to reconcile them to him, who had deserved so highly of the church of God, they propose to him an expedient which would silence the cavillers, and remove the prejudices of his Jewish brethren, who, when they saw him conform to the law, would be convinced of the falsehood of the reports which had been propagated concerning him. They advise him therefore to join himself with four other converted Jews, who were under a vow of Nazaritism, and to go through the usual rites with them, providing the sacrifices offered on this occasion, (Num. vi. 1—8.) which would most effectually silence gainsayers: not that this should be any infringement of the Gentile liberty, that being already determined by a solemn decree.

4. Paul, willing to the weak to become as weak, readily yielded to their proposal; and taking with him the men who were under a vow of Nazaritism, entered peaceably into the temple, *to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification*, to the priests, which they would observe with the usual rites, *until that an offering should be offered for every one of them*, as the law directed, Num. vi. 13—20.

Some have censured Paul's compliance, as countenancing the Jews in prejudices which ought to have been opposed; but it

should seem that the thing was justifiable, and agreeable to the avowed maxim on which he always proceeded, (1 Cor. ix. 20.) for which end he had also circumcised Timothy; willing to please all men for their good to edification; charitably condescending to the infirmities of the weak; desirous, as far as he could with a good conscience, to comply with them in all indifferent matters, if by any means he might save some.

27. ¶ And when the seven days were almost ended, [l] the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, [m] stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, 28. Crying out, Men of Israel, [n] help: this is the man that teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and, further, brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. 29. (For they had seen before with him in the city [o] Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) 30. [p] And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were [q] shut. 31. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. 33. Then the chief captain came near, and took him and commanded *him* to be [r] bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. 34. [s] And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.* 35. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. 36. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, [t] Away with him. 37. ¶ And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? 38. Art not thou that Egyptian,† which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? 39. But Paul said, [x] I am a man *which am* a Jew of Tarsus,‡ *a city* in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, [y] suffer me to speak unto the people. 40. And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and [z] beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew* tongue, saying,

Verses 27—40. Henceforward we shall find the faithful Paul in bonds, and see him no more at liberty to the end of this history.

1. A tumult is raised against Paul. When he had nearly accomplished the seven days' attendance on the temple, and was about to offer his sacrifice, the Jews of Asia, who had come up to celebrate the passover, observed him in the temple; and, fired with rage, as if his presence there was a profanation of the holy place, they incensed the people against him; and, raising a mob, as if he was the vilest criminal alive, they cried out for every Israelite to help in seizing and punishing most exemplary such a miscreant, whom they accused of apostasy from their religion, and as the arch-seducer, *teaching every where*, with a view to prejudice men against the Jewish church and nation, against the sacred law of Moses, and that hallowed temple in which they so highly gloried. And not content therewith, they charge him with the most atrocious profanation of that holy place, by introducing uncircumcised Gentiles into the court of the Israelites; a calumny malicious and false in the highest degree, and grounded on the mere seeing Trophimus, an Ephesian, in Paul's company in the city. *Note*, (1.) The cause of Christ hath been often run down by noise and clamour; and the ministers of truth have been first branded with an ill name, and then suggestions have been cast out against them, as if they were guilty of ill things. (2.) Innocence is no protection against calumny: some strained inuendo, or misrepresentation, easily turns the most innocent word or action into something highly criminal.

2. The city was soon in an uproar: exasperated by these suggestions, the people ran together, and seized the apostle, dragged him out of the temple, *and forthwith the door was shut*, to prevent Paul's flying to the horns of the altar, or the Gentiles from rushing in, or that this holy place might not be defiled with his blood; for the intention of the people was evidently to murder him; and they began now violently to beat him, and must quickly have despatched him.

3. Paul is through the divine providence rescued from instant death. The chief captain of the Roman forces, which kept garrison in the castle of Antonia, hearing of the uproar, ran down with a detachment to quell the tumult; and seeing him appear with an armed force, the people immediately desisted from beating Paul. The captain hereupon having seized and bound him, that it might appear he intended not to rescue him, but to proceed against him in a legal way, demanded *who he was, and what he had done*. *Note*, (1.) Popular tumults are highly dangerous, and to be suppressed at their first rising. (2) God can raise up instruments to rescue his suffering servants from a quarter they least expected, and often makes even *the earth to help the woman*, Rev. xii. 16.

4. The noise was so great, and the clamours so various, that it was impossible for the chief captain to get a satisfactory answer, whilst *some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude*. Therefore he commanded the prisoner to be carried into the castle, where he might examine into the affair; and as the soldiers guarded Paul thither, the crowd pressed so hard upon them, crying, *Away with him*, hang him, crucify him, that they were forced to take him in their arms, to prevent his being pulled to pieces, or smothered in the throng.

5. The apostle respectfully begs leave to speak a word with the chief captain, who expresses his surprise to hear him talk

[l] Ch. 24. 18. & 26. 21.
[m] Ch. 13. 50. & 14. 2, 5, 19. & 17. 5, 6, 13. & 18. 12. & 19. 23.
[n] Ch. 6. 14. & 19. 25, 26. & 24. 5, 6. & 16. 20, 21. & 26. 2, 20, 21.
[o] See ch. 20. 4. 2 Tim. 4. 20.
[p] Ch. 16. 20. & 19. 29. & 7. 54. & 26. 21.
[q] To keep Paul from refuge, and the Gentiles from entering. Ver. 28, 29. ch. 24. 6.
[r] Ver. 11. ch. 20. 23.
[s] Ch. 19. 32.
* Built by John Hyrcanus, the high priest, at the N.W. angle of the outer court of the temple. It is described by Josephus in his History of the Jewish Wars, B. v. chap. 5. sect. 8.
[t] Luke 23. 18. John 19. 15. ch. 22. 22. & 7. 54.
[u] Not Theudas, or Judas, ch. 5. 36, 37. but another about A.D. 55.
† There is mention made of this insurgent Egyptian in Josephus, though there is some slight difference betwixt the accounts of the sacred and the uninspired historians. Preference of course is due to the former, but the two accounts do not necessarily involve any absolute discrepancy: for the captain here speaks of the number of followers whom the Egyptian led forth into the wilderness; while Josephus speaks of them as returning to attack Jerusalem.
[x] Ch. 9. 11, 30. & 11. 25. & 22. 3.
‡ Tarsus, now called *Tarasso*, was an ancient and celebrated city of Cilicia, situated on the Cydnus. From its adherence to the Roman cause, it was much cherished by that people. See note on ch. 22. 25.
[y] 1 Pet. 3. 15. & 4. 15, 16.
[z] Ch. 12. 17. & 13. 16. & 19. 33.
* Or, *Syriac derived from it.* Ch. 6. 1. & 26. 14. Luke 23. 38. John 5. 2. & 19. 13, 17, 20. Rev. 9. 11. & 16. 16

the Greek language, and intimates his suspicion of him, that he had been that Egyptian impostor, who, a few years before, had raised a sedition at the head of four thousand murderers, who soon increased to a considerable army; but they were defeated, and the ringleader, with a few of his accomplices only, escaped. Paul soon undeceived him, informing him that he was by birth and religion, a Jew, a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia, a city of distinguished renown, and wished he might be permitted to speak unto the people, to clear himself from the malicious accusations of his persecutors. *Note,* Many are run down through misrepresentation, and oppressed by those who, if they knew the truth, would never have joined in the cry against them.

6. Lysias, the chief captain, readily granted his request; when Paul standing on the stairs, beckoned with his hand, intimating his desire to speak to them; and a great silence being made thereupon, he addressed to them, in the Hebrew tongue, in that dialect which was in common use, the noble defence recorded in the following chapter.

CHAP. XXII.—ANNO DOMINI, 61.

We have here, 1. *Paul's address to the people, and their attention to it,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The account he gives of himself:* (1.) *What a bigotted Jew he had been in the beginning of his time,* ver. 3—5. (2.) *How he was miraculously converted, and brought over to the faith of Christ,* ver. 6—11. (3.) *How he was confirmed and baptized by the ministry of Ananias,* ver. 12—16. (4.) *How he was afterwards called, by an immediate warrant from heaven, to be the apostle of the Gentiles,* ver. 17—21. 3. *The interruption given him upon this by the rabble,* ver. 22, 23. 4. *Paul's second rescue out of their hands, and the further course which the chief captain took to find out the true reason of this mighty clamour against Paul,* ver. 24, 25. 5. *Paul's pleading his privilege as a Roman citizen, by which he was exempted from scourging,* ver. 26—29. 6. *The chief captain's removing the cause into the high priest's court, and Paul's appearing there,* ver. 30.

1. MEN, [a] brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence *which I make* now unto you. 2. (And when they heard that he [b] spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) 3. [c] I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city [d] at the feet of Gamaliel,* *and* taught [e] according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. 4. [f] And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. 5. [g] As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the [h] brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. 6. [i] And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. 7. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 8. And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. 9. [k] And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they [l] heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10. [m] And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. 11. And [n] when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into [o] Damascus. 12. [p] And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, [q] having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there,* 13. Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. 14. And he said, [r] The God of our fathers [s] hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and [t] see that [u] Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. 15. For thou shalt be [x] his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. 16. And now why tarriest thou? [y] arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. 17. And it came to pass, that, [z] when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a [a] trance; 18. And saw him saying unto me, [b] Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. 19. And I said, Lord, they know [c] that I imprisoned, and beat in every synagogue, them that believed on thee: 20. [d] And when the blood of thy martyr † Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. 21. And he said unto me, Depart: for [e] I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

[a] Ch. 7. 2. & 13. 15, 26, 38. & 15. 7, 13. & 23. 1, 6. & 28. 17.
[b] Ch. 21. 40.
[c] Ch. 21. 39. & 9. 11, 30. & 11. 25. & 26. 3—23.
[d] Deut. 33. 3. 2 Kin. 4. 38. Luke 10. 39. & 8. 35. ch. 5. 34.
* Pupils generally sat below, or at the feet of, their teachers who were placed on elevated seats; but the expression may easily be understood to mean nothing more than that Paul had been a pupil or disciple of Gamaliel.
[e] Gal. 1. 14. Phil. 3. 6. 2 Cor. 11. 22. ch. 24. 16. & 26. 4—9. & 23. 6. & 21. 20. Rom. 10. 2, 3.
[f] Ch. 8. 3. & 9. 1, 13, 14. & 26. 9—11. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
[g] Ch. 9. 2, 14. & 26. 12. Luke 22. 6.
[h] Unbelieving Jews. Rom. 9. 3.
[i] Ch. 9. 3—5, 17. & 26. 12—15. 1 Cor. 9. 1. & 15. 8. 2 Cor. xii.
[k] Ch. 9. 7. Dan. 10. 7.
[l] Did not understand the words. Ch. 26. 14. Gen. 11. 7. & 42. 23. Deut. 28. 49. Is. 36. 11. Mat. 13. 11
[m] Ch. 9. 6. & 26. 16.
[n] Ch. 9. 8, 9.
[o] The chief city of Syria. Gen. 15. 2. 1 Kin. 11. 24.
[p] Ch. 9. 10—19. & x. Song 2. 8. Rom. 10. 14—17.
[q] Ch. 10. 22. 1 Tim. 3. 7.
[r] Gen. 17. 7. Exod. 3. 6. & 20. 2. Ps. 50. 7. & 81. 8—10.
[s] Rom. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 1, 12, 15. 1 Tim. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 1. Tit. 1. 1. ch. 9. 15.
[t] Ch. 9. 17. & 18. 9. & 23. 11. & 26. 16. 1 Cor. 9. 1. & 15. 8.
[u] Ch. 3. 14. & 7. 52. 1 John 2. 1. Heb. 7. 26. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22.
[x] John 15. 27. ch. 1. 8. & 4. 20. & 10. 39, 41. & 26. 16. & 20. 21. Luke 24. 47, 48.
[y] Mat. 3. 11. Mark 1. 4. Luke 3. 16. ch. 9. 18. & 2. 38. & 3. 19. Tit. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
[z] Ch. 9. 26, 28. Gal. 1. 18.
[a] Ch. 10. 10. Num. 24. 4. Rev. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 12. 1.
[b] Mat. 10. 14, 23. Eccl. 9. 10.
[c] Ver. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13. ch. 26. 9—12. & 8. 3. & 9. 1.
[d] Ch. 7. 58. & 8. 1.
† The word *martyr,* in its original sense, signified only *witness,* and in this sense is always used in the New Testament.
[e] Ch. 9. 15. & 13. 2, 4. & 26. 17. Gal. 1. 15. & 2. 8. Rom. 1. 5. & 11. 13. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 12. & 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11.

Verses 1—21. No sooner had he obtained permission to speak, and all in silence listened, than with noble composure of mind, and in the most respectful manner, he addressed himself unto the people, saying, *Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.* He makes no mention of their violence, but merely aims to apologize for himself, and undeceive them, respecting the false charges laid against him; and it is the greatest injustice to condemn any man, till he hath been heard impartially in his own defence.

As he spoke aloud to them in the Hebrew dialect, which they understood, they kept the more silence, and he proceeded as follows:

1. He gives them an account of his parentage and education. He was one of their own body, a native Jew, a Hebrew of Hebrews; not a poor obscure fellow, nor illiterate, as some might have scandalized him; but a freeman of Tarsus in Cilicia, and educated under the most famous of their Rabbins, at the feet of the learned Gamaliel; and as he was thus early initiated in the most critical and accurate knowledge of the Mosaical law, with all the traditional comments of the elders thereupon; so was he most zealous for these institutions, and for the observance of these traditions, from a conscientious regard to God's glory, as they themselves now appeared to be.

2. He informs them of the bitter enmity which he had himself formerly expressed against that religion of Jesus which he now preached. He had been a bloody persecutor of the disciples of Jesus: furious to extirpate the Christian name from the earth; seizing, without respect of rank, age, or sex, the professors of Christianity; and dragging them to prisons, endeavoured by every ignominy and cruelty to compel them to blaspheme and recant. And for this he appeals to the high priest and Sanhedrim, by whom he had been employed, and under the sanction of whose commission he had been sent to Damascus, to seize and carry prisoners to Jerusalem, all who should be there found professing the Christian religion, that they might be proceeded against, and punished as apostates. None could have been farther from Christianity than himself; the bitterest of those who now persecuted him, came short of the enmity which he had shown against it.

3. He relates the history of his conversion. It proceeded from no affectation of novelty, no discontent at being disappointed of preferment, from no worldly motives, nor the sophistry of others; but was the immediate miraculous work of God. For as he was ready to enter Damascus, with all his prejudices, and breathing out threatenings and slaughter, suddenly at noon, a light from heaven, brighter than the meridian sun, shone around him; and, falling in terror to the earth, he heard the voice of Jesus, saying, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* And when, trembling and astonished, he answered, *Who art thou, Lord?* it was replied, *I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.* Convinced now of his own dreadful guilt, and earnest to escape the fearful consequences thereof, he begs to be informed what he must do; when the Lord bid him go to Damascus, and there he should receive information of every thing that was *appointed* for him *to do.* And being now raised from the earth, and blinded with the heavenly light, his companions led him by the hand to Damascus, for the truth of which facts they could witness, this being no fancy or delusion; for, though they heard not distinctly the words that were spoken, they saw the light, were terrified, and fell to the earth together with him, and heard the sound of a voice, though not the articulate discourse.

4. He declares the further instructions and cure which he received from Ananias, whose character he describes, to recommend him to their regard. He was *a devout man according to the law,* and, though a Christian, still zealously observed the ritual service, *having a good report of all the Jews that dwelt there,* for his exemplary life and conversation, and attachment to the temple worship. He came and said, *Brother Saul, receive thy sight;* which was no sooner spoken than done: *the same hour I looked up upon him.* Then Ananias delivered his message, and said, *The God of our fathers hath chosen thee,* in his eternal counsel, *that thou shouldest know his will* as revealed in the gospel, *and see that Just One,* who so wrongfully suffered; *and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth,* and in some future time receive a fuller commission and farther instructions from him. *For thou shalt be his witness unto all men,* to the Jews and Gentiles, *of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou?* without delay *arise, and be baptized,* receiving this instituted sign of admission into his church, and to all the privileges of it; *and wash away thy sins,* now pardoned through his atoning blood, *calling on the name of the Lord,* the only Saviour, that all the blessings of his everlasting covenant may be conferred upon thee, according to his promises. *Note,* (1.) The great gospel privilege is remission of sins. (2.) All who are brought truly to the Lord, from that hour cease not to call upon him, living in constant dependence on his grace.

5. He informs them of the divine warrant by which he was commissioned to go and preach to the Gentiles. It was given him at Jerusalem, while he was in the temple praying, where he fell into a trance, and saw his divine Redeemer, who said unto him, *Get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony,* being obstinately prejudiced against it. *And I said,* unwilling to leave my dear countrymen, for whose souls I so earnestly longed, and to whom I fancied my ministry might be more particularly convincing, *Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee. And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.* And this he urges as a reason why the people would now more readily regard his testimony, when he preached that faith he once destroyed, since it must needs be supernatural power which could produce so wonderful a conversion. But the Lord who knew the hearts of all men, and that his ministry would be rejected by the Jews, repeated his commands, *Depart:* and appointed him other work; *for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.*

From all which they might see clearly how far he was from being that enemy to the Jewish nation and worship which he was represented to be; how earnestly he would have continued labouring amongst them; how reluctantly he quitted Jerusalem; and by what most express divine authority he acted in his labours among the Gentiles.

22. ¶ And they gave him audience unto this word, and *then* lifted up their voices, and said, [f] Away with such a *fellow* from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live. 23. And as they cried out, and cast off *their* clothes,* and threw dust into the air, 24. [g] The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade [h] that he should be †examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. 25. ¶ And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, [i] Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman,‡ and uncondemned? 26. When the centurion heard *that,* he went and told the chief captain, saying, [k] Take heed what thou doest; for this man is a Roman. 27. Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. 28. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was *free*-born. 29. Then straightway they departed from him which should

[f] Ch. 21. 36. & 7. 54, 57, 58. & 25. 24. Luke 23. 18. John 19. 15.

* Threw up, or tossed about their garments.

[g] Gen. 22. 14. Deut. 32. 36. Ps. 46. 1. Rom. 8. 28.

[h] Ch. 16. 22, 23, 37. John 19. 1. & 18. 23. Heb. 11. 35. ver. 25, 29.

† Scourged to make him confess his crime.

[i] Ch. 16. 37. ver. 27, 28.

‡ The Roman law prohibited the magistrate from punishing any Roman citizen capitally, or by scourging; and even from bindinghim. Yet it is a point of some uncertainty how Paul obtained this citizenship. It does not appear that his citizenship of Tarsus conferred it on him, for the captain ordered Paul to be scourged though he knew him to be a Tarsæan. Perhaps some one of Paul's ancestors had this freedom given him for his services, and Paul may have inherited it from him.

[k] Ch. 16. 38, 33. ver. 29.

[l] Or *tortured him.* Ver. 24. Heb. 11. 35.

[*] See note on ver. 25.

[m] Ch. 21. 11, 33. & 24. 28. & 26. 29. Mat. 27. 2.

[n] Luke 21. 12. Mat. 10. 17, 18. & 24. 9.

have [l] examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman,* and because he had bound him. 30. ¶ On the morrow, [m] because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from *his* bands, and [n] commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

Verses 22—30. Hitherto with patience the Jews gave audience to the apostle's discourse; but the very mention of the Gentiles fired their indignation, and they would hear no more.

1. They cried out with the most raging fury, *Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live.* The very thought, that the idolatrous Gentiles should be preferred to them, exasperated them beyond bounds, and they imagined no punishment was equal to the desert of such a miscreant, who could dare plead a divine commission to preach to the abhorred heathen. Therefore *they cried out* against him with the utmost detestation, *and cast off their clothes,* resolved to stone him on the spot as an apostate and blasphemer; *and threw dust into the air,* as if they wanted to bury him alive. Thus have the greatest and best of men the world was ever blessed with, been treated as the offscouring of all things, and unworthy of the air they breathed.

2. The chief captain Lysias, seeing such madness and fury expressed by the people, *commanded Paul to be brought into the castle,* partly to shelter him from the popular rage, partly from the apprehension, that he must needs have been guilty of some enormous wickedness, which could occasion such general abhorrence; *and* therefore most unjustly *commanded,* without further inquiry, *that he should be examined by scourging,* to extort a confession from himself of the supposed crime, which made the people so violent against him.

3. When the soldiers, who were about to execute the chief captain's commands, were binding him with thongs to the pillar, in order to be scourged, Paul mildly addressed himself to the centurion who stood by, and said, *Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?* The centurion, startled at this intimation, and knowing the dangerous consequence of such a procedure, stayed the soldiers, and went immediately to acquaint the chief captain, suggesting to him the necessity of proceeding with caution, since the person whom they had in custody was one of much greater distinction than they apprehended, and a Roman citizen.

4. The chief captain Lysias, knowing the jealousy of the Roman citizens, and the severity of the law against those who should dare to bind or scourge any of them, especially without a fair and public trial, came directly, and desired to be informed in this point, saying, *Art thou a Roman* citizen? Paul *said, Yea.* The chief captain, surprised at this, answered, *With a great sum obtained I this freedom:* and you seem a poor Jew, unable to purchase so high a dignity: *and Paul,* who held his privilege from a more honourable source, *said, But I was free born.*

5. Instantly orders were given for his being loosed; they who were about to scourge him departed, and the chief captain himself was under terrible apprehensions, lest, if Paul should complain of this outrage, it might be attended with very ill consequences to him, that he had rashly proceeded so far as to bind him, being a Roman. Our civil privileges are an invaluable blessing, and the fear of man often restrains those who know no fear of God.

6. The next day the governor, desirous of coming at the certainty of the thing laid to Paul's charge, *commanded the chief priests and all the council to appear;* and having loosed him *from his bands,* that he might not seem to prejudge his cause, and treat him as a criminal without proof, *he brought Paul down, and set him before them,* that they might bring their accusations, and he be at liberty to answer in his own defence.

CHAP. XXIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 61.

We have here, 1. *Paul's protestation of his own integrity, and of a civil respect to the high priest, however he had upon a sudden spoken warmly to him, and justly,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Paul's prudent contrivance to get himself clear of them, by setting the Pharisees and Sadducees at variance one with another,* ver. 6—9. 3. *The governor's seasonable interposal to rescue him out of their hands likewise,* ver. 10. 4. *Christ's more comfortable appearing to him, to animate him against those difficulties that lay before him, and to tell him what he must expect,* ver. 11. 5. *A bloody conspiracy of some desperate Jews to kill Paul,* ver. 12—15. 6. *The discovery of this conspiracy to Paul, and by him to the chief captain,* ver. 16—22. 7. *The chief captain's care of Paul's safety, who sent him away immediately under a strong guard from Jerusalem to Cesarea, which was now the residence of Felix the Roman governor, and there he safely arrived,* ver. 23—35.

1. AND Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, [a] Men *and* brethren, [b] I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. 2. And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him [c] to smite him on the mouth. 3. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, *thou* [d] whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and [e] commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? 4. And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? 5. Then said Paul, I wist not,‡ brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, [f] Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

[a] See ch. 22. [b] Ch. 24. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 4. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Heb. 13. 18.

[c] 1 Kin. 22. 24. Jer. 20. 2. John 18. 22. Mic. 5. 1.

[d] Mat. 23. 27. Rev. 3. 2. Tit. 1. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Jer 7. 4. Mic. 3. 11.

[e] Lev. 19. 35. Deut. 17. 4, 9. & 25. 1—3.

‡ Some commentators consider that the word here rendered *I wist not,* i. e. I knew not, properly means *I did not reflect,* or *consider.*

[f] Exod. 22. 28. Eccl. 10. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 10. Jude 8.

Verses 1—5. Paul with undaunted courage appears before this august assembly, nor fears their faces, though well persuaded of their inveterate enmity against him.

1. He makes a solemn profession of his own integrity. *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day;* even in his unregenerate state he had, according to his best light and knowledge, acted with conscientious zeal for God's glory; and his outward conversation had been ever unimpeached. And as in his conversion to Christianity he had embraced the gospel upon the strongest evidence, so had he ever since with all fidelity approved himself to God; and they who have this testimony of a good conscience, need never be ashamed.

2. Ananias the high priest, highly offended at such a protestation of his innocence, commanded one of the officers who stood by Paul to strike him on the mouth, and not suffer him to proceed with such confidence and familiarity of address.

2. Justly indignant at such an insult, and not actuated by private revenge, but by prophetic impulse, he denounces the doom of this proud high priest: *God shall smite thee, thou whited wall,* with some stroke of his vengeance for thy pride and hypocrisy: *for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?* How unjust and iniquitous is such a procedure? *Note,* Proud persecutors are but

whited walls, and shall soon feel how unable they are to stand before the storm of divine judgments.

4. Some who were present were highly offended at the apostle's freedom, as an unbecoming insult on the high priest's character and office, saying, *Revilest thou God's high priest?*

5. Paul immediately apologized for what he had said, unwilling to prejudice his Jewish brethren against him, however great the provocation which had been given him: *I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest;* either he did not advert to his dignity at that time, or he did not consider him as the high priest, another being lawfully entitled to that office, and Ananias but an intruder: *for* he meant not to speak disrespectfully of that high office, since *it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people;* and he always desired to have his conduct governed by God's revealed word, and to honour the magistrate, however wicked the man might be.

6. ¶ But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other
g Ch. 24. 15, 21. & 26. 5, 6, 8. & 28. 20. Phil. 3. 5. Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men *and* brethren, [g] I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. 7. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude
h Mat. 22. 23. Mark 12. 18. Luke 20. 27.
i Ch. 25. 25. & 26. 31. Luke 23. 4, 14, 15, 22. with Prov. 16. 7. 1 Sam. 24. 17. was divided. 8. [h] For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. 9. And there arose a great cry: and the scribes *that were* of the
k Ch. 9. 4. & 16. 9. & 22. 7, 17, 18. & 5. 30. & 11. 17. Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, [i] We find no evil in this man: [k] but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. 10. ¶ And
* The castle of Antonia: see note on ch. 21. 34. It was garrisoned by Roman soldiers. when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them,
l Ps. 109. 31. & 46. 1. ch. 2. 25. & 18. 9. & 19. 21. & 23. 11—31. Deut. 32. 36. Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 2. and to bring *him* into the castle.* 11. [l] And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

Verses 6—11. Since the apostle had to do with men on whom he might now easily perceive he could not hope to prevail by pleading the cause which they were determined to persecute, he here,

1. Prudently disconcerted all their measures by a plea which they little apprehended. He observed the council was divided into two sects, of Pharisees and Sadducees; and if he can wisely gain one party of them to his side, he may more easily extricate himself from his difficulties. Accordingly he cried aloud, *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee;* have always been brought up in the faith of their distinguishing tenets; and among the chief articles thereof we reckon the resurrection of the dead, for which hope *I am called in question,* the grand foundation of all that doctrine of the gospel which I preach being built on the resurrection of the Redeemer.

2. This immediately, as he expected, raised a division in the house; the Pharisees espousing this great truth, the Sadducees opposing it: for the Sadducees denied the resurrection of the body, the immortality of the soul, and any future state of rewards and punishments; whilst the Pharisees, though wedded to their traditions, stiffly maintained these great doctrines of truth. Hence arose the schism between them, and their fury against Paul was now turned into a sharp contention between themselves: so that a great cry arose, and in mere opposition to the Sadducees, the Pharisees took the apostle's part, and contended for him as orthodox in his principles, and innocent in his behaviour. *But if an angel or spirit hath spoken to him,* as it is possible may be the case, *let us not fight against God;* since all opposition to such a heavenly message would be in fact rebellion against God himself, according to the advice which Gamaliel had formerly given, (chap. v. 38, 39.)

3. A violent tumult hereupon arose, the Sadducees were enraged at the opposition they met with, and in the quarrel between his friends and foes, Paul was in danger of being torn limb from limb; so that the chief captain was again compelled to interpose; and with his soldiers to carry him off, and secure him in the castle, lest he should be pulled in pieces by them. Thus the Lord again providentially rescued him from the jaws of death.

4. The night following *the Lord stood by him,* in a vision, to comfort and encourage him with unshaken fortitude to stand fast, *and said, Be of good cheer, Paul;* be confident of the supports of my power and love, and let no dangers dismay thee: *for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.* So he had designed formerly, (chap. xix. 21.) and now the Lord will make even the malice of his persecutors the means of carrying him thither. *Note,* If the Lord speak comfort to our souls, and stand by us, then our prison shall be a palace, and our sufferings our joy.

12. ¶ And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, [m] and bound themselves [n] under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. 13. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy. 14. And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. 15. [o] Now therefore ye, with the council, signify to the chief captain † that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. 16. [p] And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the † castle, and told Paul. 17. [q] Then Paul called one of the centurions unto *him,* and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain; for he hath a certain thing to tell him. 18. So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him,* and prayed me to bring this young man

m Ver. 20, 30. Is. 8. 9, 10. Mat. 26. 74.

n Or *with an oath of execration.* Such execrable vows were not unusual among the Jews; but they could easily be loosed; any of their Rabbis could grant absolution from them. Mat. 26. 74. 1 Sam. 3. 17. & 20. 13. & 25. 22. 2 Sam. 3. 9. 1 Kin. 2. 23. & 19. 2.

o Prov. 1. 11, 16. & 4. 16. ch. 25. 3.

† Ps. 21. 11. & 37. 32. Is. 59. 7. Rom. 3. 14—16.

p Job 5. 13. Prov 21. 30.

q Mat. 10. 16, 17. Eph. 5. 15.

unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. 19. Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me? 20. And he said, [r] The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly. 21. But do not thou yield unto them: for [s] there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an [t] oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee. 22. So the chief captain *then* let the young man depart, and charged *him*, *See thou* tell no man that thou hast shewed these things to me. 23. ¶ And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and * spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night; 24. And provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the governor.† 25. And he wrote a letter after this manner: 26. Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor [u] Felix *sendeth* greeting. 27. [x] This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman. 28. And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, [y] I brought him forth into their council: 29. Whom I perceived to be accused of [z] questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. 30. [a] And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what *they had* against him. Farewell. 31. Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought *him* by night to ‡ Antipatris. 32. On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: 33. Who, when they came to [b] Cesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him. 34. And when the governor had read *the letter*, he asked of [c] what province he was. And when he understood that *he was* of [c] Cilicia; 35. I will hear thee, said he, [d] when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's [e] judgment hall.

r Ver. 12—15. ch. 25. 3.

s Ch. 25. 3. & 20. 3. Ps. 10. 9, 10. & 37. 32. Mic. 7. 2. Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. Is. 59. 7, 15.

t Or curse. Ver. 12, 14. Rom. 9. 3. with Mat. 26. 74.

* Or archers, or javelin-casters.

† This was Claudius Felix, the successor of Cumanus in the government of Judea. Tacitus calls him Antonius Felix, and insinuates that his vice-government was despotic and sycophantish. He was thrice married, and each time to a king's daughter. He was recalled to Rome A. D. 60, when he was accused of many mal-practices by the Jews, but was protected by the influence of his brother Pallas.

u Ch. 24. 3, 25, 27.

x Ch. 21. 32, 33. & 23. 10.

y Ch. 22. 30.

z Ch. 18. 15. & 24. 6, 10—21. & 26. 2—6, 31. & 25. 8.

a Ver. 16—24. ch. 24. 7, 8. & 25. 16.

‡ A city near the north-west of Canaan, the ancient Caphar-Saba, so called by Herod the Great in honour of his father Antipater. It was situated near the mountains, 17 miles from Joppa, on the road from Jerusalem to Cæsarea.

b A city on the north-west of Canaan. See ch. 8. 40.

c A country in Lesser Asia. Ch. 15. 41. & 22. 39.

d Ch. 24. 19. & 25. 16.

e A palace built by Herod. John 19. 28. Mat. 27. 27.

Verses 12—35. We have here a desperate plot laid against the innocent apostle, but by the divine providence discovered and defeated.

1. The plot was deeply laid and ready to be executed. Since they could gain their ends no other way, the next day some of his most envenomed foes determined to assassinate him. The number of the conspirators amounted to more than forty, who by a dreadful oath bound their souls, to be faithful to each other, and neither to *eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.* And this their horrid design they communicated to the chief priests and elders for their approbation, who they knew would stick at nothing to destroy a man whom they so abhorred. They proposed therefore, that they should desire the chief captain to bring Paul once more to the council-board to be examined, and they undertook to despatch him by the way as he came: nor did the chief priests, it seems, or elders, hesitate at the proposal.

2. God brought this bloody conspiracy to light. A nephew of Paul's, his sister's son, got some intelligence of their design, and instantly ran to the castle, to acquaint the apostle of his danger, who begged the favour of one of the centurions to introduce the young man to the chief captain, having some very interesting intelligence to communicate. The centurion very obligingly went, and informed Lysias of Paul's request, and he without delay gave the young man a private audience. Taking him kindly by the hand, he led him aside, and bid him speak freely what he had to say; whereupon he informed him of the whole conspiracy, which was ready to be put in execution; and that they were now coming to ask his consent to their request, with regard to the bringing down of Paul before them, under pretence of a more exact inquiry into the charges laid against him; the young man therefore humbly begs, that he will not *yield to them* in this matter. The chief captain with a solemn injunction of secrecy, hereupon dismissed him, engaging to take effectual care of Paul. *Note*, (1.) The Lord often wonderfully brings to light the hidden things of darkness, and lays open by strange methods the deep designs of bloody conspirators. (2.) It is a high commendation to men of rank who are in office, to be easy of access, and not proudly to disregard their poor suitors. (3.) Secrecy is often most essential to the success of our affairs.

3. Lysias immediately took the most effectual method to prevent this horrid assassination; and fearing lest, if he kept Paul in the castle, their madness might hurry them to some dreadful outrage, or to attempt by one method or other to compass his death, he called two centurions, and bid them get two hundred soldiers, and as many spearmen, with seventy horsemen, ready to march to Cesarea by nine o'clock that evening; and to *provide beasts*, one or more for Paul's use, or perhaps for some of his companions who might choose to attend him, and deliver him up safe to Felix the governor: treating the prisoner with all possible respect, and desirous thus to rescue him from the hands of the conspirators.

4. With the prisoner he sent the following letter. *Claudius Lysias, unto the most excellent Felix sendeth greeting*, wishing him all prosperity. *This man*, whom I have sent, *was taken of the Jews*, in a tumultuous manner, *and would have been killed by them*, had I not interposed. *Then*, hearing of the riot which was made, *I came with an army* to quell the disturbance, *and rescued*

him, having understood that he was a Roman citizen. *And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him,* willing to give the matter an impartial hearing, *I brought him forth into their council,* to know what they had to say against him, *whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing* really criminal *laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. And when it was told me, how that the Jews laid wait for the man* to assassinate him, to prevent so base a deed, *I sent straightway to thee,* referring the whole matter to your excellency's cognizance; *and gave commandment to his accusers also, to say before thee what they had against him,* as a more competent judge, and fitter to decide on this matter. *Farewell.*

5. The soldiers under the command of the centurions at night departed, and before morning had brought Paul safe to Antipatris; when, being out of danger, the soldiers and spearmen returned, and left the seventy horse to conduct him to Cesarea, who on their arrival delivered the letter to the governor, and presented the prisoner before him. When Felix had perused the contents, he asked Paul of what province he was; and having understood that he belonged to Cilicia, *I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall,* assigning him an apartment in the palace; and, though under confinement, permitting his friends to visit him without restraint.

CHAP. XXIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 61.

We left Paul a prisoner at Cesarea; in this chapter we have his arraignment and trial before Felix the governor. Here is, 1. *The appearing of the prosecutors against him, and the setting of the prisoner to the bar,* ver. 1, 2, 2. *The opening of the indictment against him by Tertullus,* ver. 2—8. 3. *The corroborating of the charge by the testimony of the witnesses, or rather the prosecutors themselves,* ver. 9. 4. *The prisoner's defence, in which, with all due deference to the governor,* ver. 10. *he denies the charge, and challengeth them to prove it,* ver. 11—13. *owns the truth, and makes an unexceptionable profession of his faith, which he declares was it that they hated him for,* ver. 14—16. *and gives a more particular account of what had passed from their first seizing of him, challenging them to instance any ill that they had found in him,* ver. 17—21. 5. *The adjourning of the cause and the continuing of the prisoner in custody,* ver. 22, 23. 6. *The private conversation that was between the prisoner and the judge, by which the prisoner hoped to do good to the judge, and the judge thought to get money by the prisoner, but both in vain,* ver. 24—26. 7. *The lengthening out of Paul's imprisonment for two years, till another governor came,* ver. 27.

[a] Ch. 23. 2, 30, 35. & 25. 17.
[b] Ps. 12. 2. & 55. 21. Jude 16.
[c] Felix, bad as he was known to have been (See note on ch. 23. ver. 24.) had certainly rendered some services to the country. Josephus informs us that he entirely subdued a very formidable banditti which infested the country; he suppressed the sedition raised by the Egyptian impostor; and he quelled several other disturbances which occurred during his governorship.
[c] Ch. 16. 20. & 17. 6, 7. & 21. 28. I Kin. 18. 17.
† Or, *a plague.*

1. AND [a] after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and *with* a certain orator *named* Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. 2. And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse *him,* saying, [b] Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence,* 3. We accept *it* always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. 4. Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words. 5. [c] For we have found this man *a* † pestilent *fellow,* and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: 6. [d] Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. 7. [e] But the chief captain Lysias came *upon us,* and with great violence took *him* away out of our hands, 8. [f] Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of ‡ whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him. 9. [g] And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.

[d] Ch. 21. 26, 27, 31. & 22. 10. ver. 11—13. ch. 25. 8.
[e] Ch. 21. 31—33. & 22. 30. & 23. 10.
[f] Ch. 23. 30. & 25. 16.
‡ Paul.
[g] Ch. 6. 11—13. Ps. 4. 2. & 64. 3. Jer. 9. 3—5. Ezek. 22. 27—29. Mat. 26. 59, 60. John 8. 44.

Verses 1—9. Lysias no doubt informed the chief priests and elders what he had done, and referred them to Felix, if they chose further to prosecute Paul. Whereupon,

1. Without loss of time, *after five days,* reckoning from the time they first apprehended him, they came down to Cesarea, with Ananias the high priest at their head; and appearing in a body before Felix, to give the greater weight to their cause, they desired to be heard against Paul, and had engaged an artful and plausible counsellor, one Tertullus, to plead for them. *Note,* Inveterate malice against the gospel will sometimes make the most reverend characters stoop to the meanest actions.

2. Paul being brought forth, Tertullus, with many oratorial flourishes, and a most flattering address to the judge, opens his speech against the prisoner at the bar.

[1.] He compliments the governor on his administration. Though universally known to be one of the most oppressive, covetous, and cruel, that had ever ruled over Judea: yet, to court his favour, and win him to their party, he, as one that pleaded not for truth but for hire, daubs thick his adulations. *Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence,* penetration, and prudent care; *we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness;* professing the deepest sense of our obligations for such singular favours, and emboldened thereby to hope more confidently for the justice we demand against the prisoner. *But that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee, that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words;* the case being so clear, that it can take up very little of your excellency's time to be convinced of the prisoner's guilt.

It was well known how the Jewish nation in general, and the elders in particular, hated Felix and his government; but now, when they have a point to carry, they liberally offer at his feet their flattering applause.

[2.] He comes to the point, and boldly alleges many grievous crimes, with which he charges the innocent prisoner. *We found this man a pestilent fellow,* propagating his pernicious tenets like a plague: the very pest of society, *and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world,* exciting tumults wherever he goes against the Roman government; *and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes;* a promoter of that detestable heresy, for which, and his notoriously seditious principles, the first author of it, one Jesus of Nazareth, was crucified some years ago. *Who also hath gone about to profane the temple,* with daring impiety introducing those who were by the law forbid admission there.

All these charges are a tissue of falsehoods. All the pestilence Paul carried with him was the gospel of salvation, doing good to men's bodies and souls wherever he came. Far from sedition, he taught the most conscientious obedience to the ruling powers. The tumults complained of, were made not by him, but by his

accusers themselves, He set himself up for no head of a sect, nor attempted to draw any man to his standard, but to his divine Master; and, so far from profaning the temple, none could behave with greater piety, seriousness, and conformity to the law, than he had done. *Note*, (1.) The purest innocence is no protection from the vilest aspersions. They who make no conscience of lies, with solemn assurances, and repeated falsehoods, will strive hard but they will blacken the fairest character. (2.) The charge against the gospel and its ministers hath often been, that they raise disturbances and riots; when in fact the very persons who lay this accusation against them, are the very persons who raise the tumults; like Nero, who set Rome on fire, and then persecuted the Christians for that atrocious deed; but there is one who seeth and judgeth.

[3.] He insinuates the equity with which they were proceeding against the prisoner, by a fair trial according to the law; when Lysias, the chief captain, interrupting the course of justice, by violence seized the prisoner, and carried him off, obliging them to all this trouble and expense, by bringing the cause hither: but he hopes now at least justice will be done, and that the governor, fully satisfied of Paul's guilt, will pronounce sentence against him.

Nothing could be more false and invidious than this assertion; but Lysias was not here to disprove it, and he hoped the weight of evidence which he brought with him would prevail.

3. The high priests and elders added their solemn attestation to the truth of Tertullus' language: nor is it a marvel, that they who wanted to murder Paul by assassination, should now attempt to carry their point by the blackest perjury.

h Ch. 12. 17. & 13. 16. & 19. 33. & 21. 40.

10. ¶ Then Paul, after that the governor had [h] beckoned unto him to speak,

* Felix was made procurator over Judea, A. D. 53.

answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years * a judge unto

i Ch. 21. 26.

k Ch. 25. 7, 8. & 28. 17.

this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself: 11. [i] Because that thou

l Mat. 10. 32. Ps. 119. 46. ch. 3. 13. & 5. 30. & 7. 32. & 22. 14. & 20. 22. & 28. 22: & 9. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 3.

mayest understand that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. 12. [k] And they neither

m Ch. 10. 43. & 26. 22, 23. Luke 24. 27, 44. John 5. 39. 2 Cor. 1. 20.

found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people,

† All my expectation is from Him, and therefore all my desire is towards Him, and all my dependence upon Him; my hope is toward God, and not toward the world; toward another world, and not toward this.

neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: 13. Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. 14. But this I confess unto thee, [l] that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, [m] believing all things which are written in the law

n Ch. 23. 38. Dan. 12. 2. John 5. 28, 29. ch. 26. 6, 8. & 28. 20. Rev. 20. 12. Job 19. 25, 26. 1 Thes. 4. 14—16. Mat. 22. 31, 32.

and in the prophets: 15. And have hope toward God, † which they themselves also allow, [n] that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. 16. [o] And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and *toward* men.

o 1 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1 Thes. 2. 10. ch. 23. 1. 1 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 4. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Heb. 13. 18.

p Ch. 11. 29. Rom. 15. 25, 26. Gal. 2. 10. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2 Cor. viii, ix. ch. 21. 26.

17. Now after many years I came to bring [p] alms to my nation, and offerings.

q Ch. 21. 26, 27. & 25. 23. & 26. 21. Luke 12. 1.

18. [q] Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult: 19.

r Ch. 23. 30. & 25. 16.

[r] Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me. 20. Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil-doing in me, while I stood before the council, 21. Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, [s] Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

s Ch. 4. 2. & 23. 6. & 26. 6, 9, & 28. 20.

Verses 10—21. How different is the spirit which breathes in the defence of Paul, from that which actuated the plausible orator, Tertullus. He is not exasperated with the falsehoods which were advanced, or in a heat to reply, but waited the governor's permission to speak; which when Felix had signified, he rose with conscious integrity, to pour confusion on the charges of his adversaries.

1. With deep respect for his judge, which was consistent with that severe regard to truth which became him, he opens his discourse; *Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:* Felix well knew the spirit and temper of the Jews by his long acquaintance with them, and could not wonder at the malice of these furious zealots: had half the things been true which they alleged, the governor had, no doubt, heard of Paul before.

2. He flatly denies the charges of *sedition*, of which he was accused. It was but twelve days since he came to Jerusalem, not to *profane the temple*, but, with high respect of that sacred place, *to worship* there, where they neither found him disputing with any man, either about religion or government, nor fomenting the least disturbance in the synagogues or the city, but demeaning himself with all peaceableness; and he defies his accusers to prove one of the charges which they so peremptorily alleged. *Note*, It is in every villain's power to propagate falsehood, and to bring the heaviest charges against the noblest characters; but every sedate hearer and upright judge will not rest in his assertions, but require proof of the facts.

3. He owns and glories in the acknowledgment, that after the way which they stigmatized as heresy, so worshipped he the God of his fathers, *believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets;* the divine authority of the precepts, and the accomplishment of the promises; and his hope towards God, and preaching, were in exact correspondence with the fundamental doctrine of the orthodox faith which they themselves held, that there should *be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust:* who must answer before the eternal Judge, that divine Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, whom the Jews had crucified. *And herein do I exercise myself,* persuaded of this solemn day's approach, and expecting to stand before the great Judge of all, endeavouring *to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men. Note*, (1.) The scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice; to them we must cleave. (2.) As there will be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust, it is a matter of awful consideration to inquire, which character is ours. (3.) Hope towards God is an anchor which will keep the soul steadfast in every storm. (4.) A good conscience is our best friend. Perfection is not attainable in this world; but that in simplicity and godly sincerity we desire to have our conversation, this is our rejoicing.

4. As to his *profaning the temple*, this was of a piece with the other falsehoods advanced; the very contrary was evident. He had, after a considerable absence from Jerusalem, returned with charitable contributions for the poor saints who dwelt there; and having a religious vow, had brought his own offerings to the temple, where certain Jews of Asia saw him, purifying himself according to the law, *neither with multitude nor tumult;* only four persons who had vows, like himself, were with him, demeaning

themselves with all possible quietness and regularity: and as to the supposed offence of having brought Greeks into the temple, which was suggested as the occasion of the riot which was raised, he challenges them to produce those men of Asia who raised this report, and ought to be here, if they had any thing to object. Or, since they were absent, he appeals to his accusers themselves if on examination before the council any one misdemeanour was so much as proved against him, except they reckoned his declaration concerning the resurrection of the dead to be such, wherein he had been supported and countenanced by the most respectable part of that assembly.

A defence so clear, so ingenuous, so convincing, carried its own evidence along with it, and demonstrated his innocence of every crime they had alleged against him.

22. ¶ And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of *that* way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I [t] will know the uttermost of your matter. 23. [u] And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him. 24. ¶ And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife ‖ Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the [x] faith in Christ. 25. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix [y] trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. 26. ¶ [z] He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. 27. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, [a] willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.*

t Deut. 19. 18. ch. 23. 20.

u Prov. 16. 7. ver. 26. ch. 27. 3. & 28. 16, 31.

‖ Who was married to another man.

x Tit. 2. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 7. 1.

y Ch. 2. 37. Heb. 4. 11. Rom. 3. 19, 20. ch. 17. 32.

z Job 15. 34. Ps. 26. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 10.

cir. 63.

a Ch. 12. 3. & 25. 9, 14. Gal. 1. 10. Prov. 29. 25.

* In the conduct of both Felix and Festus, it is observable how much the evil practices of such governors were restrained by the equity of the Roman laws, and by the manner in which judicial proceedings were conducted by that people.

Verses 22—27. Felix patiently heard the parties, but deferred passing judgment upon the cause.

1. He put off the determination till the arrival of Lysias, on whom they seemed to reflect, when he could more thoroughly examine into the circumstances: and probably, though unwilling to disoblige the chief men of the nation, he was little apprehensive of any danger of sedition from the professors of Christianity, *having more perfect knowledge of that way.* As Cornelius, a centurion, long ago had been converted to the Christian faith at Cesarea, and many others, Felix was no doubt well acquainted with their principles, and an eye-witness of their peaceable conduct; and therefore did not readily believe these atrocious accusations against Paul.

2. He committed the apostle to the custody of a centurion, who should let him enjoy all liberty to walk about as a prisoner at large, permitting any of his friends to visit, converse with him, and supply him with whatever he wanted. Thus the malignant priests were disappointed; and Paul, though justice was delayed, had reason to be thankful for his escape from their malice.

3. The curiosity of Felix, and of his wife Drusilla who, though a Jewess, had married him a heathen, and had forsaken her former husband Azizus, king of Emessa, prompted them to hear from this celebrated preacher an account of the Christian religion, and of the faith in Christ which he inculcated. *Note,* Many are willing to know the speculative principles of religion, whose hearts have no relish to the practice of it.

4. Paul readily appeared to give an account of his doctrine before them, not as mere speculative opinions, but as practical principles; and knowing the characters of the persons before whom he spoke, he failed not to reason powerfully on the nature and necessity of righteousness and temperance, the guilt and danger of the opposite vices, of injustice, oppression, excess, and impurity; and on the awful account which all must shortly give before the Judge of quick and dead, when, without respect of persons, the everlasting state of men must be determined. So faithfully should Christ's ministers bring home to men's conscience the word of truth, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

5. Felix, with conscious guilt, trembled as he sat; and, affrighted, heard these alarming words. But more in haste to get rid of his convictions than his sins, he dismissed the apostle with an intimation, that when his affairs were less urgent he would hear him again on the subject. *Note,* (1.) The word of God will sometimes make the stoutest hearted sinner tremble. (2.) Many are terrified with the apprehensions of their sins, and dread to think of death and judgment, who, notwithstanding, live and die the slaves of corruption. (3.) In the concerns of our souls, nothing is more fatal than delay. If God's word hath spread an alarm in the conscience, Satan seldom asks more than to defer the matter to a more convenient season, till we are older and have less worldly engagements: and if he can thus far prevail, the cause is gained; and we, like Felix, are undone.

6. Though many future conferences passed between them, Felix never brought religion on the carpet. His covetous heart thought to make a good advantage of his prisoner; and knowing how high Paul was in the esteem of his friends, he hoped they would have proposed a considerable ransom, to obtain his discharge: but though they would have done so, probably Paul resolved never to be indebted for his liberty to any such indirect method: and therefore, after two years, Felix being recalled from his government, to answer for his maleadministration, and justly apprehensive that the rulers of Judea would swell the number of his accusers, he endeavoured to gain their favour, by leaving Paul bound in the hands of Porcius Festus, his successor.

CHAP. XXV.—ANNO DOMINI, 62.

We have here, 1. *Paul accused before Festus,* ver. 1—7. 2. *His appeal unto Cesar,* ver. 8—12. 3. *Festus relating the case to king Agrippa, he desires to hear him, and Paul is accordingly brought forth,* ver. 13—27.

1. NOW, when Festus was come into the province,* after three days he ascended from Cesarea to Jerusalem. 2. [a] Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him, 3. And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, [b] laying wait in the way to kill him. 4. But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither.* 5. [c] Let them therefore, said he, which

cir. 63.

* That is, Judea.

a Ch. 24. 1. Ps. 2. 1, 2. Mat. 10. 17.

b Ch. 23. 15. Ps. 140. 5. & 37. 12.

c Ch. 23. 30. & 24. 8.

among you are able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him. 6. And when he had tarried among them [d] more than ten days, he went down unto Cesarea; and the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, commanded Paul to be brought. 7. And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, [e] and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove. 8. ¶ While he answered for himself, [f] Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cesar, have I offended any thing at all. 9. But Festus, [g] willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? 10. Then said Paul,* I stand at Cesar's judgment seat, where I [h] ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. 11. [i] For, if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, [k] no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cesar.† 12. Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cesar? [l] unto Cesar shalt thou go.

d Some copies read *no more than eight or ten days.* Ver. 17.

e Esth. 3. 8. Ps. 27. 12. & 35. 1. Luke 23. 2, 5, 10. Mat. 26. 60. ch. 21. 28. & 24. 5, 6.

f Ch. 24. 12, 16. & 23. 1. & 26. 4—6, 22. & 28. 17. ver. 10.

g Ch. 12. 3. & 24. 27. Gal. 1. 10. Prov. 9. 25.

* Every procurator represented the emperor in the province over which he presided.

h As a citizen of Rome. Ch. 16. 37, 38. & 22. 25—28.

i Josh. 22. 22. 1 Sam. 12. 3, 5. ch. 18. 14. & 21. 24. & 23. 29.

k Ch. 16. 37, 38. & 22. 25—28. 1 Thes. 2. 15. 1 Sam. 27. 1.

† This was the right of every Roman citizen, and was highly respected.

l Ver. 21. ch. 26. 32. & 19. 21. & 23. 11.

Verses 1—12. No sooner was Festus entered upon his government, than Paul's implacable enemies beset him.

1. After three days' stay at Cesarea, Festus proceeded to Jerusalem; where he no sooner arrived, than the high priest and elders, coming in a body to pay their compliments to the governor, failed not to seize the opportunity to prepossess his mind; informing him against Paul, and setting the affair in the most invidious light, they besought him to give judgment against the prisoner; and for that purpose begged the favour of him, that he might be sent for to Jerusalem, resuming the old scheme to assassinate him by the way. How restless are the struggles of malice! and what wickedness is not the wretched heart of man capable of, when enslaved by envy and revenge?

2. Festus excused himself from granting their request, choosing rather to decide the matter at Cesarea; either he thought their desire unreasonable, or perhaps suspected some design; and therefore informing them that he should shortly depart thither, he assured them, if they would prepare their evidence, and those who were best able to manage the prosecution would go down with him, and could prove him guilty of any crime or misdemeanour, he would grant them impartial justice.

3. After ten days' stay at Jerusalem, Festus went down to Cesarea with those who were to carry on the prosecution against Paul; and without delay, the very next day the prisoner is brought to the bar; and his enemies surrounding the judge, as if to intimidate him into compliance, or by their number to give weight to the cause, laid many grievous accusations against the apostle, as if he was the vilest of the vile; but when the evidences which should support these allegations were required, it evidently appeared that they could not prove one of their charges. While in his defence Paul confidently denied every accusation, having neither offended against the law, the temple, or the civil government; and defied them to produce a single instance wherein he had acted unbecoming his profession, as a Jew, or his allegiance to Cesar. *Note*, Nothing is easier than to advance high charges against Christ's people, but saying and proving are usually found to be different things.

4. Festus could not but perceive the malice of the accusation, and the innocence of the prisoner; but willing on his first coming to Cesarea, to ingratiate himself with the Jews, by granting them the favour which they desired, of having Paul tried at Jerusalem, he asked him whether he would go up thither, and have the cause decided by him in presence of the Sanhedrim? Too well Paul knew the designs of his persecutors, to consent to a proposal so dangerous; therefore he wisely pleads his privilege as a Roman, and appeals unto Cesar. *I stand*, saith he, *at Cesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged*, and am ready to appear: *to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death*, according to the laws of the empire, *I refuse not to die*, content to suffer the desert of my offences: *but if there be none of these things whereof they accuse me*, and the charge be evidently false and malicious, *no man may deliver me unto them*, and put me in their power. I claim my right as a freeman of Rome, to be only judged there, and *appeal unto Cesar. Note*, (1.) The wisdom of the serpent is as needful as the harmlessness of the dove, when we have to do with unreasonable and wicked men. (2.) It is a debt we owe ourselves to claim the protection of the law, against those who maliciously attempt to wound our fame, or injure our person.

5. Festus acquiesces in his appeal, *He conferred with the council*, who assisted him in the management of affairs; and as they admitted the right of the prisoner to claim this privilege, he answered, *Hast thou appealed unto Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou go*; not unwilling, perhaps, thus to rid his hands so fairly of a cause which might have involved him in much trouble.

13. ¶ And, after certain days, [m] king Agrippa and Bernice‡ came unto Cesarea to salute Festus. 14. And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, [n] There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: 15. About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, [o] the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed *me*, desiring *to have* judgment against him. 16. To whom I answered, [p] It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die before that he who is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. 17. [q] Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth. 18. Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: 19. [r] But had certain questions against him of their

m Ch. xxv. ver. 23.

‡ Bernice, or Berenice, was the daughter of Herod Agrippa, and sister of King Agrippa. She was first married to her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, upon whose death she resided with her brother Agrippa, with whom she is said to have lived in incest.

n Ch. 24. 27.

o Ver. 1—3. Esth. 3. 9.

p John 7. 51. Deut 17. 4. & 19. 17, 18.

q Ver. 4, 5.

r Ver. 7. ch. 26. 22, 23. 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. ch. 18. 15. & 23. 29. Rev. 1. 18.

own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. 20. And, because [s] I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked *him* whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. 21. But when Paul had [t] appealed to be reserved unto the *hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cesar. 22. Then Agrippa said to Festus, [u] I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him. 23. ¶ And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with [x] great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth. 24. And Festus said, King Agrippa, † and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and *also* here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. 25. But when I found that he had committed [y] nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. 26. Of whom I have no certain thing to write ‡ unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, [z] and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. 27. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes *laid* against him.

[s] Or *I was doubtful how to inquire hereof.* Ver. 9.

[t] Ver. 10. ch. 26. 32. 2 Tim. 4. 16.

* Or *judgment.*

[u] Is. 52. 15. ch. 9. 15.

[x] Esth. 1. 4. Dan. 4. 30. ch. 12. 21. 1 Cor. 7. 31. Jam. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 24. Rev. 1. 2.

† King Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa, who, upon the death of his uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, succeeded to his dominions by the favour of the emperor Claudius, who also gave him the power of appointing the Jewish High Priest.

[y] Ch. 23. 9. & 26. 31. John 18. 38. Luke 23. 4, 14, 15.

‡ Nero the Roman emperor.

[z] Ch. 26. 2, 3.

Verses 13—27. As Christ had told his disciples that they should be brought before governors and kings, so doth he order it in his providence, that their persecutors are made the instruments of leading those great men to hear the gospel, who perhaps otherwise never would have heard it. We have here,

1. The visit of Agrippa to Festus, to congratulate him on his coming to his government. He was the son of that Herod who slew the apostle James: Claudius, the Roman emperor, had given him the title of king, and the tetrarchy which belonged to his uncle Philip. Bernice, who accompanied him, was his sister; but was accused of too great familiarity with her brother: such were the great folks of those times; when viewing then the present corruptions of the age, *say not the former days were better,* the world was always the same.

2. As Agrippa and Bernice were both brought up in the Jewish religion, after they had been at Cesarea some time, in conversation one day Paul's case happened to be the subject, which Festus related to the king, either to entertain him with the story, or to have his advice how to act, as better acquainted with the Jewish rites and customs, than he, a stranger, could be supposed to be. He had found Paul in bonds, when Felix resigned the government to him, and had no sooner come to Jerusalem, to take possession of his province, than the chief priests and elders clamoured for judgment against him; but he excused himself from a hasty decision of the matter, alleging the constant custom of the Romans to adjudge no man to death, nor to consign him to destruction, through any favour or partiality; but first to have the person accused, and his accusers, face to face, that he might have liberty to exculpate himself from any crime laid to his charge. And to despatch the matter without delay, the next day after his arrival, the prisoner was brought to the bar; when, to his surprise, he found no one accusation of a criminal nature could be proved, such as came under his cognizance as a magistrate; but that the charge turned upon certain questions of a religious nature, respecting the tenets he held, contrary to their law, and *about one Jesus, who was crucified, whom Paul affirmed to be alive again;* counting himself an incompetent judge of such superstitious controversies, as he regarded them, he proposed to Paul to have the matter canvassed before the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem: but the prisoner objecting to them, had pleaded his privilege, and appealed unto Cesar; he was therefore still in custody, till an opportunity offered to send him to Rome. *Note,* (1.) Every man has a natural right to be heard before he is condemned. To determine a case where only one side of the question is told, is the sure way to err, and may be the means of irreparable injury to the purest innocence. (2.) They who know not Jesus, speak lightly of him; but to those who feel their guilt, and need of a Saviour, whether he is alive again or no, is a matter of infinite importance, on which their everlasting hopes depend.

3. Agrippa, curious to know what Paul had to say for himself, intimated a desire to hear him; Festus gladly consented to it, and appointed the next day. On the morrow Agrippa and Bernice in vast pomp, arrayed in gorgeous apparel, attended by their royal retinue, entered the judgment-hall, where all the chief captains and principal men of the city attended, drawn by curiosity, or to pay their respects to the noble personages who were present: when being seated, the prisoner at the commandment of Festus is brought forth, more adorned with his prison garments and glorious bonds, than they in all their vain splendour and empty magnificence.

4. Festus with respect hereupon addressed himself to king Agrippa, and the principal men who were present, and opened the occasion of their meeting, with an account of the prisoner before them, concerning whom he had been solicited with great importunity by all the Jews, both at Jerusalem and Cesarea, to pass the sentence of death upon him, as a miscreant unworthy to live. But when on a fair trial nothing criminal could be proved against him, and Paul had appealed to Augustus for the final decision of his cause, he was resolved to send him: and as it looked absurd and unreasonable to send a prisoner, without signifying what crimes he stood accused of, he had therefore brought Paul forth before that honourable assembly, especially before king Agrippa, who was most acquainted with the Jewish laws and customs, that after a full discussion of the case, he might have something determinate to write to his imperial master, concerning the prisoner who had appealed to his judgment.

CHAP. XXVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 63.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The account Paul gives of himself in answer to the calumnies of the Jews. And in that,* (1.) *His humble address to king Agrippa, and the compliment he passed upon him,* ver. 1—3. (2.) *His account of his original and education, and his profession as a Pharisee, and his adherence still to that which was then the main article of his creed, in distinction from the Sadducees, the* resurrection of the dead: *however in rituals he had since departed from it,* ver. 4—8. (3.) *Of his zeal against the Christian religion, and the professors of it, in the beginning of his time,* ver. 9—11 (4.) *Of his miraculous*

conversion to the faith of Christ, ver. 12—16. (5.) *Of the commission he received from heaven to preach the gospel to the Gentiles,* ver. 17, 18. (6.) *Of his proceedings pursuant to that commission, which had given this mighty offence to the Jews,* ver. 19—21. (7.) *Of the doctrine which he had made it his business to preach to the Gentiles; which was so far from destroying the law and the prophets, that it showed the fulfilling of both,* ver. 22, 23. 2. *The remarks that were made upon his apology.* (1.) *Festus thought he never heard a man talk so madly, and slighted him as crazed,* ver. 24. *And in answer to him he denies the charge, and appeals to king Agrippa,* ver. 25, 26. (2.) *King Agrippa, being more closely and particularly dealt with, thinks he never heard a man talk more rationally and convincingly, and owns himself almost his convert,* ver. 28. *And Paul heartily wishes him so,* ver. 29. (3.) *They all agree that he was an innocent man, and that he ought to be set at liberty, and it was a pity he was provoked to put a bar in his own door by appealing to Cesar,* ver. 30, 31.

1. THEN Agrippa said unto Paul, [a] Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul [b] stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself: 2. I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: 3. [c] Especially, *because I know* thee to be [d] expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. 4. [e] My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, [f] know all the Jews; 5. Which knew me from the beginning, (if they would testify,) that, [g] after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee. 6. And now I stand and am judged [h] for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: 7. Unto which *promise* our [i] twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day and night, [k] hope to come: for which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. 8. [l] Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? 9. [m] I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them.* 11. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme: and, being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities.*

a Prov. 18. 13. John 7. 51.
b Ch. 13. 16. & 12. 17. & 19. 33. & 21. 40.
c Ch. 25. 26.
d Gr. *a knower.* Deut. 17. 13—20. 1 Cor. 13. 7.
e Ch. 22. 3.
f Ch. 22. 5.
g Ch. 22. 3. & 23. 6. Gal. 1. 13, 14. Phil. 3. 5, 6.
h Ch. 23. 6. & 24. 15. & 28. 20. ver. 8. Gen. 3. 15. & 12. 3. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15. 2 Sam. 7. 12. Ps. 132. 11. Is. 4. 2. & 11. 1. & 7. 14. & 9. 6, 7. & 40. 10. Jer. 23. 5. & 30. 21. & 33. 15. Ezek. 21. 27. & 34. 23, 29. & 37. 24. Dan. 9. 24, 25. Mic. 5. 2. & 7. 20. Zech. 6. 12. & 9. 9. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 2. with ch. 2. 39. & 3. 26. & 5 31. & 13. 23, 26, 32, 46. Gal. 3. 13—16. Tit. 2. 13.
i Jam. 1. 1. Ezra 6. 17. & 8. 35. with Luke 2. 37. 1 Tim. 5. 5.
k Ch. 23. 6. & 24. 15. Phil. 3. 11. Luke 7. 19, 20.
l Mat. 22. 29—32. Is. 26. 19. Dan. 12. 2. Job 19. 25, 26.
m John 16. 2, 3. 1 Cor. 13. 11. Rom. 10. 2. Phil. 3. 6. Gal. 1. 13, 14. 1 Tim. 1. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 9. ch. 7. 58. & 8. 3, 4. & 9. 1, 14. & 22. 4, 19. Rom. 10. 2.
* Could such a character as Paul have been deceived and won over by a few illiterate fishermen? Or could they have dared to attempt to turn the most enlightened of their opponents, and the most cruel of their persecutors, into an apostle?

Verses 1—11. As Agrippa was the principal personage in that assembly to whom Festus had particularly addressed himself, he signified to Paul, who waited the order of his superiors, that he was permitted to speak for himself. Glad of the opportunity to vindicate the glorious cause of God and truth, whilst he apologized for himself, with dignity stretching out his hand, the great apostle, with conscious uprightness and unaffected simplicity, began,

1. With the satisfaction he felt on the occasion now given him of answering before so able and candid a judge. *I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee,* concerning the charges laid against me by my countrymen, *especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews. Wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently,* whilst I desire, without art or disguise, to relate the principles which have influenced my conduct from the first day until now.

2. He freely appeals to the Jews themselves, who knew *his manner of life from his youth up,* that he had been educated at Jerusalem, under the most celebrated of their doctors: had early embraced the principles of Pharisaism, and, according to their most rigid interpretations, had conformed to all the rites, Mosaical or traditionary, and observed, with much conscientious regard, the commandments of the law, blameless in all his conversation. So that it was neither ignorance, prejudice, loose principles, or immoral conduct, which could be urged as a reason for the change wrought upon him.

3. He declares freely the cause of his present bonds. It was for holding *the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers,* of a resurrection to eternal life and glory through the divine Messiah, who had appeared in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, and by his rising from the dead had fully proved his own glorious character, and secured the resurrection of all his redeemed people. *Unto which promise* not only he, but all the truly religious of the twelve tribes, hoped to come, with fervency and constancy, day and night, in their prayers, labouring to arrive at the possession of the blessings promised through this Messiah. And for this hope's sake was he accused, for preaching this Messiah, the salvation which was in him, and a resurrection to everlasting blessedness through faith in his name. So that, instead of being an apostate from the fundamental articles of the Jewish faith, according to the malicious accusations of his persecutors, he maintained them with all his might and diligence. Nor did he urge any thing absurd or unreasonable, when he asserted the resurrection of Jesus, as the first-fruits of his people: for *why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?* Is any thing beyond God's power? and ought we not implicitly to credit his promise? *Note,* (1.) All our hopes towards God are founded on his promises. (2.) They who would come to the possession of the eternal blessedness, are called upon to serve God day and night in ceaseless and importunate prayer.

4. He owns the inveterate prejudices against Christianity under which he formerly lay. *I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth,* supposing it a duty I owed to God and my brethren, to suppress, by every means, the doctrine and pretensions of one who appeared so despicable: *which thing I did also in Jerusalem,* being most zealous against his disciples; *and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and, when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them,* justifying the most bloody measures, and testifying my fullest approbation of these horrid executions; *and I punished them oft in every synagogue,* with restless eagerness pursuing them, *and compelled them,* through the dread of scourgings, infamy, or death, *to blaspheme* that holy Name whereby they were called; *and, being exceedingly mad against them,* to find many of them obstinate in their faith, and to see the number of the disciples increase

in spite of all the load of oppression, *I persecuted them even unto strange cities*, longing, if possible, to extirpate the very Christian name. If he was now therefore a preacher and a sufferer for that faith which once he so furiously persecuted, it could arise only from the deepest conviction; and his conversion was itself a proof of the truth of Christianity. *Note*, (1.) It is possible for those who seem most confident they are in the right, and are most violent in support of their opinions, to be most dangerously deceived. I doubt not that many to this hour persecute the truth, and think they do God service. (2.) Nothing will lie heavier on the awakened conscience than the remembrance of former injuries done to the souls of men, the effects of which perhaps are now irreparable.

12. [n] Whereupon, as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13. [o] At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them which journeyed with me. 14. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in [p] the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *It is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 15. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. 16. [q] But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, [r] to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17. [s] Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18. [t] To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and [u] *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive [x] forgiveness of sins, and [y] inheritance among them which are [z] sanctified by faith that is in me. 19. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, [a] I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20. [b] But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, [c] that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. 21. For these causes [d] the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill *me*. 22. Having therefore [e] obtained held of God, I continue unto this day, [f] witnessing both to small and great, saying [g] none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: 23. [h] That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be [i] the first that should rise from the dead, and should [k] shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

n Ch. 9. 2. & 22. 5. 1 Kin. 21. 3. Is. 10. 1. John 7. 48.
o Ch. 9. 3—9. & 22. 6—16.
p Ch. 21. 10. & 6. 1.
q Dan. 10. 11. Rev. 1. 17, 18.
r Mat. 13. 12. ch. 9. 15, 17. & 13. 2—4, 31. & 18. 9. & 22. 10. & 23. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 12. 2 Cor. 12. 2.
s 2 Cor. 1. 10. & 4. 8—10. & 11. 23—28. ch. 9. 23—25. & 14. 19, 20. & 16. 39. & 17. 10, 14. & 18. 12—17. & 19. 30. & 21. 31—35. & 23. 10, 21—33. 2 Tim. 4. 17, 18. with ch. 9. 15. & 22. 21. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 2. 7. Rom. 11 13. & 15. 16.
t 1 Cor. 3. 5, 6. 2 Cor. 4. 5, 6. Is. 35. 5. & 42. 7. & 60. 1. & 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. & 1. 77—79. & 2. 30, 32. Eph. 1. 18. & 4. 17. & 5. 8, 11. 1 Pet. 2. 9, 25. Col. 1. 13. John 1. 9. & 3. 19. & 8. 12. & 9. 5. & 12. 35. 2 Cor. 6. 14.
u Is. 49. 24, 25. 2 Tim. 2. 26. 1 John 3. 5, 8. & 5. 19.
x Eph. 1. 11. Col. 1. 14. ch. 5. 31. & 10. 43. & 13. 38, 39.
y Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 12. ch. 22. 32. Heb. 9. 15. Jam. 2. 5. & 4. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 4, 13. & 3. 9. Rom. 8. 17, 30.
z John 15. 3. & 17. 17. ch. 15. 9. & 20. 21, 32. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Tit. 3. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 1. 1 Cor. 1. 30.
a Gal. 1. 16. Jon. 1. 2. Is. 50. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 10.
b Ch. 9. 19—30. & xiii—xxi. Rom. 11. 18—30.
c Ch. 13. 46, 47. & 14. 15. & 17. 30. & 20. 21. & 17. 2, 3. & 18. 11. & 19. 8. Mat. 3. 8. Tit. 2. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 7. 1, 11.
d Ch. 21. 30. & 23. 12. & 9. 23. & 25. 3.
e 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 5, 6. Phil. 4. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 17.
f Ch. 20. 20—27. xxii, lxix. Is. liii.
g Luke 24. 27, 44. John 1. 45. ch. 24. 14. & 28. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 4. Dan. 9. 24—26. Zech. 13. 7. Gen. 3. 15.
h Ps.
i 1 Cor. 15. 20, 23. Col. 1. 18. Rev. 1. 5. John 10. 18. & 11. 25. ch. 13. 34. Rom. 6. 9. & 8. 11.
k Is. 42. 6. & 60. 1. Luke 2. 32. John 1. 9.

Verses 12—23. The apostle, having related his former life and conversation, proceeds to account for the amazing change which had been wrought in him.

1. He declares the manner of his conversion. As he approached Damascus to execute the high priest's commission, at midday, a light, brighter than the sun, darted from heaven upon him and his companions; and, when in consternation they were fallen together to the earth, a voice of majesty addressed him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks:* these mad attempts to wound me in my members must be attended with ruin to thy own soul. Terrified with this interrogation, when he replied, *Who art thou, Lord?* the voice answered, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.* That despised Nazarene, whom he branded as an impostor, now demonstrated to him his divine power and glory with such evidence as in a moment bore down all his prejudices, and struck him to the heart with horror, shame, and remorse.

2. He who had laid him in the dust, with infinite condescension raised him up, and invested him with that commission under which he now acted. He said, *Rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee*, not to destroy thee, as thou hast deserved, but *for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee*, giving thee farther discoveries of my mind and will, and directions for thy conduct; and, amidst all the dangers to which hereafter for my name's sake thou mayest be exposed, *delivering thee from the* Jewish *people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee*, with an apostolic commission to publish the glad tidings of salvation, *to open their eyes*, through a divine illumination attending thy preaching; *to turn them from* the *darkness* of superstition, idolatry, ignorance, and error, *to the* saving *light* and knowledge of the grace which is in Jesus Christ; *and from the power of Satan*, who now reigns in their hearts, *unto God;* effectually converting their souls from the dominion of sin to the love and service of the holy, ever blessed God; *that they may receive forgiveness of sins*, through me the great Redeemer of lost souls, *and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me*, prepared for and entitled to the eternal mansions of blessedness, through that divine faith which worketh by love, and purifies the souls of all my redeemed people. *Note*, (1.) The whole world lieth in darkness and wickedness, until the light of the gospel word and the power of gospel grace be shed abroad in the heart. (2.) The great end of the Christian ministry is in order to the conversion of men's souls to God. They are not sent of him, who are never made use of by him to this blessed end, and neither know nor expect such fruit of their labours. (3.) Forgiveness of sins is the great foundation on which alone repentance towards God can be effectually preached. We must believe that he is a pardoning God, before we can have any hope of returning to his favour. (4.) There can be no true sanctification but what flows from faith which worketh by love. (5.) Our title to glory is not of debt, but of grace. Jesus hath purchased it for us, and freely bestows it upon his people, who are the children which his Father hath given him. (6.) Though our title to the eternal inheritance is the finished work of Jesus, it becomes us to experience a meetness for it by the power of his Spirit in our hearts. We must be sanctified before we can be glorified.

3. Borne down by such irresistible evidence, he could not hesitate a moment. *Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; but*, instantly becoming a convert to the truth, *I showed first to them of Damascus, and* then *at*

Jerusalem, and throughout all the coast of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, according to the orders given me, *that they should repent and turn to God,* deeply convinced of their guilt and danger, filled with self-abhorrence, and in simplicity desiring to renounce their sins, whilst they drew near to a throne of grace through a crucified Jesus; *and do works meet for repentance,* to evidence the genuine conversion of their hearts to God. *Note,* Unless our fruits prove the truth of the grace which is in us, we deceive ourselves if we think that we are real converts.

4. His indefatigable labours and zeal in preaching these benevolent and infinitely momentous doctrines were the only causes of provocation given to his unbelieving brethren, who, obstinate against his testimony, and exasperated at his preaching, seized him in the temple, and in a tumultuous manner, if he had not been rescued, would have pulled him in pieces on the spot. Let the impartial judge if he had deserved such treatment.

5. Not intimidated by his past dangers, and *having,* according to the divine promise, ver. 17. *obtained help from God,* he steadfastly persevered, supported and encouraged by the Spirit's inward assistances, and the gracious interpositions of the Lord's providence in his behalf; *witnessing both to small and great,* without respect of persons, or fear of man, that great salvation which is brought to light by the gospel, and most clearly revealed through the death and resurrection of Jesus; *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say, that Christ should suffer,* and not be a temporal conqueror, but devoted to death for the sins of his people, Is. liii. 8. *and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead,* to die no more, and as the *first-fruits of them that slept,* who, by virtue of their relation to him should be quickened by his power at the last day; *and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles,* diffusing the knowledge of his great salvation not only among his ancient favourites the Jews, but extending his grace to the ends of the earth, and sending out the light of his gospel, as the light of his sun, to his people of all nations, tongues, and languages, who are freely called to partake of all the blessings and privileges of his kingdom.

24. ¶ And as he thus spake for himself, [l] Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. 25. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. 26. For [m] the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. 27. King Agrippa, believest thou [n] the prophets? I know that thou believest. 28. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, [o] Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.* 29. And Paul said, [p] I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these [q] bonds. 30. ¶ And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: 31. And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man [r] doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. 32. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not [s] appealed unto Cesar.†

l John 10. 20. Mark 3. 21. 1 Cor. 2. 14. & 4. 10. & 1. 18, 23. & 4. 10. 2 Kin. 9. 11.

m John 18. 20. Luke 24. 19. Mat. xxvi—xxviii. Mark xiii—xvi.

n Ver. 22, 23.

o Mark 12. 34. & 6. 20.

* His understanding and judgment were for the time convinced, but his heart was not changed.

p Rom. 9. 1—4. & 10. 1. Col. 1. 28. 1 Cor. 7. 7.

q Ch. 12. 6. & 25. 14. ver. 32.

r 1 Sam. 24. 17. Luke 23. 4, 14. ch. 23. 9. & 24. 12. 14. & 25. 25. 1 Pet. 4. 15, 16. & 3. 10.

s Ch. 25. 10, 11, 25.

† His appealing to Cæsar was lawful, and what became a Roman citizen.

Verses 24—32. Whilst Paul, warmed by the glorious subject on which he had entered, was proceeding to display the great truths of his Redeemer's person, offices, and character, he is here,

1. Interrupted by Festus. Unable to hear with patience what he, a heathen, counted so absurd as the resurrection of a dead man, and so strange as this miraculous conversion, he said aloud, *Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.* He looked upon him with an air of disdain, as rather to be pitied as a lunatic, then condemned as a criminal. Perhaps the warmth which Paul expressed, as he advanced in his speech, made him think his imagination was over-heated with the intenseness of his application. *Note,* It is no unusual thing for those who never knew the light of truth, and the zeal of warm affection for a Redeemer, to stamp those who appear fervent in his cause as enthusiasts or madmen.

2. Paul's reply was a sufficient proof of the falseness of this invidious imputation. *I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness,* matters of infinite importance, and supported by the most substantial evidence. He does not resent the suggestion of the governor, but by the meekness of his reply proves the unruffled serenity of his own mind; and, referring himself to Agrippa, he adds, *For the king knoweth of these things, before whom I speak freely,* being conversant in the writings of Moses and the prophets, where the sufferings and resurrection of the Messiah are foretold; and hath heard how they had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth: *for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him;* he must have been long ago told of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of my singular conversion: *for this thing was not done in a corner,* but publicly known, and attested by unexceptionable witnesses, many of whom have, and many more are ready to seal their testimony with their blood.

3. Turning then from Festus to Agrippa, in the most affecting and pathetic manner he applied himself to the conscience of his royal auditor. *King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.* He cannot entertain a suspicion to the contrary; and with confidence expresses his assurance of his faith in the inspired writings: paying him the greatest compliment, whilst he presses on him the most important truths.

4. Agrippa is nearly staggered with this close application; and, struck with the polite yet serious address of the apostle, replies, *Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian:* so much reason and evidence appeared in Paul's discourse, that, were it not for a regard to his dignity and temporal interests, he could become a convert to Christianity. *Note,* Many, unable to stand before the evidence of truth, are *almost persuaded;* but the world holds them in fetters, and they dare not pursue their own convictions.

5. With inimitable address, where the piety of the Christian was blended with the politeness of the Roman, Paul replied, *I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.* He wished him and them all the happiness which himself enjoyed in Christ, and exemption from all the ignominy and sufferings to which, for the sake of Jesus, he was exposed.

6. The king hereupon arose, unable, perhaps, any longer to stand against the powerful evidence of truth, and afraid of some more moving strokes on his conscience: the governor and Bernice followed him, with the rest of the principal persons. And as they retired together, and talked of Paul's case and his defence, they perfectly agreed that *this man,* however great the clamour was against him, had done *nothing worthy of death or*

of bonds; so clear was the innocence of the apostle. *Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cesar.*

CHAP. XXVII.—ANNO DOMINI, 63.

This whole chapter is taken up with an account of Paul's voyage towards Rome, when he was sent thither a prisoner by Festus the governor, upon his appeal to Cesar. 1. *The beginning of the voyage was calm and prosperous,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Paul gave them notice of a storm coming, but could not prevail with them to lie by,* ver. 9—11. 3. *As they pursued their voyage, they met with a great deal of tempestuous weather, which reduced them to such extremity that they counted upon nothing but being cast away,* ver. 12—20. 4. *Paul assured them, that though they would not be advised by him to prevent their coming into this danger, yet, by the good providence of God, they should be brought safely through it, and none of them should be lost,* ver. 21—26. 5. *They are shipwrecked on the isle of Malta, and by Paul's counsel all get safe to land,* ver. 27—44.

1 AND when it was [a] determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul, and certain other prisoners, unto *one* named Julius, a [b] centurion of Augustus' band.* 2 And, entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning [c] to sail by the coasts of Asia; *one* Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. 3 And the next *day* we touched at [e] Sidon. And Julius [f] courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself. 4 And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under † Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. 5 And when we had sailed over the sea of [g] Cilicia and [g] Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of [g] Lycia. 6 And there the centurion found a ship of [h] Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein. 7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against ‡ Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under [i] Crete, over against Salmone; 8 And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city *of* Lasea. 9 Now, when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because [k] the fast was now already past, Paul admonished *them,* 10 And said unto them, Sirs, [l] I perceive that this voyage will be with ‖ hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. 11 Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. 12 ¶ And, because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to [m] Phenice, *and there* to winter; *which is* an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south-west and north-west.

a Ch. 20. 16. & 25. 12, 25. with Gen. 50. 29. ch. 19. 21. & 23. 11. Rom. 15. 28, 29.

b Captain of a hundred soldiers. Mat. 8. 5. & 27. 54. ch. 10. 1. & 22. 25. & 23. 17, 23.

* It appears, from Josephus, that at this period a small body of soldiers were stationed at Cæsarea.

c Ch. 16. 11. & 18. 21. & 20. 3, 15. & 21. 1, 3.

d Ch. 19. 29. & 20. 4. Col. 4. 10. Philem. 24.

e Gen. 10. 15. Josh. 19. 28. Is. 23. 2.

f Ch. 24. 23. & 28. 2, 16.

† A large island northward of Syria.

g Countries in the south-west of Lesser Asia. Ch. 1. 10. & 13. 13. & 14. 24. & 15. 41. & 22. 3.

h A city in the north-west of Egypt. ch. 6. 9. & 28. 11.

‡ A city on the south-west of Lesser Asia.

i Or *Candy*, a large island in the Mediterranean. Tit. 1. 5, 12.

k The great day of atonement in the month of September. Lev. xvi. & 23. 27, 29. Num. 29. 7.

l Amos 3. 7. Ps. 25. 14.

‖ Or *injury.*

m Not Phenicia, the country on the north-west of Canaan. Ch. 11. 19. & 21. 2.

Verses 1—12. How long Paul continued at Cesarea is not said; probably on the first opportunity, he was shipped for Rome. We have here,

1. His embarkation. Paul and some other prisoners were put on board a ship of Adramyttium, under the care of one Julius, a centurion of the legion which bore the name of Augustus. Luke the evangelist, and Aristarchus a Macedonian, accompanied the apostle, whose presence and society could not but be a singular blessing to him in this tedious voyage.

2. His progress. The next day after they sailed, they touched at Sidon; where Julius reposed such confidence in his prisoner, that, on his parole, he permitted him to visit his friends, that he might have the comfort of refreshing himself with their company and conversation, and be supplied with proper provisions for the voyage. Loosing from thence they beat up under the island of Cyprus, the wind being against them, and, coasting the Cilician and Pamphylian shore, they arrived at Myra, a city of Lycia. There the centurion finding a ship of Alexandria sailing to Italy with a loading of wheat, he contracted for a passage, and carried the prisoners and the companions of the apostle aboard; and putting to sea, through contrary winds, they made but little way, in many days scarce reaching Cnidus, a promontory in Caria, and, instead of leaving Crete on the left, they were forced to beat up on the other side, over against the eastern cape called Salmone, and, with great difficulty weathering the point, cast anchor in a bay called The Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea. *Note,* (1.) In our voyage through this tempestuous world we may expect to meet many an unfavourable gale. (2.) Though the wind of afflictions and temptations blow hard against us, and we can scarcely bear up against it, if we steadily hold on our course, we shall at last reach the fair havens where we would be.

3. His advice. As the autumn was far advanced, and the fast on the great day of atonement was now passed, the season of the year began to grow tempestuous, and sailing to be dangerous. Paul therefore admonished them not to proceed farther till the spring, foretelling by a prophetic impulse, that if they did they would repent their rashness, and not only sustain great damage in the loss of their ship, but also greatly endanger their lives. But, the master and owner of the ship being of a different opinion, the centurion, who chose rather to be guided by their judgment in this matter, disregarded Paul's admonition; and *The Fair Havens* being an inconvenient port to winter in, the majority of the ship's company advised to sail for Phenice, a haven in Crete, at no great distance, that was made by two points of land that ran south-east and north-west, and was more sheltered from the winds, and more commodious for a winter station.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* purpose, loosing *thence,* they sailed close by Crete. 14 [n] But not long after there § arose against it a tempestuous wind, called * Euroclydon. 15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let *her* drive.

n Esth. 7. 10. Ps. 37. 35. Eccl. 11. 9. ch. 12. 23.

§ Or *beat.*

* A north-east wind, common in the Mediterranean and now usually known by the name of a *Levanter.*

16. And, running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat: 17. Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship;* and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. 18. And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next *day* they lightened the ship: 19. And the third *day* [o] we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. 20. [p] And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on *us*, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

* Seamen even now have recourse sometimes to this method of securing a ship by fastening cables around it. Several passages in ancient authors show that it was common in their times.

o Jon. 1. 5. Job 2. 4. Prov. 23. 5.

p Ps. 107. 25—27. Jon. 1. 4, 13. Mat. 8. 24, 25.

Verses 13—20. In consequence of the advice of the majority, we have here,

1. The ship pursuing her voyage with a prosperous gale. The south wind blowing gently, encouraged them to put to sea; and now, concluding they could not fail to reach their desired port, they coasted along the island of Crete; but the gale of prosperity is often but a short-lived delusion. For,

2. The wind suddenly shifted to an opposite quarter, and a hurricane, called Euroclydon, arose, and blew so vehemently, that the ship was ready to be swallowed up in the waves; so that, unable to bear up against the storm, or keep their course, they let her drive at random; and, running under an island Clauda, with great difficulty they hoisted the boat on board; then undergirding the ship with ropes, to prevent her going to pieces, and fearing lest they should be driven on the quicksands of the African shore, they reefed their sails, and drove before the wind under the bare poles. Thus they continued to be tossed about violently, whilst lowering clouds obscured the skies, and neither sun nor stars for many days appeared; so that they knew not where they were. *Note*, (1.) We should never be too elated; the transition from the height of prosperity to the depth of adversity is often very sudden. (2.) Many of God's dearest children have known such melancholy seasons, when Christ, their polar star, hath been obscured, and spiritual darkness hath compassed them round on every side.

3. All attempts which human prudence dictated they now made use of. The next day after the storm began, in order to lighten the ship, they cast out the merchandise into the sea; and when still the danger increased, passengers as well as seamen were called upon deck; and the third day they threw overboard the utensils and necessary tackling of the ship; when their lives were each moment in jeopardy, they cared not for any loss besides; but when, after all their efforts, for many days the storm raged with unabating severity, despair sat in general upon the countenance of the seamen, and they expected nothing but to be swallowed up of the merciless waves. *Note*, (1.) If men are so prodigal of their goods to save their bodies, when in danger, how much readier should we be to part with them, rather than seek to preserve them at the peril of our souls? (2.) Long continued trials are apt to lead us to despair. It requires strong faith to walk in darkness and see no light, and yet to stay ourselves upon God.

21. ¶ But, after [q] long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, [r] and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. 22. And now [s] I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be [t] no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship. 23. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, [u] whose I am, and whom I serve, 24. Saying, [x] Fear not, Paul; [y] thou must be brought before Cesar: and, lo, [z] God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: [a] for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. 26. Howbeit we must be cast upon [b] a certain island. 27. But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down † in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; 28. And sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms; and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms. 29. Then, fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. 30. And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, 31. Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers, [c] Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. 32. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off. 33. And, while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried, and continued fasting, having taken [d] nothing. 34. Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat; for this is [e] for your health: [f] for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. 35. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and [g] gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat. 36. Then were they all [h] of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat. 37. And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. 38. And when they had eaten enough, [i] they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea. 39. And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were pos-

q Ps. 107. 5. Deut. 8. 3.

r Ver. 9, 10.

s Job 22. 29, 30. Is. 43. 1, 2& 41. 10.

t With ver. 31.

u Rom. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 3.

x Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 1, 2.

y Ch. 19. 21. & 23. 11. & 25. 11.

z Is. 6. 13. Job 22. 30. Gen. 39. 5, 18, 26, 28—32. ver. 44.

a Rom. 4. 20. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Num. 23. 19. Tit. 1. 2. Heb. 6. 17, 18. Luke 1. 45. John 1. 50. 2 Tim. 1. 12.

b Ch. 28. 1.

† A sea southwest of Italy now called the Gulf of Venice.

c Means must be used in fulfilling God's infallible promises. Ps. 37. 34. Is. 33. 21. Mat. 4. 7. Judg. 20. 28, 29. ver. 22, 24.

d Very little, and no set meal. ver. 21.

e Eph. 5. 29. 1 Tim. 5. 23.

f Luke 21. 18. & 12. 7. Mat. 10. 30. 1 Kin. 1. 52.

g 1 Sam. 9. 13. Mat. 15. 36. John 6. 11. 1 Tim. 4. 4.

h Ps. 30. 11. & 107. 30.

i Ver. 19. Jon. 1. 5. Prov. 23. 5. Job 2. 4. Mat. 6. 25.

sible, to thrust in the ship. 40. And when they had * taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward the shore. 41. And, falling into a place where two seas met, [k] they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves. 42. [l] And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. 43. But the centurion, [m] willing to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first *into the sea*, and get to land; 44. And the rest, some on boards, and some on *broken pieces* of the ship.† And so it came to pass, that [n] they escaped all safe to land.

* Or *cut the anchors, they left them in the sea*, &c.

k 2 Cor. 11. 25, 26.

l Prov. 12. 10. & 1. 16. Rom. 3. 15—18.

m Prov. 16. 7. ch. 23. 10. Jer. 38. 10.

† It was usual for great ships to have two large broad oars fixed at the head and stern. The bands were fastenings by which these were raised out of the water, and secured in a storm.

n Ver. 22, 24. Ps. 107. 30.

Verses 21—44. Man's extremity is God's opportunity: when we are at our wit's end, he can still open a door for us to escape.

1. Paul cheers their hearts with the assurance, that, though they gave themselves over for lost, and abandoned themselves to despair, not a man of the company should perish.

(1.) He gently reminds them of his advice which they had disregarded. They should have followed his prophetic warning, and then they would have prevented the danger, loss, and injury which they had now sustained. *Note*, Most of the miseries in which we involve ourselves are owing to our own obstinacy and disregard of the admonition of our wiser friends.

(2.) He confidently assures them of the safety of their persons, though their ship must be wrecked, and therefore exhorts them to be of good cheer. Notwithstanding their contempt of his advice, he desired to revive their desponding hearts, and to quicken them to bestir themselves in the confidence of being preserved through the divine mercy. *Note*, Though others involve themselves in trouble by neglecting our counsel, we must nevertheless be ready to lend them our assistance to comfort them under their trials, or to extricate them from their difficulties.

(3.) He produces divine authority for what he said, that they might rest satisfied with the truth of his assertion, however improbable it might appear. *There stood by me this night*, in a vision, *the angel of God*, a celestial messenger sent from that glorious Lord, *whose I am*; his peculiar property by redemption, as well as creation, and by his special appointment constituted an apostle; *and whom I serve*, making it the business and happiness of my life to promote his glory in the gospel of his dear Son, and yielding up my body, soul, and spirit, with unreserved devotedness, to his blessed work and service. And this heavenly minister addressed me, saying, *Fear not, Paul*; thou art safe in the midst of danger; for *thou must be brought before Cesar; and lo! God hath given thee all them that sail with thee*, who for thy sake shall be preserved. Such a public blessing is one good man; and they who are hated and persecuted of the world as not worthy to live, are indeed the very persons for whose sake it is preserved.

(4.) He comforts them, and encourages them to trust in God. *Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me*, and doubt not but the event will confirm his gracious promise.

(5.) He tells them they must, however, expect to be shipwrecked on a certain island; which, among other things, when it came to pass, would evidence the divine inspiration by which the apostle spoke.

2. After many days of terror and dismay, on the fourteenth night, as they were tossed to and fro by the tempest in the Adriatic Sea, the seamen about midnight apprehended they were near land; and sounding, at first found twenty fathom of water, and a little farther, fifteen; lest therefore they should be driven ashore in the dark, or strike upon some rock, they cast anchor, and longed impatiently for day-light, that they might see in what situation they were. *Note*, In the dark and stormy night of temptation, desertion, or affliction, the anchor of hope, which enters into that within the veil, must hold the soul sure and steadfast until the Sun of Righteousness arise, and lift up the light of his countenance upon us.

3. The sailors, disregarding Paul's assurances of safety, thought to secure themselves, whatever became of the rest; and therefore hoisting out the boat, under pretence of casting anchor out of the foreship, they intended to make for the shore, and leave the ship and the passengers to shift for themselves. Paul, probably by divine intimation, perceived their design, and immediately acquainted the centurion and soldiers, assuring them, that though God had promised to preserve them, it was to be affected in the use of the necessary means; and that if the seamen, who should work the ship, were suffered to escape, they must not expect to be saved. In the way of duty we may only hope for the fulfilment of the promises. The soldiers, therefore, apprized of the danger, immediately cut the ropes, and let the boat drive.

4. While they waited for the morning light, Paul, the comforter and encourager of his dejected shipmates, *besought them to take meat*, and refresh themselves after their toils, *saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried*, in suspense between life and death, *and continued fasting*, without any inclination to food, *having taken nothing*, at least no regular nor hearty meal: *wherefore I pray you to take some meat, for this is for your health*, and will conduce to your safety; *for there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you.* And when he had thus heartened them with his cheerful counsel and countenance, *he took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all*, for their past preservation, the promise of assured safety, and the provision that was now before them; *and when he had broken it, he began to eat*, setting them an example. Revived by this repeated assurance, and exhortation, and seeing him so satisfied, they all took refreshment, their number consisting of two hundred and threescore persons; and being strengthened by a hearty meal, they cleared the ship, casting the wheat, of which part of her cargo consisted, into the sea, that she might draw the less water, as they intended to run her ashore.

5. When welcome daylight appeared, they descried the land not very distant, though what country it was they knew not: but observing a creek which ran up within the shore, they resolved if possible, to steer the ship thither; and weighing the anchors, or slipping the cables, they hoisted the mainsail, and loosed the rudder, which had been fastened, and made for the shore: but striking on a shoal where two currents met, the prow stuck fast, and the waves dashing on the stern, she soon went to pieces.

6. In this extremity the inhuman soldiers proposed the bloody expedient of murdering all the prisoners, lest any of them should escape, and they become answerable for them; a shocking proposal! But the centurion, who now saw more reason than ever to value Paul, for his sake would not permit so cruel a project to be executed: and therefore commanded every one to consult in the best manner possible for their own safety; whereupon some by swimming, and others on parts of the wreck, got safe to shore, and not one person of the whole company was drowned, according to Paul's prediction. *Note*, (1.) Many a faithful soul reaches the shores of eternal rest in a storm; and however

great his fears, or imminent his danger, he will find his safety secured. (2.) After long beating on life's tempestuous ocean, though we leave earth and all its things behind us, we shall not regret their loss, when we feel ourselves entered into the land of rest which remaineth for the people of God.

CHAP. XXVIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 63.

We have here, 1. *Paul's miraculous escape, after his shipwreck, from a viper which fastened on his hand,* ver. 1—6. 2. *The great good he did in the island of Malta, and the respect showed him there,* ver. 7—10. 3. *The completion of his voyage, and his journey to Rome,* ver. 11—16. 4. *The conference he held with the Jews on his arrival, some of whom believed, and others were hardened,* ver. 17—29. 5. *The liberty he had, though a prisoner, to preach in his own hired house during two years,* ver. 30, 31.

a Ch. 27. 25.

1. AND when they were escaped, then they knew that the [a] island was called * Melita. 2. And the [b] barbarous people [c] shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. 3. ¶ And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid *them* on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. 4. And when the barbarians saw the *venomous* beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, [d] No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. 5. [e] And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. 6. Howbeit, they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but, after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that [f] he was a god. 7. ¶ In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. 8. And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever, and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, [g] and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. 9. So, when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came and were healed: 10. [h] Who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded *us* with such things as were necessary.

* Or Malta, an island, about 350 miles south of Rome. Some writers indeed have supposed that this island was not Malta, but an island of that name on the coast of Illyria. This however appears to be a mistake from not considering that the name of Adria formerly extended to the part of the Mediterranean sea between Greece, Italy, and Africa. It should have been remembered also that the Euroclydon blows from the east.

b Rom. 1. 14. 1 Cor. 14. 11. Col. 3. 11.

c Col. 3. 12, 13. Heb. 13. 1, 2. ch. 27. 3.

d Luke 13. 2, 4. John 9. 2, 3.

e Mark 16. 18. Ps. 91. 13. Luke 10. 19.

f Ch. 8. 10. & 14. 11. & 10. 25. Rev. 19. 10. & 22. 8, 9.

g 1 Kin. 17. 20—22. Jam. 5. 14—16. Mark 16. 18. & 6. 5. Luke 4. 40. & 13. 13. Mat. 9. 18.

h Ver. 2. Mat. 5. 46, 47. Jam. 2. 15, 16. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. Mat. 10. 10.

Verses 1—10. The isle of Melita, or Malta, since so famed for the noble stand its knights made against all the power of the Ottoman empire, was the place where they found themselves on shore.

1. They received great courtesy from the people of the island who are called *barbarous*, not as being savages in their manners, the very contrary of which appeared, but as unpolished islanders, and unacquainted with Grecian literature. They were so far from being engaged in plundering the wreck, that their attention was taken up about the poor people who had escaped, wet and cold as they were: they therefore kindled a fire to dry them, and took them under shelter from the rain, which fell heavily, and from the cold. *Note,* (1.) Shipwrecked mariners are entitled to the greatest humanity. It is a pitch of savage brutality beyond what heathens showed, to plunder the little remains of their misfortune: yet shocking to tell, even in a Christian land, are wretches found so destitute of every feeling of humanity, as to be more intent on the wreck, than solicitous about the lives of the people: yea, to strip and rob them even when cast on shore, instead of helping and assisting them. Surely they will receive judgment without mercy, who have thus showed no mercy. (2.) Fuel is as needful a charity for the poor as food or raiment. When we hear the wintry winds blow, and feel the cold even in our warm rooms, we should remember those who shiver over the scarce smoking embers, and through whose miserable cottages the wind and rain find a free passage.

2. Paul, ever active and ready to serve his fellow-creatures in the lowest offices of kindness, had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, when a viper, which had been unobserved in the faggot, perceiving the heat, leaped out and fastened on his hand: which when those unlettered islanders beheld, they concluded this must be some notorious murderer, who, though he had escaped shipwreck, the divine vengeance thus signally overtook, and would not suffer to live; and they expected every moment to see him swell and drop down dead. *Note,* (1.) Though this is not usually the place of retribution, yet God is sometimes pleased to make even here some signal monuments of his vengeance. (2.) We must not interpret every sudden stroke of God, or remarkable affliction, as a divine judgment: the best of men have been often most severely exercised.

3. The apostle, with perfect composure of mind, and trust on Christ's promise, (Mark xvi. 18.) shook off the venomous animal into the fire; and remaining to their astonishment unhurt, they, after a while, changed their opinion of him, and fancied he must be more than human, even one of their immortal gods, who could thus defy the viper's venom. So changeable are the sentiments of the populace; he that is run down as a murderer today, is sometimes cried up as a god to-morrow.

4. The possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius, lay near the place where the ship had been cast away, and he most hospitably entertained them three days, till they could be otherwise provided for; and in return for his civility, God so ordered it in his providence, that he should not lose his reward. Publius' father now lay dangerously ill of a fever and the bloody flux; Paul therefore went in, and praying over him, *laid his hands on him,* and in the name of his divine Master *healed him,* instantaneously. The fame of which miracle soon spread, and others who were diseased made their applications to the apostle, and freely received the cure of all their several maladies. *Note,* (1.) They who have large possessions, should exercise proportionable hospitality, and be generous stewards of these temporal gifts of God. (2.) Kindness shown to God's ministers, their Master somehow or other will take care to repay.

5. This grateful people, during their stay, failed not to pay them the highest veneration and respect. Most probably the apostle not only healed their bodily diseases, but with his companions preached to them the gospel of Jesus, for the healing of their souls; and therefore the Maltese at their departure liberally furnished them with all necessaries for the voyage. Having shared their spiritual things, they gladly in return communicated of their worldly things.

11. ¶ And after three months we departed in a ship of [i] Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was [k] Castor and Pollux. 12. And landing at * Syracuse, we tarried *there* three days. 13. And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to † Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to ‡ Puteoli; 14. Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them [l] seven days: and so we went toward Rome. 15. And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as || Appii-forum and the § Three Taverns: [m] whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. 16. And when we came to [n] Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: [o] but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him.

i Ch. 27. 6. & 6. 2.
k Sailors' gods. 2 Sam. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 8. 4.
* The chief city of Sicily, an island south-west of Italy.
† A city on the south-point of Italy.
‡ A city on the south-west of Italy, where the corn-ships from Egypt were accustomed to unload.
l Ch. 20. 6. & 21. 4. Till he preached on a Lord's day
|| A city 51 miles south of Rome.
§ A place 33 miles south from Rome. The three tabernæ may have been inns, or shops for the sale of provisions to travellers.
m Heb. 13. 3. 1 Cor. 12. 21.
n The chief city of Italy, and of the Roman empire. Ch. 19. 21. & 23. 11.
o Ch. 24. 23. & 27. 3. ver. 30, 31. ch. 23. 11.

Verses 11—16. After three months' stay on the island, when the spring returned, they once more pursued their voyage, and met with no more difficulties.

1. They embarked in another ship of Alexandria, which had wintered at Malta, and bore the images of Castor and Pollux, under whose protection the wretched idolaters expected safety.

2. After a prosperous voyage they landed at Syracuse, in the isle of Sicily, where they stayed three days. From thence they fetched a compass round, and arrived at Rhegium, the first port they made in Italy. The next day, taking advantage of the south wind, they proceeded to Puteoli, near Naples, from whence they were to travel by land to Rome. At Puteoli Paul and his companions, to their great comfort, found some Christian brethren, who requested him to stay a week with them, that they might spend one Lord's day together, which the centurion kindly permitted him to do; and from thence they set forward for the great metropolis of the world, the place of their destination.

3. The Christians who were at Rome, no sooner heard of his coming from Puteoli, than they set forward to meet him on the road, to show respect to one who had so eminently distinguished himself in the cause, and was particularly endeared to them by the affectionate epistle which they had received from him. Some of them went as far as the town called *Appii-forum*, above fifty miles; and others as far as *The Three Taverns, (Triæ Tabernæ,)* a place upwards of thirty miles from Rome, to receive him, not ashamed of his bonds. Their presence much refreshed his heart; when he saw them *he thanked God* for the grace which appeared in these faithful brethren, *and took courage;* his drooping spirits revived, and now he can boldly face the bloody Nero, before whom he must appear. Nothing so encourages the hearts of ministers amidst the greatest opposition of enemies, as the company and countenance of some faithful friends, who dare own and stand by them in defiance of reproach or danger.

4. On their arrival at Rome, the centurion delivered up his charge of prisoners to the captain of the guard. The rest probably were committed to close custody; but Paul, either through the letter of Festus, or the request of Julius, was left a prisoner at large, being permitted to dwell in lodgings, with a soldier chained to him as his guard.

17. ¶ And it came to pass, that after three days, Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren, though [p] I have committed nothing against the people or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. 18. [q] Who, when they had examined me, would have let *me* go, because there was no cause of death in me. 19. But when the Jews spake against *it*, [r] I was constrained to appeal unto Cesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. 20. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you;* because that for the [s] hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.* 21. And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee. 22. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for, [t] as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

p Ch. 23. 1, 33. & 24. 12—16. & 25. 8.
q Ch. 22. 24. & 23. 29. & 24. 10, 13, 22. & 25. 8, 25. & 2. 31.
r Ch. 25. 10—12, 25. & 26. 31.
s Faith in Christ, and the resurrection. Jer. 14. 8. ch. 23. 6. & 24. 15. & 26. 6—8, 29. 2 Tim. 1. 16. Eph. 6. 20. Phil. 1. 23. Eph. 3. 1, 13. & 4. 1.
* That is, the chain with which he was bound to the soldier that kept him. See Eph. 6. 20
t Luke 2. 34. Heb. 12. 3. ch. 24. 5, 14.

Verses 17—22. Though by the edict of Claudius all the Jews had been banished from Rome, at the accession of Nero they returned, and many were now settled there, opulent and men of distinction. To them, after three days' rest from his journey, Paul addressed himself; and since he could not wait on them, begged the favour of their company at his lodgings; and when they were assembled there, being desirous to stand right in their opinion,

1. He relates his case to them, as to men of humanity, his brethren after the flesh, and worshippers of the true God, from whom he might expect friendship and affection. Though he appeared in bonds, it was not for any crime he had committed, nor for any violation of the sacred rites and institutions delivered by Moses to their fathers, that he had been sent a prisoner to Rome. The Roman governors, both Felix and Festus, before whom he had been examined, were sensible of his innocence, and would have discharged him; but some violent persons of his own countrymen, filled with prejudices against him, objected to his release, and urged the governor Festus to bring him back to Jerusalem; so that he was obliged to appeal unto Cesar, merely for his own preservation; not that he meant any accusation of his countrymen before the emperor, but only to defend himself, and obtain his liberty. He therefore called them together to assure them, that the chain he wore was purely for preaching *the hope* of every true Israelite, even the coming of the divine Messiah, who had, according to the prophecies, appeared, and accomplished the salvation of his people; and for declaring the resurrection to eternal life, as the privilege of all who believed in him. *Note*, Christ is the only hope of the Israel of God. A sinner who knows his real state, sees nothing out of Jesus but black despair and wrath to the uttermost; but in him there appears grace abounding to the miserable and the desperate, and *reigning through righteousness unto eternal life.*

2. In reply the Jews said unto him, *We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spoke any harm of thee;* so that they own they had no

crime to charge him with. Probably his accusers dared not appear before the emperor, conscious of the danger to which they might expose themselves. *But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest,* and would impartially examine into the new opinions you broach; and are willing to know how you can prove, that Jesus of Nazareth is that hope of Israel, of whom the prophets have spoken: *for* this seems to us highly improbable; and *as concerning this sect,* which he hath founded, *we know that every where it is spoken against,* as maintaining heretical opinions, and disturbing the peace of mankind. *Note,* (1.) Christianity is no sect, built on narrow opinions, aiming at secular advantages, or tending to sow division in the world: No: just the very contrary: it embraces all mankind who acknowledge Jesus as the Saviour, directs us to seek our happiness and true interests in another world, and breathes nothing but peace and love. (2.) We may not wonder if the true gospel of the grace of God be still every where spoken against: it must be so, whilst the generality rest in the form, and deny the power of godliness.

u Ch. 23. 11. & 20. 21, 25. & 9. 15, 22. & 17. 2, 3. & 18. 5, 28. & 19. 8. & 26. 22, 23. 1 Cor. 2. 2. & 15. 3, 4. Luke 24. 27, 44. John 1. 45. ch. 10. 43. & 13. 27.

x Ch. 13. 48, 50. & 14. 4. & 17. 4, 34.

y Ver. 29.

z Amos 3. 7. Is. 44. 26. Num. 23. 19. Mat. 15. 7. & 24. 35. & 5. 18. Mark 7. 6.

a Is. 6. 9, 10. & 44. 13. Mat. 13. 14, 15. Mark 4. 12. Luke 8. 10. John 12. 40. Rom. 11. 8. Jer. 5. 21. Ezek. 12. 2. Is. 42. 19, 20. & 66. 4. Ps. 81. 12. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. 2 Pet. 3. 5.

b Ch. 2. 14. & 4. 10. & 13. 38.

c Heb. 2. 3. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Is. 49. 6. ch. 18. 6. & 13. 14, 46, 47. Luke 24. 47. Is. 11. 10. Rom. 15. 9—12.

d Mat. 10. 34. Luke 12. 49, 51. ch. 14. 4. & 21. 7.

23. ¶ And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom [u] he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening. 24. [x] And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25. And when they [y] agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, [z] Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26. Saying, [a] Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed: lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28. Be [b] it known therefore unto you, that [c] the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it. 29. And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and [d] had great reasoning among themselves.

Verses 23—29. Though naturally prejudiced as Jews, against the doctrines of Jesus, they consented to appoint a day, and met at the apostle's lodgings in great numbers, to hear what he had to say on the subject. Hereupon,

I. Paul *expounded* to them the nature, doctrines, and privileges of that kingdom of God which he preached: explained to them all the prophecies and types of the Old Testament, showing how they centred in Jesus of Nazareth, and received their full accomplishment in his life, death, and resurrection; *testifying,* from his own and others' experience, the power of this divine Saviour's grace upon the heart; and *persuading* them with the warmest affection and zeal, to submit to this Redeemer, and embrace that divine Messiah, to whom both the law and the prophets bore witness, that they might partake of that spiritual salvation which he had obtained for his people. As the matter was of such vast importance, he reasoned with them from morning until evening, answering probably all their objections, and proving at large by the most convincing arguments, that Jesus is the Christ.

2. His discourse, as usual, produced different effects on his hearers. *Some believed* the truths he preached, and others remained hardened in their prejudices, and *believed not;* which occasioned a disagreement in their sentiments, the infidel party being incensed against the gospel word. Thus is the same gospel to some a savour of life unto life; to others of death unto death.

3. Before they parted, the apostle addressed to them one awakening word, *Well spoke the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet,* even that glorious Jehovah who inspired the sacred penmen, *saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive;* amidst the clearest preaching of the gospel word, and the fullest discoveries of gospel grace, they were abandoned of God for their obstinacy, to judicial blindness and obduracy. *For the heart of this people is waxed gross;* stupid, senseless, and obstinate, through pride, prejudice, and passion: *and their ears are dull of hearing;* inattentive to the preaching of the truth; *and their eyes have they closed;* wilfully blind against the evidence of miracles performed, of prophecies fulfilled, and the divine attestation given to the character of Jesus as the Messiah; *lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that,* since ye thus with determined obstinacy reject the counsel of God against your own souls, and exactly fulfil this prophecy, in your present rejection of Christ and his gospel; *the salvation of God,* which you neglect and despise, *is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it,* and partake of the invaluable blessings and privileges of the Messiah's kingdom. *Note,* They who refuse to hearken to God's word, and wilfully harden their hearts against his warnings, are justly given up to a reprobate mind, and left to the ruin which they have chosen.

4. The assembly hereupon broke up, and warm debates ensued on the subjects concerning which he had spoken; some vindicating what they had heard, as righteous, just, and good; others exasperated against the preacher and his doctrine, and unable to think of the Gentiles being admitted into the Messiah's kingdom, without the utmost indignation.

e Ch. 23. 11. ver 23. ch. 5. 42. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Phil. 1. 13. & 4. 22.

30. ¶ And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31. [c] Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching * those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

* It was from his prison here that the apostle indited his epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Hebrews.

Verses 30, 31. The apostle had been already near three years a prisoner, and still longer is ordained to wear the honourable bonds of Christ. It was, at Rome, however, a consolation to him, that he was so much his own master, as to be able to dwell in his own hired house, and to have all company whom he chose admitted; these years therefore that he abode at Rome, we are told, were profitably spent.

1. *He received all that came to him:* his doors were ever open, and whosoever would, might hear him: and, no doubt, multitudes, drawn by the desire of instruction, the comfort of his company, or curiosity to know what so remarkable a person had to say, attended him. *Note,* (1.) Every minister's house should be readily accessible to all who seek instruction for their souls. (2.) Our houses, by godly conversation and discourse, by prayer

and praise, should be consecrated to God's service; and where two or three are met in his name, he will be in the midst of them.

2. The subject of his preaching to those who came to hear, was concerning the kingdom of God, and the things which related to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega of all his discourses. His person, offices, character; his incarnation, sufferings, and glory; with all the great and inestimable blessings and privileges derived from thence, were the delightful theme on which he insisted. Happy were it, if all who call themselves Christ's ministers followed so bright an example. How dry and unaffecting is that discourse, where Jesus is not exalted as all and in all!

3. He preached *with all confidence;* with the greatest liberty and freedom in his own spirit; most fully assured of the doctrines which he taught; using all plainness of speech, and with the most undaunted courage; *no man forbidding him;* neither the Roman emperor restrained him, nor could the Jews hinder him: so that though a prisoner, God made him eminently useful in his bonds; and there were saints converted by his ministry even in Cesar's household, Phil. iv. 22. Here also he wrote these epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and the Philippians; wherein, though dead, he yet speaketh, and we in them enjoy the most blessed fruits of his prison labours.

The historian leaves him in this confinement. After two years he regained his liberty. Concerning his future labours we have nothing certain: the received tradition is, that after visiting Spain, Crete, Judea, and the churches of Asia, he came to Rome the second time, where he suffered martyrdom, and went to receive the crown of glory which fadeth not away.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT UPON THE

EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

ROMANS.

Introduction.

WE are now entering upon the most peculiarly profitable parts of the Book of God. All scripture is given by inspiration of God; but among the bright volumes it contains, Paul's Epistles shine with distinguished lustre; in which the grand truths of Christianity appear in all their glory illustrated, defended, the objections against them answered, and the doctrines of grace explicitly taught, and urged with the warmth of a heart which felt its need of them.

Though others of the epistles in order of time precede this to the Romans, it stands first in the collection, as being the largest, and containing the most comprehensive view of the peculiar doctrines and duties of our holy religion. It was written, as is generally supposed, about the year 57, from Corinth, just before the apostle departed for Troas in his way to Jerusalem. See Acts xx. 2, 3, &c.

The chief design of this epistle is to show the only way of a sinner's acceptance with God, whether he be Jew or Gentile, even through faith in the blood and righteousness of Jesus; to exalt the glory of God's grace in this method of salvation; and to vindicate it from the objections of the Judaizing Christians, who, by placing some dependence on the works of the law, moral and ceremonial, debased the purity of the gospel. In the first fifteen verses the apostle introduces and asserts the doctrine of a free salvation by Jesus Christ; the necessity of which he proves in the remaining part of that chapter and the following, where it appears, that the Gentiles could not be justified by the law of nature, nor the Jews by the law of Moses; that both being guilty before God, must be justified freely by faith in Jesus Christ, or perish; and that Abraham, the father of the faithful, thus found acceptance with God. (Chap. iv. 1, 2, 3, 4.) He pursues the argument in the 5th chapter as far as the fall of man, the cause of all the sin and misery which are in the world, and forms a striking contrast between the first covenant-head of mankind, who fell, and the second man the Lord from heaven, who came to rescue his people from the miseries in which they were involved. And here the glory of the Redeemer's grace shines the more illustrious, when considered in the view of the desperateness and universality of the guilt and ruin in which we are involved. From the views of the grace which is in Jesus Christ, he proceeds to infer the necessity of dying unto sin, and living unto God: declares, amidst all the struggles of indwelling corruption, the happy deliverance from the dominion of sin which believers enjoy; describes their transcendently great and glorious privileges

in Christ, including deliverance from condemnation, the Spirit of adoption, victory over all tribulation, even death itself, the redemption of the body in the resurrection-day, and the perfection of bliss and blessedness in the eternal enjoyment of the love of God. (Chap. vi, vii, viii.) He thence traces up these inestimable mercies to their source, as flowing from the eternal, sovereign, and absolutely free purpose and grace of God; wherein he shows, that the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, were according to the everlasting counsels of his own will, revealed in the prophetic word, and every way consistent with his wisdom, righteousness, and grace. He answers the objections of those who cavilled at the divine sovereignty displayed in this awful, pleasing, dispensation, (chap. ix, x, xi.) On these doctrines he grounds his exhortations to the practice of a variety of personal relative duties, whereby the faithful in Christ Jesus are bound to adorn the doctrines of God their Saviour in all things, (chap. xii, xiii, xiv, xv. to ver. 14.) and the whole closes with affectionate salutations, the promise of a speedy visit, if the Lord permitted, his benediction, and doxology.

Many expositors have grievously debased the great and glorious doctrines herein contained, respecting the free grace and justification of the gospel, and would fain insinuate, that the works concerning which the apostle speaks, are not the *moral*, but *ceremonial* works of the law; that the *election* spoken of is *national*, respecting Jews and Gentiles, and not to be interpreted of *individuals:* and the privileges to which some are *chosen* in preference to others, are merely *external*, and have no reference to their *eternal* state: the contrary of which many faithful and able advocates have fully evinced; among the least of whom I shall count it an honour to be numbered, and wish to plead with them the cause of Sovereign grace. Not that any one can be reasoned into the reception of these humbling truths: man's fallen spirit, his pride, and prejudices, must revolt against them; till enlightened from above, brought under a *divine conviction of sin*, and led to a discovery of the desperate wickedness, the absolute impotence, and the inconceivable deceitfulness of his naturally corrupted heart, he bows in the dust, is content to be saved as desperate, and to acknowledge himself indebted for his whole salvation to God's free choice and everlasting love. All the truths of God here described must till then appear absurd, unreasonable, derogatory, according to the notions he hath formed, to all the divine perfections, perhaps impious, nay even blasphemous. But when the Spirit of God discovers to us our real state of enormous guilt, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and writes despair on every effort and attempt to help ourselves: then, like a mathematical proposition which before appeared inexplicable, because the principles on which alone it could be solved were unknown, we trace, admiring and adoring, the various steps of gospel grace from everlasting to everlasting: divine evidence accompanies the process, and in the full blaze of truth we discover in this most astonishing scene of salvation the offspring of eternal love, planned by infinite wisdom, and executed by almighty power; we discover glory given to God in the highest; the honour of the incarnate Saviour exalted to the uttermost; the sinner reduced to the lowest state of humiliation, yet most effectually engaged to love and serve the God of all grace. Thus as many as it pleaseth the Lord our God to call out of darkness into his marvellous light, they see and believe the love which God hath towards them; whilst all the labour of critics, philosophers, and merely letter-learned divines, leaves them just where it found them, groping for the wall as blind.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter we may observe, 1. *The preface or introduction to the whole epistle, to* ver. 16. 2. *A description of the deplorable condition of the Gentile world, which begins the proof of the doctrine of justification by faith, here laid down at* ver. 17.

1. [a] PAUL, [b] a servant of Jesus Christ, [c] called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the [d] gospel of God, 2. [e] (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3. Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made [f] of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4. And * declared *to be* the Son of God [g] with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5. By whom [i] we have received grace and apostleship, [k] † for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6. Among whom are ye also the [l] called of Jesus Christ: 7. To all that be in Rome, [m] beloved of God, called *to be* saints: [n] Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

† Or *to the obedience of faith.*

a Acts ix, xxii, xxvi. Gal. 1. 13—23. Phil. 3. 5, 6. Acts 13. 9.
b Phil. 1. 1. Jam. 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 1. Jude 1. ver. 9. Eph. 4. 1.
c Heb. 5. 4. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2, 3. & 22. 14, 21. & 26. 16—18. 1 Cor. 1. 1. & 9. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 1. 1. & 11. 5. & 12. 11, 12. Gal. 1. 1, 15. Eph. 1. 1. & 3. 8. Col. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 1, 12. & 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 1. Tit. 1. 1. ch. 11. 13.
d Luke 2. 10, 11. ver. 9. Acts 20. 24.
e Gal. 3. 8. Gen. 3. 15. & 12. 3. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15—18. 2 Sam. 7. 12. Ps. 132. 11. Is. 4. 2. & 7. 14. & 9. 6, 7. & 40. 9. Jer. 33. 5, 6, 15, 16. & 31. 22. Ezek. 34. 23, 29. & 37. 24. Dan. 9. 24. Mic. 7. 20. see Luke 24. 27, 44. Acts 10. 43.
f Mat. 1. 1. & 9. 27. & 12. 23. Luke 1. 32, 69. & 2. 5, 6. Acts 2. 30. & 13. 23. 2 Tim. 2. 8.
* Gr. *determined.*
g Ps. 2. 7. John 10. 30. Acts 2. 22. & 13. 32. Heb. 1. 5. & 5. 5. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. & 5. 26. Acts 17. 31.
h 2 Cor. 13. 4. 1 Tim. 3. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Heb. 9. 14. John 10. 18.
i Ch. 12. 3. & 15. 15, 16. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Gal. 2. 9. Eph. 3. 2, 7, 8. 1 Cor. 15. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 12. John 1. 16.
k Ch. 16. 26. Acts 9. 15. & 26. 17, 18. & 13. 46. & 22. 21. & 28. 28. ch. 11. 13. & 15. 16, 19. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Gal. 1. 16. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11. Col. 1. 6, 23. Mat. 28. 19. Mark 15. 15, 16. ch. 3. 29, 30. 2 Thes. 1. 12.
l 1 Cor. 1. 2, 9. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. ch. 8. 28, 30. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 10. 1 Thes. 4. 7. ch. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 14.
m 1 John 3. 1. & 4. 9, 10, 19. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 1. Rev. 17. 14.
n 1 Cor. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Tit. 1. 4.

Verses 1—7. The epistle opens,

1. With an account of the author. *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ,* once an envenomed persecutor, but now *called to be an apostle,* and glorying in this honourable name: *separated unto the gospel of God;* to that delightful and happy work of preaching the glad tidings of salvation through a dying Redeemer; signally distinguished by the Spirit's call, qualified by the effectual working of his mighty power, and solemnly dedicated and devoted to this service.

2. The apostle no sooner mentions the gospel of God, than his heart fires at the views of its glory and excellence. The wondrous scheme had been planned in the divine mind from eternity; had been the burden of the prophetic word from the

beginning, where various hints of it had been given, and promises made of a more clear revelation of the divine mind and will, which might be expected in the fulness of time. The grand subject of this gospel is *Jesus Christ*, the Messiah, the anointed Saviour, and *our Lord*; the object of our faith, and worship, and the king to whom we owe all duty and allegiance; who, in his *human nature, was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh*, as had been foretold, (Ps. cxxxii. 11.) and as to *his divine nature he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.* As the eternal Son of God, he possessed the same divine nature and perfections with the Father, they being one in the *Spirit of holiness*, in the essence of the undivided Godhead; a demonstration of which appeared, when by the exertion of his own power through the operation of the Holy Spirit, he raised his body from the grave; so that he appears to be God and man in one Christ.

3. From this risen Saviour he professes to have received, together with his brethren, *grace and apostleship*; both the high honour of that office, and ability to discharge it to the glory of God; *for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name*; this being the great end of their ministry, to bring all men, both Jews and Gentiles, to the faith of the gospel, and that holy obedience which flows from it, by which the name of Jesus should be to eternity exalted. *Note*, As obedience to God's law is the great fruit of faith, so is faith itself a most eminent part of obedience, when considered as an act of submission to the righteousness of God.

4. He with pleasure mentions the happy lot they had among those who are become obedient to the faith; *among whom are ye also called of Christ Jesus*; by his word and Spirit effectually brought to the participation of all the privileges of the gospel; *beloved of God* from eternity, and in his good time *called to be saints*; separated from a world that lieth in wickedness, for his peculiar people. *Note*, Every one truly called of Jesus is the happy object of the divine regard, and obliged to answer in their spirit and conversation the honourable title they bear, as *the saints* of God.

5. To these the apostle addresses his epistle. *To all that be in Rome*, professors of the faith, and in the judgment of charity partakers of the grace of God in truth, may *grace*, pardoning, comforting, quickening, sanctifying, be multiplied *to you; and peace*, the blessed effect thereof, *from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

8. First, [o] I thank my God [p] through Jesus Christ for you all, [q] that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. 9. For [r] God is my witness, whom [s] I serve ‡ with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, [t] that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; 10. Making request, [u] if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. 11. For I long to see you, [x] that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; 12. That is, [y] that I may be comforted together ‖ with you, by [z] the mutual faith both of you and me. 13. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that [a] oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might [b] have some fruit * among you also, [c] even as among other Gentiles. 14. [d] I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

o 1 Cor. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 16. Phil. 1. 3, 5. Col. 1. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 2. 2 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Phil. 4. 5.
p Heb. 13. 15. Eph. 5. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 5.
q Ch. 16. 19. 1 Thes. 1. 8. 2 John 4. Phile. 5. with Luke 2. 1. ch. 17. 6.
r Ch. 9. 1. Job 16. 19. 2 Cor. 1. 23. & 11. 31. Gal. 1. 20. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 5, 10.
s Acts 27. 23. John 4. 23. Phil. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 2.
‡ Or *in my spirit.*
t 2 Tim. 1. 3. Col. 1. 3. 1 Sam. 12. 23. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Phil. 4. 6. 2 Thes. 1. 11.
u Ch. 15. 23, 32. 1 Thes. 3. 10. & 2. 17. Jam. 4. 15.
x Ver. 12, 15. 1 Thes. 3. 2. 1 Pet. 5. 10. & 2. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 1. 12. & 3. 17, 18. Eph. 4. 12, 13. ch. 15. 1, 23, 29. & 16. 17, 18.
y 3 John 3. ch. 15. 32. Phil. 2. 18.
‖ Or *in you.*
z Tit. 1. 4. 2 Pet. 1. 1.
a Ch. 15. 22, 23. 1 Thes. 2. 18. or Acts 16. 6, 7. & 19. 21.
b John 15. 8. Col. 1. 6, 10. Phil. 4. 17. & 1. 11.
* Or *in you.*
c Ch. 15. 18, 19. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Acts xiii—xix.
d 1 Cor. 9. 16—22. 2 Cor. 11. 28, 29. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 26. 17, 18. 1 Cor. 1. 24. Col. 3. 11.

Verses 8—15. After the warmest wishes for all spiritual blessings upon them, and his authoritative benediction, in the fullest confidence that the grace and peace he prayed for would be bestowed upon them,

1. He thanks God on their behalf, whom he calls *my God*, happy in an assured interest in his favour and love *through Jesus Christ*, by whom alone every mercy descended on him or them. And the matter of his thanksgiving was, their *faith spoken of throughout the world*; they had approved themselves eminently faithful, and were the glory and joy of the churches, who triumphed in their eminent attainments. *Note*, (1.) When faith can say, *my God*, then the heart will be filled with thanksgiving and praise. (2.) A Christian's heart glows with gratitude, when he beholds the power of divine grace shining in the conversation of his brethren. (3.) Though we may not affect a name in the world, yet it is highly desirable to be spoken of by good men, and that our faith and conduct should receive their approbation.

2. He appeals to God for his incessant prayers on their behalf. *God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son*, most willingly, affectionately, and faithfully preaching the glad tidings of salvation through the divine Redeemer; *that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers*, begging the best of blessings may descend upon you: and particularly *making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you*, and enjoy the comfort of personal conversation with you. *Note*, (1.) Those whom we truly love, we shall remember without ceasing at the throne of grace. (2.) God's service must engage our souls: nothing is acceptable to him, but what is done heartily with an eye to his glory. (3.) In all our journeys the Lord should be regarded; though we devise our way, he must direct our steps.

3. The ends he proposed to himself in this visit, were [1.] Their benefit. *For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established*; confirmed, if it please God, by his labours and ministry in the faith; guarded against seducers, and their ministers furnished with greater gifts for the edifying of the church. [2.] Their mutual consolation. *That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me*; when by communicating their mutual experience they might discover the effectual workings of the same divine faith, and rejoice together in the glorious hope set before them. *Note*, (1.) The highest advanced in faith and grace have need of farther establishment. We have not yet attained, nor are already perfect. (2.) Mutual communications of the dealings of God with our souls, greatly tend both to our comfort and establishment in the faith.

4. He informs them that he had long meditated a visit to them, though hitherto he had been providentially hindered by the difficulties he had to encounter, and the engagements which lay upon him; being earnestly desirous to *have some fruit among them, even as among other Gentiles*; that he might see his ministry attended with the same blessed effects, as in so many other places. And in these his labours he looked upon himself as *a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians*; his call of God to the office of apostleship, and the qualifications he was endued with, obliged him to be faithful to his trust: and as the deepest

adepts in Grecian literature were, respecting the way of salvation, as far removed from the truth as the most unpolished barbarians, he endeavoured to suit his discourses to both, that the wise men of this world might become wise unto salvation through the gospel word, and the weaker and more unlearned be fed with the sincere milk of heavenly truth. *Note*, (1.) All our abilities and gifts of nature, providence, or grace, are lent us of the Lord, and to be accounted for to him, as being his debtors for them. (2.) We must suit our discourses to our auditory; and though the matter be the same, the manner should be varied, to give every man his portion in due season.

5. He professes the alacrity and cheerfulness wherewith he looks towards Rome, amidst all the dangers he might expect to encounter there, ready to preach the gospel in the most public manner, and fearless of any consequences from the opposition of the many or the mighty. The ministers of grace should thus be bold as lions in the cause of truth, nor fear the faces of men.

16. For [e] I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is [g] the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to [h] the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17. For therein is the [i] righteousness of God revealed [k] from faith to faith: as it is written, [l] The just shall live by faith. 18. For [m] the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who [n] hold the truth in unrighteousness;

e Ps. 40. 9, 10. 2 Tim. 1. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2. & 9. 16. Mark 8. 38. Acts 5. 41.
f 2 Cor. 2. 2. Col. 1. 27. Luke 2. 10, 11. Heb. 2. 3.
g 1 Cor. 1. 18, 24. & 15. 2. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Acts 13. 26. Mark 16. 15, 16. Eph. 1. 13. ch. 10. 4, 10, 17. Ps. 110. 2.
h Ch. 2. 9, 10. Acts 3. 26. & 13. 46. & 28. 28. ch. 9. 24.
i Ch. 3. 21—26. & 5. 15—21. & 10. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 3. 9. 11. 1 Hab. 2. 4. Gal. 3. 11. Heb. 10. 38. Gal. 2. 20. & 3. 11. ch. 5. 1, 2. Acts 10. 43. 2 Cor. 1. 24. & 5. 7. Heb. 11. 6, 7.
k Ps. 84. 7. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Rev. 22.
m Gen. 6. 5—7. & 19. 13, 24. Exod. 15. 7. Is. 3. 10, 11. Ezek. 18. 4. ch. 2. 8, 9.
n John 12. 42. Luke 12. 47. Job 24. 13. John 3. 19. ver. 28.

Verses 16—18. The apostle having experienced the power of the gospel on his own soul, so far was he from being ashamed of the reproach of the cross, which to the Jews was a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, that he gloried in the honour of being sent to publish to small and great the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified Jesus; and he gives his reasons for so doing.

1. Because the gospel which he preached was *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek;* this being the great mean God is pleased to make use of, which, through the Spirit's effectual working, comes with demonstration to the sinner's heart; and it was sent to the Jews first, and then more generally to the Gentile world, that as many of both as were ordained unto eternal life, might believe the divine report, and by faith embrace and lay hold of the hope of eternal life revealed in the gospel: *for therein is the righteousness of God revealed*, that transcendently glorious righteousness, which God the Son incarnate hath wrought out for us, and God the Father, according to the tenor of the everlasting covenant of grace, hath appointed as the condition of our salvation, hath declared his acceptance of, by the resurrection of Jesus, and imputes to our account; and which is set forth in the gospel, as the great object of our faith, the meritorious cause of our justification, and our title to eternal glory: *from faith to faith*, being wholly of faith, exclusive of all works and duties of our own, (see chap. vi. 12. 2 Cor. iii. 18.) or from the doctrine of faith in the word, to the grace of faith in the heart; or rather from one degree of faith to another, as we gain clearer discoveries of the fulness, suitableness, and transcendent glory of that finished salvation which is revealed to us in the gospel. *As it is written*, in the Old Testament, which exactly corresponds in doctrine with the New, *The just*, or justified man, *shall live by faith;* hereby he is brought into, and continues in, a state of spiritual life; so that death, the wages of sin, can have no more dominion over him; and, being regarded in God's sight as righteous and just, he possesses a title sure and indefeasible to that eternal life which is brought to light in the gospel, as the reward of the Redeemer's obedience unto death, even the death of the cross.

2. Because, without this method of gospel grace, every human creature must lie down under eternal wrath and despair: *for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;* God's word denounces vengeance on every transgressor; his judgments past have often fearfully spoken his displeasure against sin; and the whole world is found guilty before him, since all have sinned in opposition to their better knowledge, whether Jews, who enjoyed the light of revelation, or Gentiles, whom God left not without witness, giving them sufficient traditionary notices of his being, perfections, and attributes, which the visible objects around them served to explain, so as to leave them without excuse in their idolatry and disobedience. *Note*, (1.) Every sinner at God's bar will stand self-condemned; he will be made to own he knew better, and did worse. (2.) Fearful is the wrath revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men: if it once seize on the sinner, it will burn, and never can be quenched. (3.) How highly should we value, and how eagerly embrace, that glorious gospel, which alone can afford us shelter from those terrible blasts of the divine vengeance!

19. [o] Because that which may be known of God is manifest † in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. 20. [p] For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; ‡ so that they are [q] without excuse: 21. Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, [r] neither were thankful; [s] but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22. [t] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23. [u] And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. 24. [x] Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25. Who [y] changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is [z] blessed for ever. Amen. 26. For this cause [a] God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence

o Acts 14. 17. & 17. 24—30. ch. 2. 15. ver. 20.
† Or *to them.*
p Ps. 19. 1—6. & 148. 3—6. Acts 14. 17. & 17. 24, 27.
‡ Or *that they may be.*
q Luke 12. 47. ver. 18, 21. ch. 2. 14, 15. Job 24. 13. John 3. 19.
r With Acts 14. 17. Ps. 106. 13. 2 Tim. 3. 2.
s Deut. 28. 28, 29. & 29. 4. 2 Kin. 17. 15. Jer. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 3. 20. & 1. 20, 21. Eph. 4. 17, 18. 1 Thes. 4. 7.
t Jer. 10. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 19—22. Prov. 25. 14. & 26. 12, 16. ch. 11. 25.
u Deut. 4. 15—18. 2 Kin. 17. 10, 29. Ps. 106. 20. Is. 40. 17, 18. Jer. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 4.
x Deut. 19. 4. Ps. 68. 12, 13. Acts 7. 42. & 14. 16. & 17. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 6. 15, 18. Eph. 4. 14, 19. 1 Thes. 4. 5. 2 Thes. 2. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 3.
y Ver. 18—21. with 23. Is. 44. 20. Hab. 2. 18. Jer. 10. 8, 14, 15. & 13. 25. Jon. 2. 8. Ps. 115. 4—8. 1 Thes. 1. 9.
z Ch. 9. 5. 2 Cor. 11. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 17. & 6. 15.
a Ver. 24. Lev. 18. 22, 23. Eph. 5. 12. Jude 7. Gen. 19. 5. Judg. 19. 22. 1 Cor. 6. 9.

of their error which was meet. 28. And, [b] even as they did not like * to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to † a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient: 29. [c] Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30. Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31. Without understanding, covenant breakers, ‡ without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32. [d] Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but || have pleasure in them that do them.

[b] Ver. 18, 21. John 12. 42. Luke 12. 47. Job 24. 13. John 3. 19.

* Or *to acknowledge.*

† Or *a mind void of judgment.*

[c] Jer. 17. 9. ch. 8. 7, 8. Mat. 15. 19. & 12. 35. Mark 7. 20—23. Eph. 2. 1—3, 12. & 4. 18, 19. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 5. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 2—4. Is. v, lix. Jer. ix. Ezek. viii, xvi, xxi, xxii. Mic. ii, iii, vii, &c.

‡ Or *unsociable.*

[d] Ver. 18. ch. 2. 1—5, 21—23. & 6. 21. Hos. 7. 3.

|| Or *consent with them.*

Verses 19—32. The deplorable state of guilt in which the Gentile world lay, is here pathetically described, and the judgment of God against them therefore evidently appears to be most righteous.

1. They had, though not the light of revelation, yet such notices of God's being and attributes, as left them inexcusable. *Because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them,* or *among them;* not, I apprehend, by any light of nature, which comes with every man into the world as some suppose; *for* the fallen soul is darkness itself; but *God hath showed it unto them,* by the traditionary notices delivered down from the beginning, and by the works of creation and providence, which confirm and evidence the truth of the being and glory of the eternal Jehovah, whose *invisible things,* his divine perfections, his eternal power and Godhead, his self-existence, incorporeal nature, infinite wisdom and goodness, *are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made:* the intellectual faculties contemplating the visible objects, and man himself (κτισις κοσμου) the most remarkable creature upon earth, might *from the creation of the world* receive the fullest confirmation of what God had showed unto men concerning himself.

2. They notwithstanding fell into the grossest and most inexcusable idolatry. *When they knew God,* had some notions of his being and attributes, and might have obtained clearer discoveries, had they attended to the means of instruction which he afforded them; *they glorified him not as God,* neither in their hearts, their worship, nor their conduct, regarding and treating him suitably to his nature and perfections; *neither were thankful,* insensible to the blessings of his providence, and imputing to second causes all the mercies which they received from the first. Hence *they became vain in their own imaginations,* indulging their fancies, and proudly reasoning about matters which were too high for them, the philosophers set up their various systems, and in their contests and disputations for their own opinions erred alike from the truth; *and their foolish heart was darkened,* their boasted wisdom became folly, the corruption of their nature blinded their understanding, and, in the midst of the highest pretensions to science, they sunk into the most fatal depths of ignorance and error: *professing themselves to be wise,* puffed up with the conceit of their vast attainments, *they became fools,* perfect idiots in the most obvious matters respecting the divine Being and worship; *and,* instead of a Spirit immortal, invisible, eternal, they *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things:* so shockingly debasing his dignity, so horridly infatuated in their wild imaginations; *changing the truth of God into a lie,* ascribing to idols the honour due to Jehovah; making such false representations of him, as if he was corporeal: and worshipping and serving *the creature more than the Creator,* (παρα) *above, besides,* or *contrary* to him. Though they acknowledged a supreme Numen, their worship was chiefly directed to their inferior deities: and all the services which they paid to their idols were the greatest dishonour to God, and reflected most highly upon his being and perfections, *who is blessed for ever. Amen.* He, infinitely and necessarily blessed and glorious in himself, is the only author of blessedness to all his creatures, and the alone worthy object of their worship and adoration, to whom it may be for ever rendered and ascribed!

3. In just judgment upon them for such abominable idolatry, and direct opposition to the notices he had given them concerning himself, *He gave them up,* abandoned them to their own hearts' lusts, which, when his restraining grace was withdrawn, hurried them headlong into the foulest and most unnatural acts of uncleanness, the very mention of which should make us shudder with horror; and to be ignorant of the very ideas of such horrid deeds is most desirable. To commit such uncleanness with greediness, was at once the filling up the measure of their iniquities, and the heavy and deserved punishment inflicted for their idolatry, *the recompense of their error which was meet. And as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,* but quenched the gift he had bestowed, and acted in opposition to the knowledge he had vouchsafed to them, *God gave them up to a reprobate mind,* rejected them with abhorrence, and left them to the blindness, hardness, and malignity of their fallen hearts, *to do those things which are not convenient,* detestable to God, dishonourable to themselves, and the consequences of which must be eternally ruinous; *being filled with all unrighteousness.* And the dreadful catalogue of sins here given, ver. 29—31. was not merely applicable to the more ignorant and unrefined part of the Gentile world, but was notoriously true of their wisest philosophers, and their most famed moralists, *who knowing the judgment of God,* and having sufficient light in their consciences to discover *that they which commit such things are worthy of death,* as transgressors against the Majesty on high: yet so enslaved were they by their vile affections, that they *not only do the same* themselves, *but have pleasure in them that do them,* encourage, countenance, and take delight in others who commit the same abominations. From all which it is most evident, that men of such a character as these can never, by any works of righteousness which they can pretend to, be justified before God; but must be saved by abounding grace, or perish. *Note,* (1.) Nothing is a sorer punishment than for the sinner to be given up to his own heart's lusts. (2.) When God withdraws his restraints, there are no abominations into which we shall not rush headlong, as the horse rusheth into the battle. (3.) When we see the dire iniquities here recorded, and behold them in the practice and temper of others, we should reflect, for our own humiliation, that our hearts are the same, our nature alike corrupt, and that, if we are restrained from the like wickedness, we owe it not to ourselves. (4.) Sin against light and knowledge is most exceeding sinful; but the summit of iniquity is to take a diabolical pleasure in the wickedness of others, and to love sin for its own sake.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The Gentiles have been found guilty. The Jews are here shown to be in the same condemnation. 1. *He proves in general that Jews and Gentiles stand upon the same level before the justice of God to* ver. 17. 2. *He shows more particularly what sins the Jews were guilty of, notwithstanding their profession and vain pretensions,* ver. 17. *to the end.*

1. THEREFORE [a] thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 2. But we are sure that [b] the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 3. [c] And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4. [d] Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5. But, [e] after thy hardness and impenitent heart, [f] treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6. [g] Who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7. [h] To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: 8. [i] But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9. Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, [k] of the Jew first, and also of the * Gentile; 10. [l] But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the * Gentile: 11. For [m] there is no respect of persons with God. 12. [n] For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; 13. (For [o] not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. 14. For when the Gentiles, [p] which have not the law, [q] do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15. Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, † their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts ‡ the meanwhile accusing or else [r] excusing one another;) 16. In the day when [s] God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to [t] my gospel.

[a] Ch. 1. 18, 20, 32. 2 Sam. 12. 5, 7. Mat. 7. 1—5. & 23. 3. Luke 6. 37. & 14. 3. John 7. 49. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Jam. 3. 1. & 4. 11.

[b] Ch. 3. 4, 5. & 9. 14. Ps. 96. 13. & 11. 6, 7. Ezek. 18. 25, 29. Luke 12. 47. 2 Thes. 1. 6—9. ver. 11, 12. Gen. 18. 25.

[c] Mat. 7. 2. Jam. 2. 13. & 4. 11. Prov. 11. 21. & 16. 5. Luke 19. 22.

[d] Eccl. 8. 11. Deut. 32. 15. Is. 1. 2. Hos. 13. 6. Ezek. 12. 22. Mat. 24. 48, 49. 2 Pet. 3. 3—9, 15. Is. 30. 18. & 63. 7—10. Ezek. 16. 63. & 36. 31. Mat. 5. 44.

[e] Exod. 33. 3. & 34. 9. Is. 48. 4. Zech. 7. 11, 12. 1 Tim. 4. 2. ch. 1. 28. Ezek. 3. 7. Acts 7. 51.

[f] Jam. 5. 3. Deut. 32. 34, 35. Amos 3. 16. ch. 9. 22.

[g] Ps. 62. 12. Job 34. 11. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Prov. 24. 12. Mat. 16. 27. & 25. 34—46. ch. 14. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 21. 12. & 2. 23. & 20. 12.

[h] Mat. 24. 13. Gal. 6. 8, 9. Rev. 2. 7, 10, 11, 17, 26. & 3. 5, 12, 21. Jude 20, 21. Mat. 5. 3—10. & 13. 43. & 25. 34—40, 46. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 13. 2 Cor. 5. 1. & 4. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

[i] Job 24. 13. Hos. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 3, 8. 1 Cor. 11. 16. ch. 3. 18. Gal. 3. 1. & 5. 7. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. & 2. 12. Lev. 26. 14—39. Deut. 28. 15—68. Is. 3. 11. Ezek. 18. 4. Ps. 9. 17.

[k] Amos 3. 2. Luke 12. 47, 48. 1 Pet. 4. 17. ch. 1. 16. Acts 3. 26. & 13. 46. ver. 10.

* Gr. *Greek.*

[l] Ver. 7. Is. 1. 19. & 3. 10. Prov. i—iv. Ps. 34. 7—14. & xxxvii, cxüi, & cxxxviii. 1 Pet. 3. 10—13.

[m] Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 10. 17. & 1. 17. & 16. 19. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Job 34. 10, 19. Prov. 24. 23. Acts 10. 34. Gal. 2. 6. Eph. 6. 9. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Is. 3. 10, 11. Ps. 11. 6. 7.

[n] Luke 12. 47. John 5. 45. ver. 14. ch. 3. 2.

[o] Mat. 7. 21, 24. Jam. 1. 22, 25. 1 John. 3. 7. John 13. 17. Gal. 3. 10, 12. ver. 25.

[p] Ps. 147. 19, 20. ch. 3. 1, 2. Acts 17. 30. Eph. 2. 12.

[q] 2 Cor. 5. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 14. Phil. 4. 8. ch. 1. 19, 20.

† Or *the conscience witnessing with them.* ‡ Or *between themselves.* [r] Gen. 20. 5. [s] Ps. 50. 6, 21. & 96. 13. & 98. 9. & 7. 8. & 90. 8. Eccl. 3. 17. & 12. 14. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Mat. 6. 4, 6. & 25. 31. John 5. 22, 28. & 12. 48. Acts 10. 42. & 17. 31. 2 Tim. 4. 1, 8. 1 Pet. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10. ch. 14. 12. Rev. 20. 11, 12. [t] 2 Tim. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11. Tit. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 11. ch. 15. 16, 19. 1 Cor. 9. 17. 1 Thes. 2. 2, 4.

Gentiles which the Jews would not with satisfaction admit. But, whilst they judged them, they in fact condemned themselves, being chargeable with the same abominations, and that with more aggravated guilt because of their superior advantages. To them therefore the apostle addresses himself, and proves them most inexcusable in their censures, and liable to the same wrath of a justly offended God.

1. They were guilty of the same sins which the Gentiles committed; yet flattered themselves that they should escape the judgment of God. But it was folly in them to promise themselves impunity, when the God of truth and judgment had fully declared his determined purpose to punish such workers of iniquity; and all who knew the unchangeableness of his word, were sure that vengeance must overtake the transgressors, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. *Note,* (1.) It is vile hypocrisy to condemn that in others which we allow and practise ourselves. (2.) God's judgment will be according to truth, and none shall be able to object to the righteousness of his sentence, any more than they can escape from the execution of it.

2. They abused God's patience, and made the most ungrateful returns for his goodness. Peculiar mercies they had enjoyed, the most wonderful forbearance they had experienced, and all his multiplied favours had the most direct tendency to melt down their obdurate hearts into ingenuous shame and contrition, and to engage them to return to God; but they considered not their deep obligations, were insensible to all the wonders of his grace, and *after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasured up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;* so eager in pursuit of their iniquities, as if they were heaping up the most valuable treasures. *Note,* (1.) There is a day of wrath, of terrible wrath, approaching, when inexorable judgment will seize the impenitent soul. (2.) In all God's decisions his righteousness will appear, and even the damned be forced to own their sentence just. (3.) They are past remedy whom the goodness of God leads not to repentance. (4.) A hard and impenitent heart is the direst plague on this side of hell. (5.) The time of God's patience is expiring, and abused patience will bring down the heaviest vengeance.

3. God, in his procedure at the day of judgment, will act with the greatest impartiality, rendering *to every man according to his works.* (1.) *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing,* who in the persevering exercise of faith in a Redeemer, are in the use of the appointed means working out their salvation; and *seek for* the *glory, honour, and immortality* which is brought to light in the gospel; to them God will give *eternal life: glory, honour, and peace,* are the assured portion secured *to every man that,* under the influence of faith and love, *worketh good,* actuated by gospel principles, and proposing as his end the divine glory. And herein there is no difference between Jew or Gentile, nor is God a respecter of one more than the other; the faithful of both denominations shall share the same blessedness; as they are interested in the same divine righteousness, they shall be entitled to the same reward. (2.) On the other hand, *unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth,* contradicting and opposing the method of divine grace revealed in the gospel; *but obey unrighteousness,* walking in unbelief, iniquity, and impenitence: *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish,* even all the terrors of vengeance which a righteous Judge will inflict, must be poured out *upon every man that doeth evil; of the Jew first,* to whom all his outward privileges will be no protection; *and also of the Gentile,* who shall no more escape than the Jew, if her neglects the great salvation of the gospel: and each will bear their punishment according to the advantages which they have enjoyed, and the means and mercies which they have abused.

4. In judging the world, God will regard the different measures of light against which men have sinned, and will punish them according to the several aggravations of their guilt.

Verses 1—16. Nothing could be urged against the profane

The Gentiles who *have sinned without law,* must perish *without law.* They have not indeed the same clear revelation as was made to the Jews at Sinai; but they have a law written on their hearts, some more obscure traces of God's will have been delivered down to them, and their consciences, though defiled, have some general notions of good and evil, right and wrong, truth and falsehood; by which means these heathens, though *not having the law, are a law unto themselves;* and, when they correspond in their practice with these dictates of natural conscience, their thoughts and judgment acquit and approve them; or, if they deviate therefrom, they are accused, reproached, and condemned in their own hearts. The Gentiles, therefore, though not so criminal as the Jews who resist clearer manifestations of the divine will, yet cannot plead ignorance; they sin against their partial convictions, are without excuse, and God is just in executing his judgments against them.

The Jews, and *as many as have sinned in the law,* against the holy commandments which were delivered unto them, *shall be judged by the law;* and, as their sin is more aggravated, their condemnation will be more grievous. And though they valued themselves highly on their external privileges as the disciples of Moses, and thought themselves the favourites of heaven, because they were acquainted with God's law, and heard it constantly read and explained to them, they were most fatally deceived; since *not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified;* and, if they cannot produce a righteousness perfect and complete, so far from profiting them, the law on which they boast themselves, denounces all its curses on their guilty heads.

In the day therefore *when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ,* to whom all judgment is committed, *according to* the gospel, which Paul calls *my gospel;* not as if he was the author of it, but as being put in trust with it; then shall impartial justice be executed on transgressors, and according to the measure of their guilt shall be their condemnation. *Note,* (1.) An awful day of judgment approaches; it highly imports every soul to inquire how they shall come and appear before God. (2.) Whatever is now concealed with most cautious care, shall soon be brought to light; we believe that he shall be our Judge from whom nothing is hid, nothing is secret.

17. Behold, [u] thou art called a Jew, and [x] restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God. 18. [y] And knowest *his* will, ‖ and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law. 19. [z] And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, 20. An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast [a] the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. 21. [b] Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22. [c] Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? 23. [d] Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24. [e] For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. 25. [f] For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26. Therefore [g] if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27. [i] And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, [h] judge thee, who by the [i] letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? 28. [k] For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; [l] neither *is that* circumcision which is outward in the flesh: 29. [l] But he *is* a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, [m] in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; [n] whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

u Ps. 76. 1, 2. & 114. 2. & 135. 4. & 148. 14. ch. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4, 5. Phil. 3. 5.
x Jer. 7. 4. Zeph. 3. 11. Is. 48. 2. Mic. 3. 11. Mat. 3. 9. John 8. 33, 41. ch. 9. 4.
y Ps. 147. 19. with Phil. 1. 10. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Deut. 6. 7. Is. 38. 19.
‖ Or *triest the things that differ.*
z Is. 42. 19. Mat. 5. 14. & 15. 14. & 23. 16. 1 Cor. 8. 1. Gal. 6. 3.
a Ch. 6. 17. 2 Tim. 1. 13. & 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16.
b Ps. 15. 16—21. Mat. xxiii. Luke 11. 39—48. & 4. 23. 1 Cor. 9. 27.
c Jer. 3. 1. Mal. 1. 6, 8, 12. & 3. 8 Mat. 12. 33. & 16. 4. & 21. 12. Mark 7. 18. & 8. 38. & 11. 15. Mat. 5. 28.
d Ver. 17. ch. 9. 4. & 3. 2. Mat. 23. 3, 14, 23. & 16. 20. Luke 18. 11. ver. 24. ch. 7. 9.
e 2 Sam. 12. 14. Is. 52. 5. Ezek. 36. 20, 23.
f Ch. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4, 5. Lev. 26. 41. Jer. 4. 4. & 6. 10, 14. & 9. 25, 26. Acts 7. 51. 1 Cor. 7. 19. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15.
g Mat. 8. 10, 11. & 15. 28. Acts 10. 34. ver. 28, 29.
h Mat. 12. 41, 42. Ezek. 16. 51, 52. ver. 14, 15.
i Ch. 7. 6, 2 Cor. 3. 6. Tit. 1. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5.
k John 8. 39. Rev. 2. 9. Mat. 3. 9. ch. 9. 6—8. & 14. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 20. & 8. 8. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 8.
l Phil. 3. 2, 3. ch. 14, 17. Ps. 45. 13. Luke 17. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 15. Gal. 4. 19. Eph. 3. 16. Col. 1. 27. 1 Pet. 3. 4. Deut. 10. 16. & 30. 6. Jer. 4. 4. Col. 2. 11, 12.
m Ch. 7. 6. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. Phile. 3.
n 1 Cor. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 10. 18. 1 Thes. 2. 4. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

Verses 17—29. The great rock on which the Jews split was their vain dependence on the law of Moses, when, in fact, that very law on which they trusted, denounced indignation and wrath upon them as transgressors of it.

1. The apostle mentions various particulars in which they proudly gloried. *Behold, thou art called a Jew;* they valued themselves highly on their descent from Abraham; *and restest in the law;* secure of heaven because they had Moses for their teacher, though they obeyed not his injunctions; *and makest thy boast in God,* as if peculiarly interested in him, and, exclusive of all other nations, possessing his favour and regard; *and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law,* puffed up with the conceit of their superior knowledge of God's mind above any other people, accurate to discern truth from falsehood, professing their high estimation of the divine law, and from earliest youth (κατηχουμενος) catechised and instructed out of it; *and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes;* such high and lofty titles they assumed, when regarding their Gentile neighbours, on whom they looked down with sovereign contempt, and thought the wisest heathens were but as infants to them, and needed to come to their school to learn the elements of divine knowledge, when in fact, all they possessed was but *a form of knowledge and of the truth in the law;* for in reality they neither understood its nature, extent, or spirituality; nor practised its precepts. *Note,* (1.) External privileges rested upon, instead of improved, tend but more fatally to deceive and destroy us. (2.) Unsanctified knowledge is a dangerous possession, puffing up the soul in pride, and leading it to perdition. (3.) A form of sound words in our lips may impose upon men; but without the power of divine grace in the heart, all the rest is no better than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

2. He charges them with various crimes, the more aggravated because of the privileges in which they boasted, and the knowledge which they professed. Whilst they taught others, they never preached to their own hearts; their lives gave the lie to their instructions. They declaimed against theft, yet practised it themselves, Matt. xxiii. 14. and lived in that adultery they so sharply condemned in others; they testified their abhorrence of idols, yet sacrilegiously robbed God of his honour, not only withholding their tithes and offerings from his altar, but more abundantly by making void his law through their traditions,

and, whilst scrupulous in trifles, neglecting the weightier matters. Thus they stood most inexcusably guilty, and by such flagrant breaches of his law even while they boasted of it as their great privilege, and trusted on it as their security, they put the highest dishonour upon God, and brought the greatest reproach upon their profession, giving occasion to the very Gentiles to blaspheme and speak evil of that religion the professors of which were so infamously vile: and acting over the same part, *as it is written* their fathers had done before them, Ezek. xxxvi. 20—23. *Note*, (1.) Example influences more than precept. Indeed how can it be expected that the people should believe those, who show by their practice that they do not believe themselves? (2.) They who prove false to their profession, give the deepest stab to the cause of God and truth.

3. The apostle considers the Jewish plea of circumcision, and proves the vanity of it. It profited them, if they kept the law perfectly, to which they bound themselves thereby; but, in case of transgression, it stood them in no stead, nor were they at all more acceptable to God than an uncircumcised Gentile. And if, for argument's sake, it be supposed that a heathen should observe all the precepts of the law, would he not be an object of God's regard, as much as if he had been circumcised? and would not such a moral heathen, though uncircumcised, condemn thee a Jew, and circumcised, if he observed that law, which you, though professing to hold, and by circumcision obliging yourself to keep, notwithstanding transgress? Undoubtedly he would. *Note*, The comparative exemplariness of those who enjoy less means, and make less profession of religion, will justly condemn those, who with greater advantages, and more pretensions to piety, dishonour, by their unfaithfulness, the holy name whereby they are called.

4. He describes the true circumcision. It is not mere outward profession which seals a man a true Israelite, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh available to any saving purpose: but he is the true son of Abraham, who in faith and spirit resembles this eminent friend of God; and the true circumcision, which God regards, *is that of the heart* purified by faith; *in the spirit and not in the letter:* where not only a profession is made, but a real inward change is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost; *whose praise is not of men, but of God;* it is what men cannot discern; and as they who possess it desire not human but divine approbation, their great care and concern is that they may be accepted of God. *Note*, It is the heart which God regards. Let us remember then, that we have to do with him on whom the most plausible professions cannot impose.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

Having proved the guilt both of Gentiles and Jews, the apostle in this chapter, 1. *Answers some objections that might be made against what he had said about the Jews,* ver. 1—8. 2. *He asserts the guilt and corruption of mankind in common, both Jews and Gentiles,* ver. 9—18. 3. *He argues from thence, that justification must needs be by faith, and not by the law,* ver. 19. to the end.

1. WHAT [a] advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? 2. [b] Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. 3. For what if some did not believe? [c] shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? 4. God forbid: yea, [d] let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written,

a Eccl. 1. 3. & 3. 19. & 6. 8. Dan. 5. 14. & 6. 3. with ch. 2. 26, 28, 29. Phil. 3. 5.
b Deut. 32. 9. & 4. 7, 8. Ps. 78. 5. & 147. 18—20. ch. 2. 18. & 9. 4, 5. Eph. 2. 12.
c Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. ch. 9. 6. & 11. 29. 2 Tim. 2. 13. Heb. 4. 2.
d Ps. 116. 11. & 51. 4. & 62. 9. John 3. 33. Job 40. 8. Is. 46. 10. Ps. 86. 15. & 100. 5. Mic. 7. 20. Luke 10. 35. Deut. 32. 4.

That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. 5. [e] But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, [f] what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak [g] as a man.) 6. [h] God forbid: for then [i] how shall God judge the world? 7. [k] For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? 8. And not *rather*, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) [l] Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just. 9. What then? [m] are we better *than they?* No, in no wise: for we have before [n] proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10. As it is written, [o] There is none righteous, no, not one: 11. [p] There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12. [q] They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13. [r] Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; [s] the poison of asps *is* under their lips: 14. [t] Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness: 15. [u] Their feet *are* swift to shed blood: 16. Destruction and misery *are* in their ways: 17. And the way of peace have they not known: 18. [x] There is no fear of God before their eyes.

e Ch. 5. 8, 20. Tit. 3. 3—5.
f Ch. 4. 1. & 6. 1. & 7. 7. & 9. 14.
g Ch. 6. 19. 1 Cor. 9. 8. Gal. 3. 15.
h Ver. 4. ch. 6. 2, 15. & 9. 14. & 7. 7.
i Gen. 18. 25. Job 8. 3. & 34. 17. Ps. 11. 6, 7. & 7. 8, 9. & 9. 8. & 96. 13. & 9. 8, 9. & 50. 6.
k Ver. 5, 8. ch. 5. 8, 20.
l Ch. 5. 8, 20. & 6. 1, 15. & 7. 7. Jude 4.
m Ver. 10—20, 23 Gal. 3. 22.
n Or *charged*. ch. i, xi.
o Ps. 14. 1—5. & 53. 1—5. & 36. 1—4. Eph. 2. 1—3. Tit. 3. 3. 2 Pet. 2. 13—15.
p Ps. 14. 2, 4. Is. 27. 11. Hos. 4. 7. Eph. 4. 17, 18. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. ch. 10. 2, 3. Jer. 4. 22.
q Ps. 14. 3. Eccl. 7. 29. Jer. 2. 13. & 1. 2, 4. & 5. 7—23. & 9. 17, 18. & 24. 5. & 57. 3—5. & 59. 7—15. & 64. 6. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Tit. 3. 3.
r Ps. 5. 9. & 12. 2, 3. & 55. 21. & 56. 1—4. Mat. 15. 19. Jer. 9. 2—6.
s Ps. 140. 3. & 58. 2, 3. & 55. 3. & 57. 4. & 64. 3. & 58. 4. Is. 59. 3—8. Jer. 9. 2—6. Jam. 3. 6, 8.
t Ps. 10. 7. & 5. 9. & 36. 3. Job 20. 13. Jam. 3. 6—9.
u Prov. 1. 16. & 4. 16. Is. 59. 7, 8. Hos. 4. 1, 2. Ps. 120. 7. Is. 59. 7—15. Ezek. xxii. Tit. 3. 3. Eph. 2. 2, 3.
x Ps. 36. 1. Gen. 20. 11. Hos. 10. 3. Is. 1. 2, 4.

Verses 1—18. The apostle proceeds to answer the objections raised against the doctrine he had advanced, and to confirm the truth which he had asserted.

1. He answers the objections raised against his positions.

(1.) If the Jews are thus in the same condemnation as the Gentiles, what advantage have they, notwithstanding the peculiar favours shown them of God, and the divinely instituted rites, particularly circumcision, which he appointed them? The apostle answers, *Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.* In the law and the prophets they had the most blessed means vouchsafed them to come to the knowledge of the truth, and especially of that Messiah who was the sum and substance of the oracles of God: and it was also their honour to be intrusted with the keeping of those sacred records. Their advantages therefore above the Gentiles were very great and singular. *Note*, Among our most invaluable blessings we should always reckon our Bibles; for in them we have eternal life revealed to us.

(2.) If it be objected to this; that, though the Jews had the oracles of God, *some did not believe;* admit it. But what then? *Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?* Shall the faithful God, because of the infidelity of some, fail of fulfilling his promises to Abraham and his spiritual seed, who trust upon him according to his word? *God forbid!* His word must

be accomplished, and his promises are sure. *Yea, let God be true;* let it be for ever acknowledged that he is so; *but* let *every man,* who dares dispute his veracity and truth, know that he must be found *a liar.* Men are inconstant, deceitful, and vain: no confidence is to be placed in them, but God never can nor will deceive us: *as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged;* as David acknowledged, Psal. li. 4. for, notwithstanding his foul falls and great unfaithfulness, God would not alter the word which was gone out of his mouth concerning that Messiah who should spring from his loins. And he will for ever stand clear of all imputations which foolish men may cast upon him, and be found faithful and true, though we presumptuously dare arraign his righteousness, or censure his conduct.

(3.) But some perverse Jew may say, whose character I will personate, speaking *as* such *a man, If our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God,* and he gains glory by our wickedness and unbelief, both glorifying his justice in our punishment, and his grace in calling the Gentile sinners in our stead, and justifying them by the righteousness of his Son, *what shall we say? Is God unrighteous,* (μη αδικος ὁ Θεος) *who taketh vengeance* for that unbelief and unrighteousness, which serves as a foil more eminently to display the lustre of his divine perfections, his truth, holiness, and grace? With abhorrence the apostle rejects the insinuation. *God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?* If he were not infinitely righteous in his nature, he would be unfit for this high office: and if he, by his over-ruling providence, brings good out of evil, and magnifies his grace more eminently where sin hath most abounded, sin hath not therefore the less evil or malignity, nor hath the sinner ought to plead, since he designs nothing less than the divine glory.

(4.) But the same carnal Jew, whom I have personated before, may further urge, *If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory,* and my unbelief, which gives the lie to his promises, and my wickedness, which gives the lie to my profession, serves to magnify his veracity, *why yet am I also judged as a sinner?* and punished for transgressions that serve rather to magnify God than to dishonour him? *and* may we *not rather* abandon ourselves to evil, in order that *good may come?* and God's grace and truth receive greater glory in justifying those who believe on his Son? And such malicious and blasphemous reports are spread by our Jewish enemies, who confidently affirm that this is the doctrine which we as apostles preach, and as Christians believe. But we abhor the suggestion, and declare to such slanderers of us and the truth, and to all who dare thus abuse the holy doctrines of grace, that their *damnation is just,* and inevitable. *Note,* (1.) The best of ministers and of men have had the foulest aspersions cast on them, and have been charged with holding the most abhorred blasphemies. (2.) The injured characters of his ambassadors God will avenge. (3.) They who abuse the doctrines of grace, as arguments for licentiousness, will perish with most aggravated guilt.

2. The apostle returns, after confuting the Jewish objections, to the main point in debate, whether Jews, as well as Gentiles, were not all under sin. *Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved* at large in the two former chapters, *that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin,* condemned by the guilt, enslaved by the power, and liable to the eternal wrath which is the wages of sin: so that all need a better righteousness than their own to justify them before God. And to enforce this truth, the apostle quotes the Scriptures, which the Jews admitted, as containing the fullest proof of his assertion. God declares, Psal. xiv. 1. *that there is none righteous,* according to the perfect demands of his holy law, *no, not one;* so corrupted is our nature, *that there is none that understandeth;* the human mind is darkened, and cannot discover or receive the things that be of the Spirit of God; *there is none that seeketh after God,* no one good disposition remaining in the natural heart, nor desire after communion with God; but evil, and only evil, and that continually. Hence of all men, the Psalmist asserts, that *they are all gone out of the way,* following the bent of their native corruptions, *they are altogether become unprofitable,* bringing forth no fruit to God's glory; *there is none that doeth good, no, not one.* And the foul streams which flow from this polluted fountain are described in other places of the Scripture: *their throat is an open sepulchre,* voracious and insatiable in the pursuits of their lusts and covetousness; *with their tongues they have used deceit,* flattering, false, faithless; *the poison of asps is under their lips,* secretly, artfully, incurably, does their tongue drop the malignant venom, to blast the fame, or destroy the life, of their neighbour: *whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness,* blaspheming God himself, and shooting out their bitter words of rancour and reviling against the people and good ways of the Lord: *their feet are swift to shed blood,* every member of their body is a ready instrument of iniquity; *destruction and misery are in their ways,* and wherever they go, they mark their path with mischief, spreading their wickedness as a plague, pestilential to others, and at last bringing perdition on themselves; *and the way of peace have they not known,* strangers to whatever would conduce to their own peace and happiness both here and hereafter; disturbing, as far as they can, by their malignity and perverseness, the peace of mankind: *there is no fear of God before their eyes;* destitute of every gracious principle: and this, as it is the root of all their wickedness, so it is the summit of all their ungodliness; they leave God far above out of their sight. And such being the divine description of every man by nature, declared by him who searcheth the heart, and knoweth what is in man, the universal guilt and desperate wickedness of the whole human race, both Jews and Gentiles, cannot but be most evident. Whilst we read the dreadful charge, may we be led to an humbling acknowledgment of the truth, and from the deepest heartfelt conviction be laid in the dust, submitting wholly to the righteousness of God.

19. Now we know that what things [y] soever the law saith, [y] it saith to them who are under the law: [z] that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become * guilty before God. 20. Therefore [a] by the deeds of the law there shall no [b] flesh be justified in his sight: for [c] by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. 21. But now [d] the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, [c] being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22. Even the righteousness of God, *which is* [f] by faith of Jesus Christ [g] unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: 23. For [h] all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; [e] 24. [i] Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25. Whom God hath [k] set forth *to be* a propitiation, [l] through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the [m] remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26. To de-

[y] Gal. 3. 10, 13, 23. ch. 1. 32. & 2. 14, 17, 18. ver. 9.
[z] Job 5. 16. Ps. 107. 42. Ezek. 16. 63. 1 Cor. 1. 29. & 14. 21. ch. 1. 20, 32. & 2. 1. John 15. 22. Job 9. 2, 3.
* Or *subject to the judgment of God.*
[a] Gal. 2. 16. & 3. 10. Ps. 143. 2. & 130. 3. Job 9. 2, 3. Tit. 3. 3, 5. ch. 4. 5. & 7. 9.
[b] With ch. 7. 5, 18, 25. & 8. 1, 3—5, 8, 9, 12, 13.
[c] Ch. 7. 7, 9, 14. & 5. 20.
[d] Is. 45. 24. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. ch. 1. 17. & 10. 3. & 5. 19. Phil. 3. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Is. 45. 24.
[e] Gen. 3. 15. & 15. 6. & 22. 18. & 40. 10. Is. 42. 21 & liii. & 45. 24, 25. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7. Acts 10. 43. & 15. 11. & 26. 22. John 5. 46. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 12.
[f] Ch. 1. 17. & 5. 1. Phil. 3. 9. Gal. 2. 16.
[g] Ch. 10. 12. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.
[h] Ch. 1. 18—32. ver. 10—18. ch. 11. 32. Gal. 3. 22.
[i] Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 7, 8. Col. 1. 14. Tit. 3. 5, 7. Is. 53. 11. Mat. 20. 28. John 3. 6. ch. 6. 6. & 5. 19. Heb. 9. 12, 14.
[k] Or *foreordained.* 1 Pet. 1. 18—20. 2 Cor. 5. 21. ch. 8. 3, 32. Gal. 4. 4. 1 John 1. 2. & 4. 10. Col. 1. 20.
[l] Ch. 1. 17. & 5. 1. Acts 13. 38, 39. & 10. 43. Phil. 3. 9.
[m] Or *passing over.* Heb. 9. 15. Acts 17. 30.

clare, *I say*, at this time [n] his righteousness: that [o] he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. 27. [p] Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; but by the [q] law of faith. 28. Therefore we conclude that [r] a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29. [s] *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30. [t] Seeing *it is* one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. 31. [u] Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

n Ps. 11. 7. & 119. 137, 142. or Dan. 9. 24. Is. 45. 24. & liii. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9.
o 2 Cor. 5. 19, 21. Is. 42. 21. 1 John 1. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. John 3. 14—17.
p Ch. 2. 17, 23. & 4. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 29, 31. Eph. 2. 9. Tit. 3. 4, 5. Ezek. 16. 62, 63. & 36. 25—32.
q Is. 2. 2. & 51. 4. Luke 2. 10, 11.
r Ver. 19—26. Gal. 2. 16. Phil. 3. 9. Tit. 3. 5. Acts 13. 38, 39. ch. 4. 5, 6. & 5. 1. Is. 45. 24, 25. & 64. 6. Eph. 2. 4—9.
s Ch. 1. 16. ver. 22. Gen. 17. 5, 7. & 22. 11. with Gal. 3. 26, 28. Col. 3. 11.
t Ch. 4. 11. Acts 13. 39.
u Ch. 10. 4. & 8. 4. Mat. 5. 17. 1 John 4. 9, 10, 19. Gal. 3. 24.

Verses 19—31. The apostle proceeds to apply the truths which he had advanced and proved.

1. *All the world* is become guilty before God, and no flesh can be justified in God's sight by the deeds of the law, because *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*, have come short of righteousness, and therefore of heaven, ver. 23. According to the several dispensations under which they have lived, the law speaketh both to Jews and Gentiles, and condemns them as transgressors. The Gentiles have offended against those precepts of the moral law, which God, though more obscurely, hath showed them; and the Jews, against the clearer revelation, which in the Scriptures they have enjoyed; so that *every mouth must be stopped*, and guilt evident and confessed appear upon every living soul. *For by the law is the knowledge of sin;* so far from being able to justify any man, it is the glass that can only show him his deformity, the straight rule to mark his sad deviations from it. *Note*, (1.) Man in his nature is become *flesh*, fallen and corrupted; and therefore it is impossible that, in his present ruined state, he should be just before God. (2.) The law is designed to discover sin to the conscience, not to justify any, but to convince all men of the necessity of a better righteousness than their own to appear in before God. (3.) All flesh must plead guilty at God's bar: and no man can possibly be saved, till he has seen, felt, and owned that he hath deserved most justly to be damned.

2. To those who, from the conviction which the law brings to their consciences, are driven to despair of acceptance with God, on account of any doings and duties of their own, the gospel reveals the method of divine grace, appointed and provided for the sinner's justification before God. *But now*, since all hope is fled of obtaining favour with God on the footing of our own obedience, *the righteousness of God*, that divine righteousness which God incarnate wrought out, and which God the Father accepts on our behalf, *without the law*, which the moral law never discovered, but required personal, not imputed righteousness; and which is complete, exclusive of all respect to any obedience of ours to the law, *is manifested* in the person of Jesus Christ, and by the preaching of the gospel, *being witnessed by* all the types and figures of the ceremonial *law, and* by *the prophets*, Isa. xlv. 24, 25. Jer. xxiii. 6. Dan. ix. 24. So that even during the time that the Mosaical dispensation lasted, the Jews were taught to look for a better righteousness than that which they could obtain by the deeds of the law; *even the righteousness of God;* of our divine substitute and surety, who for us men and our salvation became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and *which is* now received *by faith in* this adored Redeemer *Jesus Christ*, and, judicially made over, and reckoned to the account of every soul, who, renouncing every other hope, lays hold on this set before him; and it is *unto all and upon all them that believe*, whether Jew or Gentile, *for there is no difference;* they alike need it, as having all sinned and come short of God's glory, and he freely bestows it on them without any regard to the degrees of their guilt, or the different measures of their faith; the weakest believer, though the chief of sinners, being freely, fully, and everlastingly justified before God through this divine righteousness. Nor is there the least moving cause in any of us to engage God to have respect to us. We lie in one promiscuous mass of corruption till *justified freely by his grace*, by his sovereign and undeserved mercy, *through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ*, who by his obedience unto death, paid down the invaluable price of our redemption, which doth not at all affect the riches of the grace respecting us; though bought with his blood, it is sovereignly and freely imputed to our account; and we owe it to God's boundless mercy, that he provided, qualified, and accepted our glorious surety, and freely gave him up for us all. *Whom God hath set forth*, predestinating him in his eternal counsels, and in the fulness of time sending him in the human nature, *to be a propitiation*, to be the one great propitiatory sacrifice, that, *through faith in his blood*, the chief of sinners might boldly approach a throne of grace. And hereby, (1.) The best of blessings is secured to us, even *the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.* The sacrifices under the law were insufficient to take away sin: the faithful therefore under the Old Testament had recourse to this atoning blood which in the fulness of time should be shed, and in the view thereof God bore with them, pardoned and accepted them. And we are infinitely indebted to this blood, that speaks before the throne, and to the forbearance of God with us, in consequence thereof, that we have not, through our repeated provocations, been cut off long since, as we have deserved, and cast into hell for our sins. (2.) Hereby the greatest honour redounds to God; for in this his method of dealing with sinners, he shows and demonstrates *his* own *righteousness*, both the glory of his justice in the punishment of sin, and the transcendent excellence and perfection of the Redeemer's righteousness, by means of which, consistent with the divine glory, an honourable provision was made for the pardon of sin, and neither God's truth, justice, nor holiness impeached by the grace extended to the sinner: so that *at this time*, under the gospel dispensation, he *declares his righteousness, that he might be just, and* withal, *the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* Never was God's displeasure against sin more awfully displayed than when he laid upon his Son the iniquities of us all. Having exacted from him the debt of suffering, it is now become an act of justice that we should be discharged; our Surety's obedience being accepted in our stead, we have by right a title to the divine favour. (3.) Hereby all boasting is excluded from the sons of men; none can say he is accepted before God on account of any works of righteousness done by him, or foreseen in him; all are excluded. *By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith*, by that gracious evangelical dispensation, wherein the blood and righteousness of God our Redeemer are proposed as the only meritorious cause of the sinner's acceptance.

The conclusion then from the above premises is evident, that a man is and can be justified before God in no other way than *by faith only, without the deeds of the law*, the only justifying righteousness being that of the Saviour which faith apprehends, and exclusive of all other considerations, whether of our duties or our sins, entitles the believer to the favour of God.

3. This privilege of free justification, through a Redeemer's righteousness, is common to the Gentile as well as Jew. Is God then in this new dispensation of his grace in the gospel of his dear Son, *the God of the Jews only?* or peculiarly? *Is he not of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also.* It is a common salvation, and both are alike freely invited to partake of it. *See-*

ing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith; both Jews and Gentiles standing exactly on the same footing, without respect of persons, or any difference in the way of their acceptance.

4. He concludes with obviating an objection which some might raise, as if he hereby *made void the* moral *law*, the eternal rule of righteousness, as useless and insignificant; but he rejects with detestation the suggestion, *God forbid! Yea*, so far from making it void, we *establish the law.* Its true use remains the same as ever to convince of sin; to be not a covenant of life, but a rule of obedience; and that faith which shows it manifested in the highest, by the perfect righteousness of our Redeemer, as it works by love, is the most powerful principle to engage our hearts to delight in the law of God after the inner man, and to run the way of his commandments, walking in the glorious liberty of the children of God, a liberty not to transgress, but to obey.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

Nothing could serve so effectually to prove the argument he advanced, as to show that Abraham, in whom the Jews so highly gloried, was justified by faith only. The apostle, therefore, in this chapter, 1. *Enters into the evidence of this fact,* ver. 1—8. 2. *He observes when and why Abraham was so justified,* ver. 9—17. 3. *He describes and commends that faith of his,* ver. 18—22. 4. *He applies all this to us,* ver. 23—25.

a Ch. 6. 1. & 7. 7. & 9. 14.
b Is. 51. 2. Mat. 3. 9. John 8. 39. Phil. 3. 4, 5.
c 1 Cor. 4. 7. Eph. 2. 8. 1 Ti. 6. 6. Tit 3. 5. Is. 45. 24, 25. Phil. 3. 9.
d Gen. 15. 6. & 12. 3. Gal. 3. 3. Jam. 2. 23. with ch. 3. 24, 25, 28.
e Mat. 20. 7, 14. ch. 11. 6. with 35.
f Gal. 2. 16. Phil. 3. 9. Acts 13. 39. & 15. 11. ch. 5. 1, 11. ver. 3.
g Josh. 24. 2. ch. 5. 6, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. ch. 5. 10.
h Ch. 10. 4, 10. & 5. 11. or Gal. 3. 23, 25. with 1 Tim. 1. 1. Col. 1. 27.
i Is. 45. 24, 25. & 64. 17. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Dan. 9. 24. ch. 1. 17. & 3. 21—28. & 5. 15—21. & 8. 1—4, 32, 33. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 21. Phil. 3. 9. 1 John 2. 2. & 4. 10. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 9. & 19. 8.
k Ps. 32. 1. & 85. 2. & 103. 3. & 130. 4. & 51. 9. Is. 1. 18. & 40. 1, 2. & 43. 25. & 38. 17. & 44. 22. Jer. 33. 8. & 50. 20. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Acts 13. 38, 39. ch. 8. 1, 33, 34. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 21.

1. WHAT [a] shall we then say that Abraham, [b] our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2. For [c] if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God. 3. For what saith the scripture? [d] Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. 4. Now [e] to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5. But to him that worketh not, but [f] believeth on him that justifieth [g] the ungodly, his [h] faith is counted for righteousness. 6. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God [i] imputeth righteousness without works, 7. *Saying,* [k] Blessed *are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8. Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Verses 1—8. Abraham was the renowned ancestor, on their descent from whom the Jews so highly prided themselves. If therefore it can be made appear, that he who was so eminent for his obedience was justified not by works but by faith, then surely none of his descendants, who came so short of his excellent character, may expect to be justified in any other way.

What shall we then say that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? Did he obtain justification by the efforts of his natural wisdom and strength, or by circumcision, or his outward privileges and performances? No, in no wise. For,

1. If he were justified by works, he might have had room for boasting; for whatever excellence there was in his character before men, he had nothing whereof *to glory before God:* for in the Lord alone can we be justified or permitted to glory. Therefore, when speaking of Abraham, the scripture expressly observes, Gen. xv. 6. *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness,* that which he believed respecting the promised seed, who should suffer and obey in his stead, was reckoned to his account, as the ground of his justification and righteousness before God, and not any doings or duties of his own; so that he had no room for glorying, except in the Lord his righteousness.

2. If Abraham was justified by works, his reward would have been of debt, not of grace; for perfect obedience would have entitled any man to eternal life: but God called Abraham when he was (ασεβη) an ungodly idolatrous heathen, and justified him through faith in the promised Messiah. *And to him that worketh not,* who is utterly unable to perform that perfect righteousness which God requires, *but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly,* conscious that this is his character, and perceiving the absolute necessity of a better righteousness than his own, even that which God hath provided in his Son; *his faith,* not the act, but the object of it, the righteousness of Jesus Christ, is counted and *imputed to him,* for his justifying *righteousness* and title to God's favour. If Abraham then must be justified as an ungodly sinner, as one *that worketh not,* it would be strange presumption in his descendants, or any others, to expect justification in any other way.

3. He argues the necessity of free justification from the declarations of the psalmist, who describes him as the truly blessed man, not who hath no sins to answer for, but who hath them not imputed to him, being justified from them all by the free grace of God, *without* any *works* of his own, of whatever kind, to recommend him to the divine regard. Indeed how else could he regard us, since all have sinned, are chargeable with iniquity, and liable to wrath? But God forgives, covers, doth not impute our sins to us, but to our Surety, and reckons his righteousness to our account; and this is the ground of all true blessedness in time or eternity. From hence flows forgiveness of sin, admission to God's favour, and a title to the eternal inheritance: and blessed indeed and happy are they, who through a Redeemer are thus justified from all things, and shall never more enter into condemnation!

9. [l] *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only,* or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?* [m] Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be [n] the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; [o] that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12. And the father of circumcision to them [p] who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised.

l Ch. 3. 22, 29. 30. & 1. 16. & 9. 24, 30. & 16. 12, 13, 18. & 11. 11. & 15. 8—19. Gal. 3. 26—28. Col. 3. 11.

* God entered into covenant with Abraham, in Haran, (Gen. xii. 1—3.) about 24 years before the institution of circumcision; in which interval the promise was frequently renewed.—*Terrot.*

m Gen. 12. 3. & 15 6. with 17. 11.

n Luke 19. 6. Gal. 3. 7, 29. John 8. 39. ch. 6. 9. Gal. 6. 16.

o Ch. 3. 22, 24, 30. & 9. 24, 30. & 5. 19. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Is. 45. 22, 24, 25.

p 2 Pet. 1. 1. Gal. 3. 7, 26—29. John 9. 39.

Verses 9—12. The blessedness above described is, no doubt, most desirable; the question is, to whom it belongs? Is it peculiar to the circumcised Jews, or common to the uncircumcised

Gentiles? The former would fain monopolize it as the sole privilege of those who were within the pale of circumcision; but the gospel declares the uncircumcised Gentiles alike capable of receiving it.

It was faith, the object of it, even the divine righteousness of a Redeemer, not circumcision, which was Abraham's justifying righteousness as hath before been shown. This was imputed to him, and in consequence thereof he was a justified man, fourteen years before he was circumcised. It is evident, therefore, that when he afterwards submitted to this instituted ordinance of God, and received *the sign of circumcision*, it was not in order to his being justified, since that he had been long before, but as *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised;* a visible token that God had taken him and his seed into the bond of the covenant, and an assurance to him of all the blessings which were to be procured by that Redeemer in whom he had believed. Thus, in this eminent instance of him, who bore the distinguished title of father of the faithful, and from whom the Messiah should spring, in whom all nations were to be blessed, the Gentiles, though uncircumcised, might behold the way of justification freely opened to them, and stand in the nearest relation to Abraham, whose faith they followed, as his spiritual children; and though they were not his natural descendants, might share in all his most distinguished blessings, through that *righteousness* which should be *imputed unto them also*, in like manner as it was to him, during his uncircumcised state.

And herein also God showed to the Jews, it was not their being the natural descendants of Abraham, and partakers of circumcision with him, which entitled them to pardon, but that the distinguished privileges of that covenant of grace into which Abraham was admitted, belonged only to those *who walked in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had, being yet uncircumcised;* and without which, circumcision, and all their other duties and performances, would never procure for them *justification to life.*

13. [q] For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14. [r] For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15. [s] Because the law worketh wrath: [t] for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. 16. [u] Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17. (As it is written, [x] I have made thee a father of many nations,) [y] before him whom he believed, *even* God, who [z] quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. 18. [a] Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become [b] the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19. And being not [c] weak in faith, [d] he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: 20. He [e] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21. And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, [f] he was able also to perform. 22. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

q Gen. 12. 3. & 13. 15, 17. & 15. 6, 7, 18—21. & 22. 17, 18. & 17. 4, 8. Gal. 3. 18. Heb. 11. 17.
r Ver. 4, 5. ch. 11. 6. Gal. 3. 10, 18. & 2. 21. & 5. 4.
s Ch. 5. 20. & 7. 8, 10. & 3. 19, 20. John 15. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 56. 2 Cor. 3. 7, 9. Gal. 3. 10.
t Ch. 5. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 56.
u Ch. 9. 11. & 11. 29. Gal. 3. 9, 16—18, 28, 29. & 4. 28. & 3. 9, 14. Col. 3. 11. Mat. 8. 11.
x Gen. 17. 5. Heb. 11. 12.
y Or *like unto him.* ch. 3. 29.
z Ch. 8. 11. John 5. 25. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Eph. 2. 1, 5. 1 Cor. 1. 28. Mat. 3. 9. & 8. 11. Is. 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 55. 5.
a 2 Chr. 20. 20. Is. 7. 9. Mark 5. 35, 36. Acts 27. 25. Job 13. 15.
b Gen. 12. 2. & 13. 16. & 15. 5, 6. & 17. 5, 6. & 22. 17, 18. & xxv.
c Ch. 14. 1, 21. 1 Cor. 8. 7—12.
d Gen. 17. 17. & 18. 11. Heb. 11. 11, 12.
e Ver. 18, 19. Jam. 1. 6. Mark 5. 36. Acts 27. 25. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Luke 17. 18. Is. 7. 9.
f Luke 1. 37. Gen. 17. 1. & 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27. Mat. 19. 26. ch. 14. 4. & 11. 23. Heb. 7. 25. & 2. 18. 2 Cor. 9. 8. Ps. 115. 3.

Verses 13—22. As circumcision was not a justifying righteousness to Abraham, nor to any of his seed, neither was the law, in which the Jewish people trusted. *For the promise that he should be heir of the world*, inheriting all true blessedness both here and hereafter, *was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law* of Moses, which was not yet given, nor in virtue of any personal obedience of his or theirs, *but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs*, and the title to the blessings promised arose from the fulfilling the law, whether that of Moses or any other, *then faith is made void;* there is no place for the exercise of it, *and the promise* is *of no effect*, since the inheritance would depend on our obedience, and if that were not perfect, the promise would be useless, which must necessarily be the case in our present corrupted state, *because the law worketh wrath*, and can only deliver over every man to the righteous judgment of God, as transgressors. Had there indeed been no law given, had no notice of God's will, traditionary or revealed, been afforded, there would have been no conscience of sin, *for where no law is there is no transgression;* but now that there is a law, the offender is obnoxious to the curse, which is the sanction annexed to the transgression of it. *Therefore*, since none by their obedience to any law, moral or ceremonial, could possibly be entitled to the promised blessings, God so ordained, that it should be *of faith, that it might be by grace;* that the promise, and all the blessings contained in it, of pardon, adoption, and eternal life, might appear to be given of God's mere goodness and sovereign pleasure, without the least desert on our part, faith stretching out its empty hand to receive the inestimable treasure, and that faith too the gift of God, that it might be wholly of grace, *to the end that the promise might be sure;* and notwithstanding our unworthiness, secured to us in our divine substitute and covenant head Christ Jesus, independent of any obedience of our own; for such is our frailty and corruption, that if it depended upon our own obedience as the condition of it, not a moment could we be sure of it; but now it is infallibly ascertained *to all the seed*, to the spiritual seed of Abraham, even all true believers, *not to that only which is of the law*, who live under the Mosaical dispensation, *but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham*, who, though Gentiles by birth and profession, yet through faith become, in God's account, the children of this eminent patriarch, *who is the father of us all*, whether believing Jews or Gentiles; *as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations:* in a spiritual sense, *before him whom he believed, even God*, was he thus reputed as the father of many nations; even before him *who quickeneth the dead*, Abraham and his wife, whose bodies were now as good as dead; or the Gentiles dead in trespasses and sins; or the bodies of the deceased in the last day; *and* who in virtue of his almighty power, *calleth the things which be not as though they were*, since whatever he wills, at his word starts into being. Persuaded of this, notwithstanding all the difficulties which his faith had to encounter, *Abraham against hope*, if reason were consulted, *believed in hope*, and against all arguments which sense or experience urged, he rested satisfied in the fulfilment of the promise, *that he should become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken*, Gen. xv. 5. when, pointing him to the stars, God assured him, *so shall thy*

seed be, so numberless, so illustrious. Having this divine promise, he staggered not a moment through any improbabilities which unbelief might suggest, from the consideration of his own great age, which, with regard to his having children, rendered his body as if already dead, nor at *the deadness of Sarah's womb*, long since past childbearing, *but was strong in faith, giving glory to God*, with the fullest assurance expecting the fulfilment of what God *had promised, and was able also to perform*. And *therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness*; and what he saw about to be done by the promised seed, Christ Jesus, was now reckoned to his account, and he stood thereby justified before God. *Note*, (1.) Where God hath promised, whatever objections carnal reason and unbelief may make, it is our wisdom to turn a deaf ear to every suggestion, and confidently wait the accomplishment of his word; and this gives God the highest glory. (2.) Though unbelief will war against the soul, yet in every child of Abraham faith will get the victory.

g Ch. 15. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 6, 11. 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.
h Gal. 2. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 21. ch. 1. 17. & 10. 4, 9, 10. Acts 2. 24.
i Is. 53. 4—12. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Zech. 13. 7. Mat. 20. 28. ch. 3. 25. & 5. 6, 8. & 8. 3, 32. 1 Cor. 15. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 19—21. & 2. 24. & 3. 18. 1 John 1. 7. & 2. 2. & 4. 9, 10. Rev. 5. 9. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Rom. 8. 33, 34. Heb. 4. 14—16. & 1. 3. & 8. 1. & 9. 12.

23. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24. [g] But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, [h] if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25. [i] Who was delivered for our offences, and [k] was raised again for our justification.

k 1 Cor. 15. 7.

Verses 23—25. Great was the faith of the patriarch, great the honour put upon him thereby. But this record borne to him of his acceptance before God was not written *for his sake alone*, historically to inform us of that which rendered him so eminent, *but for us also*, as a pattern, comfort, and encouragement to us, and an assurance that the same divine righteousness shall be imputed to us, for our justification, if we, as true sons of this father of the faithful, believe as he did, *on him that raised up Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead, who*, as our substitute and surety, *was delivered for our offences*, to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, and, by his obedience unto death, to bring in an everlasting righteousness: *and*, having so done, *was raised again for our justification;* who, in virtue of his finished work, are now by faith in him, entitled to pardon, acceptance, and eternal life. *Note*, There is but one justifying righteousness before God, even that of Jesus Christ. In that Abraham stood accepted, and all his seed must look for no other.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle having made out his point, and fully proved justification by faith, doth in this chapter proceed in the explication, illustration, and application of that truth. (1.) *He shows the fruits of justification*, ver. 1—11. (2.) *He shows the fountain and foundation of justification in the death and righteousness of Jesus Christ, which he discourseth of at large in the rest of the chapter.*

a Ch. 4. 25, 4, 5, 11. & 8. 22, 25, 28. Gal. 2. 16. Phil. 3. 9.
b Is. 27. 5. Eph. 2. 13—15. Col. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 19—21. Mic. 5. 5. Is. 54. 8—10. & 32. 17. & 57. 19. John 14. 27. & 16. 33.
c Eph. 2. 18. & 3. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 18. John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. Heb. 10. 19—22. & 3. 6. & 12. 28. 1 Cor. 15. 17. ch. 8. 23. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Phil. 1. 29. Jam. 1. 2, 3.
d Acts 4. 41. 2 Cor. 12. 9, 10. & 4. 17. & 8. 2. Mat. 5. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 13. & 1. 6.
e 2 Tim. 4. 17. 2 Cor. 1. 5, 10. John 16. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8, 13. & 5. 10.

1. THEREFORE, [a] being justified by faith, [b] we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. [c] By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3. And not only *so*, but we [d] glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4. [c] And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5. [f] And hope maketh not ashamed;* because the love of God is [g] shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

f Phil. 1. 20. Ps. 22. 5. & 25. 2, 3.
* Does not deceive, so as to render us ashamed of having indulged in it.
g Tit. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 22. ch. 8. 15, 16.

Verses 1—5. The sinner's justification before God through faith being set forth, the blessed effects of it are here described. Not that faith is the meritorious cause of our justification, as any act of our own, or any work of grace wrought in us, *but we are justified by faith*, as the means whereby we receive the righteousness of Jesus as our own, and thereby appear complete in him. And being now justified,

1. *We have peace with God.* The dreadful breach which sin had made is repaired, the enmity between God and us is removed, and being restored to a state of favour and reconciliation with him, we have that peace of God in our souls which passeth all understanding, and which none can know or taste till they have through Jesus Christ our Lord, received the atonement, and seen the arms of everlasting love stretched out to receive their sinful souls.

2. *We have*, by him, *access into this grace wherein we stand;* have freedom and liberty to approach a throne of grace, as abiding in a state of constant acceptance before God; and are assured that all our requests shall, through our great high priest, be always heard and answered.

3. We *rejoice in* the *hope of the glory of God*, that glory which shall be revealed in us, at the day of the appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, which being secured to us by the promises of the unchangeable God, and our title clear through the divine righteousness of the Redeemer, we can even now antedate by faith our blessedness, and rejoice in the purchased possession prepared for us in heaven.

4. Even our severest trials now have in them matter of abundant joy. *And* we can *not only* rejoice in the prospect before us, *but glory in tribulations also*, in all our afflictions, persecutions, sufferings, and reproaches for Christ, *knowing that*, however grievous to flesh and blood these things at present may be, in the issue they shall prove blessings in disguise, whilst *tribulation worketh patience*, and gives us an opportunity to exercise submission to God's holy will; and, without repining, cheerfully to resign ourselves into his hands, neither angry at the instruments of our troubles, nor resenting their indignities. *And patience* brings *experience* of God's power, grace, and faithfulness, supporting us under our trials, and extricating us out of them; and of our own frailty and infidelity, whilst we feel how weak we are in ourselves, yet that we can do all things through Christ strengthening us. *And experience* begets *hope;* every support he ministers, every deliverance which he gives, confirms and encourages our hope in God; *and hope maketh not ashamed*, will never disappoint nor deceive us, *because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us;* and our hope rests not on any goodness, or strength in ourselves, but on the sovereign, free, and boundless love, which, in the most copious streams, is poured forth by the Holy Ghost, into our hearts, in the richest manifestations, and produces these blessed and happy effects.

6. For [h] when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet [i] peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8. But [k] God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9. [l] Much more

h Ezek. 16. 3. Eph. 2. 1. Col. 2. 13. Gal. 4. 3—5. Heb. 7. 18. & 9. 10, 15. ch. 3. 3. & 4. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 18—20. & 2. 24. Luke 19. 10. Mat. 20. 20, 28. & 1. 21. & 9. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 15.
i John 15. 13. 1 John 3. 16.
k John 3. 16. 1 John 4. 9, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Is. 53. 6. ver. 6, 10.
l Ch. 3. 24. & 8. 1, 33, 34. & 11. 25. John 5. 24. Rev. 12. 11. 1 Thes. 1. 10.

then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10. For if, when we were enemies, [m] we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we [n] shall be saved by his life. 11. And not only *so*, [o] but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

m 2 Cor. 5. 19—21. Col. 1. 20—22. Eph. 2. 13—16. ch. 3. 24, 25. & 4. 25. Rev. 1. 5. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

n Heb. 7. 25. Rev. 1. 18. John 14. 19. & 6. 40, 57. & 10. 28.

o Exod. 15. 1, 2. Ps. 33. 1. & 149. 2. Is. 45. 17, 25. & 61. 10. Luke 1. 46, 47. Hab. 3. 18. Phil. 4. 4.

Verses 6—11. The apostle having mentioned that delightful theme, the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, cannot but expatiate thereon. It is amazing love, if we consider the persons to whom it is shown, the manner in which it is expressed, and the blessings thence derived. (1.) The *persons* were ungodly wretches, apostate from God, desperately wicked, sunk in the lowest abyss of misery, *sinners* in nature, in practice, and exposed to all the terrible wrath of an offended God, *without strength* to afford ourselves the least relief, or to take a single step in order to escape the just and inevitable destruction which was before us; yea, *enemies*, determinately set on evil, and rebels open and avowed against God's crown and dignity. (2.) In this state of deadly guilt, and hopeless misery, *in due time*, according to the divine appointment, *Christ died for the ungodly;* an instance of such transcendent grace and love, as never had appeared on earth before. Were we to search the world throughout, scarce could we find a man who, for the most righteous, excellent, and amiable person, would lay down his own life to ransom him: *though peradventure for a good man*, whose public usefulness was eminent, or to whom he owed the deepest obligations, one might be found so generous and grateful, as even to dare to die in his stead. And with what astonishment would such an heroic action be heard, and preserved in the records of fame, for the admiration of all succeeding ages! But lo! with infinitely transcending glory doth God commend the surpassing excellence of *his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*, took our nature, stood in our place, endured the curse which we had deserved, and by the ransom of his own blood redeemed us from our state of guilt, misery, and despair. Hear it, ye angels, with admiration and astonishment! Hear it, ye sinful sons of men, with wonder and love, and henceforth let heaven echo and earth resound with the praises of redeeming love! (3.) Inestimable are the blessings derived to us through this love of God in Jesus Christ.

1. We *are now justified through his blood*, and *reconciled* to God *by his death*. All the enmity between us is done away, his favour restored, and we are accepted in the beloved.

2. Much more then may it be depended upon as a most assured truth, that if we are now justified before God, *we shall be saved from wrath through him;* shall never enter again into condemnation, but shall hold fast the most assured hope of eternal life. *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being* now in a state of *reconciliation*, and having an everlasting advocate in our ascended Jesus, to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth, *shall we be saved by his life:* because he lives, we shall live also, and reign with him in glory everlasting.

3. Such a prospect ministers the most enlivened delight to the soul: *Not only* are we reconciled, and raised superior to all tribulations, but having *through Jesus Christ, now received the atonement*, and being actually made partakers of the justification, acceptance, and title to glory, which by his obedience to death, he purchased for us, we *joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ*, as our God for ever and ever, our portion, and exceeding great reward, in whose present and eternal favour we have a sure and indefeasible interest. Blessed and happy the people that are in such a case!

12. Wherefore, [p] as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, * for that all have sinned: 13. (For [q] until the law sin was in the world: [r] but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14. Nevertheless [s] death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, [t] who is the figure of him that was to come. 15. But not as the offence, [u] so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16. [x] And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. 17. For if [y] by one man's offence [z] death reigned by one; [a] much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18. Therefore, as † by the offence of one *judgment* [b] *came* upon all men to condemnation, even so ‡ by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. 19. For [c] as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, [d] so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 20. Moreover, [e] the law entered, that the offence might abound. But [f] where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

p Gen. 2. 17. & 3. 6, 19. ch. 6. 23. Ezek. 18. 4. 1 Cor 15. 21.

* Or *in whom.*

q Gen. 6. 5, 12. & 8. 21. & 13. 13. with Exod. xx.

r Ch. 4. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 56. John 3. 4.

s Gen. 4. 8. & v, vii, xi, xxiii, xxv, xxxv, xlix. ch. 5. 21 & 6. 23.

t 1 Cor. 15. 21, 22, 45.

u John 3. 16. 1 John 4. 9, 10. John 1. 16. Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 4—9. Mat. 20. 28. & 26. 28. ver. 19. 21.

x Gen. 3. 1, 16. ver. 12. with Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. Jer. 33. 8. Eph. 1. 7. Rev. 1. 5. Acts 2. 39. Col. 2. 13.

y Or *by one offence.* Gen. 3. 6.

z Ver. 12, 14, 21.

a John 1. 16. Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 4—7. Is. 61. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 8. 2 Tim. 2. 12. John 10. 10. Rom. 8. 23. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 20. 4. & 22. 5.

† Or *by one offence.*

b Ver. 12, 19. ch. 3. 19, 20. John 12. 32. Heb. 2. 9.

‡ Or *by one righteousness.*

c Ver. 12, 14, 15—18. 1 Cor. 15. 21, 22.

d Dan. 9. 24. Is. 53. 4—6, 10—12. & 45. 24. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 33. 15, 16. Mat. 20. 28. & 26. 28. Rev. 1. 5, 6. & 5. 9, 10. & 7. 4, 9, 14. & 19. 8.

e Ch. 3. 19, 20. & 4. 15. & 6. 1, 15. & 7. 5, 8, 11, 13. Gal. 3. 19, 23. John 15. 22.

f Luke 7. 47. 1 Tim. 1. 13—16. Is. 1. 18. & 43. 24, 25. & 44. 22. Jer. 3. 1, 4, 5, 14, 19, 22. & 31. 31—34. & 33. 8. & 50. 20. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Mat. 9. 13. John 10. 10. 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. Eph. 1. 2—9. & 2. 1—9. Tit. 3. 3—7.

Verses 12—21. In these verses the apostle draws a parallel between the two covenant heads, Adam and Christ; between the guilt and misery derived from the one, and the blessedness obtained by the other for his people; where it appears how men came into the wretched state of sin in which at present they appear, and how rich was that love of God, which drew them out of it.

By one man sin entered into the world; one sin opened the floodgates of ungodliness, and deluged the world, overwhelming it with miseries unutterable: *and death by sin*, in every tremendous form, seized on the human nature; *and so death*, the wages of sin, death temporal, spiritual, and eternal, *passed upon all men, for that*, or *in whom*, (ἐφ' ᾧ) *all have sinned.* Adam was the common parent and covenant head of mankind, and at that time possessed the whole human nature; so that all his posterity, being in his loins, (Heb. vii. 9, 10.) fell with him: his offence became theirs, is im-

puted them, and renders them obnoxious to the same punishment with himself. So that it appears hereby that Jews as well as Gentiles are in the same state of condemnation. *For until the law,* before the revelation of God's will on mount Sinai was made, *sin was in the world,* with death and all its attendant miseries; *but* this supposes some law in force, before that which was given by Moses; for *sin is not imputed where there is no law,* nor would any punishment have been inflicted where there was no offence committed. But though the law of Moses was not in being, *nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses,* not only over actual transgressors, grown up to the knowledge of good and evil, but *even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression,* multitudes of infants suffering in the deluge and desolations of Sodom and Gomorrah; and daily their dying groans and agonies testify that sin is in them, because the wages of it is exacted from them, and evidently prove that they are involved in the guilt of that one man's disobedience, by which sin and death entered into the world, and *who is the figure of him that was to come,* the type of our second covenant-head and representative Jesus Christ, who in the fulness of time should become incarnate; that as sin and death are communicated to us by the one, so should righteousness and life be obtained for us by the other. *But,* though the parallel between them is striking, yet in comparing them the latter far excelleth; *for not as the offence, so also is the free gift;* the benefit accruing from the divine righteousness, doth not barely answer the dire effects of the first man's sin, it doth much more. *For if through the offence of one, many be dead,* the dreadful sentence being passed upon them, *much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ,* who hath wrought out that righteousness, by which the most unsearchable riches of divine grace are procured for his people, *hath abounded unto many,* securing to them not merely such a life as Adam had in innocence, but one far surpassing in glory, and eternal in its endurance, *And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift;* the dissimilitude is considerable with regard to the *efficacious influence* of the transaction of the two great covenant-heads: *for the judgment,* the guilt and sentence in consequence thereof, *was by one sin,* of one man, *to the condemnation* of all his posterity whom he represented; *but the free gift* of God through the Redeemer's obedience to death, reaches not to the pardon of one sin, but *of many offences unto justification;* all the sins of his elect, actual as well as original, being laid on their substitute, and they, through faith in him, are freely and fully delivered from all condemnation, and accepted as righteous before God. *For if by one man's offence,* or *by one offence, death reigned by one,* and set up the pillars of his throne, bringing the whole human race under his mortal power, *much more they who receive abundance of grace,* even all that fulness which is laid up for them in Jesus Christ, *and of the gift of righteousness,* that everlastingly glorious, and infinitely meritorious righteousness of their Lord, *shall reign in life, by one Christ Jesus,* triumphant over sin, its guilt and power, quickened to spiritual life here, and looking for that life of glory hereafter, when they shall reign with Jesus in heaven, and see sin and death and hell for ever put under their feet. *Therefore, as by the offence of one,* or *by one offence, judgment came,* (or, sin entered, as it may be supplied) *upon all men to condemnation,* and they were exposed to death eternal thereby, *even so by the righteousness of one,* the second man, the Lord from heaven, the free gift came *upon all men to justification of life,* their Redeemer having provided the complete righteousness which contains their title to life and glory, and which God accepts and graciously makes over to all the heirs of promise; so that in both cases God appears as a righteous judge, placing the acts of the representatives to those, whose persons and characters they bore, and who were, in the eye of the law, one with them. *For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners,* (κατεστάθησαν) and in virtue of the imputation of his sin, regarded in the eye of the law as guilty, and condemned as one, in crime and punishment, with their covenant-head; *so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous,* his righteousness being imputed to them, and they thereby being, in the eye even of the holy law, regarded as righteous, and declared to be so, as complete in him. *Moreover,* let it be observed, that long after sin and death were in the world, *the law entered,* which was given on mount Sinai, not that the Jews might be justified thereby, but *that the offence might abound,* and sin be more clearly discovered to the conscience, and appear exceeding sinful; *but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,* God taking occasion, even from the creature's vileness, to magnify the more transcendently the riches of his own free mercy, in pardoning, justifying, and saving lost souls, and raising them to higher glory than that which they had lost by the first man's disobedience. So *that as sin hath reigned unto death,* and, usurping the throne, spreads its dire dominion over the fallen sons of men, *even so might* victorious *grace* erect her throne on the ruins of these vanquished foes, and *reign through* that *righteousness* which is brought in by *Jesus Christ our Lord,* over all his redeemed people *unto eternal life,* rescuing them from the power of sin and death, bringing them into a state of favour with God, which is better than life itself, quickening them to spiritual life here, and securing to them eternal life hereafter. Thou God of all grace, set up this blessed kingdom in my heart, and reign for ever there!

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle having at large asserted, opened, and proved the great doctrine of justification by faith, lest any should turn this grace of God into licentiousness, he doth with a like zeal, copiousness of expression, and cogency of argument, press the absolute necessity of sanctification, as the inseparable fruit and companion of justification. The water and the blood came streaming together out of the pierced side of the dying Jesus: and what God hath thus joined together, let us not dare to put asunder.

1. WHAT [a] shall we say then? [b] Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2. [c] God forbid. [d] How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3. Know ye not, that [e] so many of us as * were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4. Therefore we are [f] buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by [g] the glory of the Father, even so [h] we also should walk in newness of life. 5. [i] For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection: 6. Knowing this, that [k] our old man is crucified with *him,* that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7. [l] For he that is dead is † freed from sin. 8. [m] Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9. Knowing that Christ, [n] being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more do-

a Ch. 3. 5. & 4. 1. & 7. 7. & 9. 14.
b Ch. 3. 7, 8. & 5. 20, 21. & 2. 4, 5.
c Ch. 3. 5. Mat. 4. 10. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Jam. 1. 15. ch. 1. 18. & 2. 5. & 6. 23.
d Col. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Gal. 6. 14. Col. 2. 12, 13. Gen. 39. 9. Ps. 119. 104.
e Mat. 28. 19. Acts 19. 5. Gal. 3. 27. Col. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 21.
* Or *are.*
f Col. 2. 12. & 3. 4. ver. 3, 5, 6, 8, 11.
g John 11. 40. Col. 1. 11. Eph. 3. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 4. 1 Cor. 6. 14. ch. 8. 11.
h 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Eph. 4. 22—24. Col. 3. 9—13. 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2. & 2. 1, 2. ch. 7. 4, 6. & 12. 1, 2. Heb. 12. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. ver. 19.
i Ch. 8. 11. Phil. 3. 10, 11.
k Ch. 7. 24. Gal. 2. 20. & 5. 24. & 6. 14. Col. 2. 11, 12. & 3. 5, 9. Eph. 4. 22.
l 1 Pet. 4. 1. ch. 8. 33. John 8. 30. Job 3. 19.
† Gr. *justified.* 4. & 8. 11, 13.
m 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 1. Gal. 2. 20. John 14. 19. ver. 4, 5, 22. ch. 7.
n Acts 2. 24. Heb. 9. 28. & 7. 25. & 10. 12, 14. Rev. 1. 18. Ps. 16. 11. & 21. 4.

minion over him. 10. [o] For in that he died, he died unto sin once: [p] but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11. [q] Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12. [r] Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13. [s] Neither yield ye your members *as* ‡ instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God. 14. [t] For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15. [u] What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 16. Know ye not, that [x] to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17. But God be thanked, that [y] ye were the servants of sin, [z] but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine || which was delivered you. 18. [a] Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. 19. [b] I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: [c] for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. 20. [d] For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free * from righteousness. 21. [e] What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? [f] for the end of those things *is* death. 22. [g] But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, [h] and the end everlasting life. 23. [i] For the wages of sin *is* death; [k] but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

o Heb. 9. 14, 26, 28. 1 John 4. 10. Tit. 2. 14. Mat. 26. 28. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18.
p Luke 20. 38. Heb. 10. 12—14.
q Gal. 2. 19, 20. Col. 3. 3, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Phil. 1. 11.
r Ps. 19. 13. & 119. 133. ch. 7. 23, 24. Jam. 4. 1. Col. 2. 11. Eph. 4. 22. & 3. 5, 9. Gal. 5. 24.
s Ch. 12. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Col. 3. 5. ch. 8. 13. & 7. 4—6. Heb. 9. 14. Gal. 2. 19, 20. Luke 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1.
‡ Gr. *arms*, or *weapons*.
t Mic. 7. 19. Tit. 2. 14. ch. 5. 20, 21. Heb. 8. 10. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 5. with ch. 7. 4, 5, 8, 11.
u Ver. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 9. 21. Gal. 5. 18. & 2. 18. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Jude 4.
x John 8. 34. 2 Pet. 2. 19. Mat. 6. 24. with ver. 13, 19, 21—23.
y 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. Tit. 3. 3—7. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
z 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13. 2 Tim. 1. 1, 13. Heb. 6. 1, 2. ch. 2. 20.
|| Or *whereto ye were delivered*.
a John 8. 32, 36. 1 Cor. 7. 22, 23. Gal. 5. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 16. Luke 1. 74, 75. Tit. 2. 11, 12, 14. Ps. 116. 16.
b Ch. 3. 5. John 3. 12. Gal. 3. 15.
c Ver. 13, 16, 18. 1 Pet. 4. 2, 3.
d John 8. 31. Eph. 2. 1, 2. Tit. 3. 3. Mat. 7. 18.
* Gr. *to righteousness*.
e Ch. 1. 24—32. & 7. 5. Ezek. 16. 63. & 36. 31. Job 40. 4. & 42. 6. Ezra 9. 6. 2 Cor. 7. 11. Luke 15. 18, 19, 21.
f See ver. 23.
g Ver. 2, 7, 11, 12, 14, 18. Ps. 116. 16. & 119. 32. Luke 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Heb. 12. 14, 28. ch. 8. 2.
h See ver. 23.
i Ver. 21. Gen. 2. 17. ch. 5. 12. Jam. 1. 15. Ezek. 18. 4. ch. 7. 5. & 8. 13. & 2. 8, 9. Is. 3. 11. Gal. 6. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Rev. 21. 8. & 22. 15.
k Ver. 22. ch. 2. 7. & 5. 10, 17, 18, 21. 1 John 2. 25. & 5. 11, 12. Tit. 1. 2. John 3. 14—17, 36. & 6. 40, 54, 57. & 17. 2. & 10. 10, 28, 29. Eph. 2. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 3.

Verses 1—23. The riches of the grace which he had displayed in the former chapter, the apostle clearly foresaw would furnish objections against his doctrine, which he therefore states and obviates. *What shall we say then?* Is this a licentious doctrine; *and shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid:* the apostle rejects the thought with abhorrence, as the vilest abuse of this most blessed truth. *How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?* under its power and dominion: how inconsistent would it be with our character; how contrary to the obligations of gratitude and duty lying upon us; and how destructive of our peace and hope! Our very baptism represents our profession, and intimates to us the conversation becoming the name we bear. *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ,* into the faith of his name, and obedience to his authority, *were baptized into his death?* that we should resemble him, dying to sin, as he died for it, and corresponding with his great design in suffering, which was to redeem us from all iniquity. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death;* partaking of the benefits of his death; and, as a corpse laid in the grave, which ceases from the actions of life, so should we show an abiding deadness to sin: *that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,* by his almighty power, *even so also we should walk in newness of life:* quickened by virtue derived from him, our head of vital influence, as well as representative; and having received a new nature, new principles, and new hearts from him, we are bound to his praise to show forth in all holy conversation and godliness, the real and universal happy change which is passed upon us to the praise of the glory of his grace. *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death;* engrafted into him, and one with him as the members of his body mystical, sharing in the blessed effects of his death, and experiencing its efficacy in separating our souls from sin, as death separated his body and soul; *we shall be also* planted *in the likeness of his resurrection;* quickened by his divine power, and enabled to walk before God in holiness here, till we shall come in perfect holiness to dwell with him for ever in glory. *Knowing this, that our old man,* that fallen nature derived from Adam, and coeval with our very being, *is crucified with him;* so that its condemning guilt is abolished, and its tyrannizing power is broken. And though it be a painful, lingering death, and the remainders of indwelling sin will struggle to the last; yet we know Christ died, *that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;* should no longer be the slaves of corruption as before, and that shortly its very being in us might be at an end. *For he that is dead is freed from sin;* as a man that is dead can have no farther claims laid against him, so if we are crucified with Christ, we are freed from the legal power and dominion of our former master; shall never perish under guilt, nor return to the bondage of corruption; yea, though we may be overtaken by temptation, we shall not finally or fatally be enslaved by sin. *Now if we be* thus *dead with Christ,* through union with his crucified body, and virtue thence derived; *we believe that we shall also live with him;* quickened to a life of grace here, and shortly to be raised to a life of eternal blessedness and glory, to reign with him in heaven. *Knowing that Christ,* our covenant-head and representative, *being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him;* he hath for ever satisfied all the demands of justice; *for in that he died, he died for sin once,* and by one oblation once offered hath obtained eternal redemption for us; *but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God,* a life heavenly, immortal, which death can never more affect, being exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, as our covenant-head of righteousness, and the eternal source of vital influence to all the members of his body mystical; and because he liveth, we must live also, our life being eternal as his own.

From these glorious views which the apostle sets before us of our union and communion with Christ in his death and resurrection, the apostle proceeds to urge upon the faithful two things: (1.) That they *should reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin;* not only discharged from its condemning guilt, but delivered from its power and dominion, so as henceforward willingly to have no more fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, ceasing from them as a dead man does from the actions of life. (2.) That they should reckon themselves *alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord;* quickened by his grace as the divine prin-

ciple, to newness of life, and engaged and inclined to live to his glory as their great end.

This being then the great privilege, dignity, and duty of believers, we are most powerfully urged to walk agreeably thereunto. *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof.* Whilst we carry a mortal body about us, we must expect to feel the warrings of indwelling sin; till death comes, the conflict will not end: we need, therefore, to watch and pray, which are the great appointed means of grace, that the tyrant which is dethroned, may not again usurp dominion over us; and particularly are called upon to deny the cravings of bodily appetite, by which the strongest temptations to sin enter; that, however beset, we may not yield a willing obedience to the former lusts, in which we walked in the days of our ignorance. But, though overtaken, nay, overcome, we may not, must not, cannot lie down contented slaves; but shall rise through the power of divine grace, and cast the hateful yoke away, under which we groan being burdened. *Neither yield ye your members,* neither those of your bodies, nor the faculties of your souls, *as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin,* to war in that hateful cause under so foul a captain: *but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead; and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God,* living henceforward for his glory, and employing body, soul, and spirit in his blessed service, and to advance his kingdom and interests in the world, fighting under his banners, and faithful unto death. *For sin shall not have dominion over you;* though it may surprise and prevail against you for a while, it shall not gain your approbation, lord it over you abidingly or unresisted, nor obtain an allowed sovereignty. But though the conflict be sometimes sharp and afflictive, the victory is sure at the last; *for ye are not under the law,* as a covenant of works, which can give no hope of pardon of guilt, nor afford any assistance against the power of sin; *but under grace,* under that gracious covenant established with the second Adam, wherein the pardon of all sins is granted, where unchangeable promises secure our stability, and never-failing springs of divine support and assistance shall make us at last more than conquerors; and what can afford such an encouraging argument to strive against sin, as the assurance that we shall overcome?

But some man might object to this, that if this be the case, and we are no more under the law, we may live as we list. The apostle prevents and refutes the objection: *What then? shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid:* this would be to act in opposition to the whole design of the gospel salvation, and inconsistently with all our professions as children of grace. For *know ye not, that,* it is a truth obvious and incontestable, *to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* No man can serve two masters utterly contradictory in their commands. The servants of sin, who willingly surrender themselves to this tyrant's will, must infallibly reap eternal death as the wages of their work: whilst the servants of God are servants *of obedience unto righteousness,* his interests being thus served and advanced, and their end is eternal life; according, therefore, to the service in which we are employed, we show what master we serve, and to whom we belong. *But God be thanked, that though ye were* in times past *the servants of sin,* ye do not continue so; *but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you:* both in heart and conduct now cast into the mould of the glorious gospel, (τυπον εις ον παρεδοθητε) and bearing all its amiable lineaments, in the most blessed and happy conformity to him who is the great author of it, Jesus Christ.

Being then made free from sin, by the power of the eternal Spirit, through the gospel, effectually operating to destroy the dominion, tyranny, and love of sin, *ye became the servants of righteousness;* were discharged from the hateful servitude of iniquity, and entered into the service of a better master, which is perfect freedom, the willing subjects of the holy Jesus, your rightful Lord and Sovereign. *I speak after the manner of men,* representing this matter under the familiar images of masters and servants, *because of the infirmity of your flesh,* the understanding being still dark through the remainders of corruption, and most easily receives spiritual ideas, when communicated under the vail of sensible objects. *For as,* in times past, *ye yielded your members,* both of body and soul, *servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity,* willing slaves to every vile affection, going from evil to worse, and fulfilling all the corrupt desires of the flesh and of the mind; *even so now yield your members servants of righteousness unto holiness;* let every member of your body and faculty of your soul be as freely, delightfully, constantly, and universally employed in the service of the blessed Jesus your Master, and in the practice of righteousness and true holiness, as by nature they were before engaged in the service of sin.

And surely the strongest obligations now lie upon you thus to walk in holiness: *for when ye were the servants of sin,* wholly devoted to its service, *ye were free from righteousness,* not from the obligations to it, which are immutable and eternal, but ye cast off all restraint, were utterly averse to the rule of righteousness, and boasted of liberty, when the most wretched slaves of corruption. And a moment's reflection will now convince you of the misery of that state in which you lay; for *what fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed?* did not the curse of sin follow you close as your shadow? did not the sting of it at times torment and make you miserable in the midst of your enjoyments? did not the very pursuits in which you were engaged, involve you in trouble, disappointment, vexation? and were you not always unsatisfied, and felt an aching void, which nothing you possessed could fill? and with what shame horror, and remorse, do you now reflect upon your past conduct? *for,* careless and thoughtless as you then were, you now know, *that the end of those things is death* eternal, which must have been your miserable lot, if divine grace had not interposed, and plucked you as brands from the burning. *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God,* since this blessed exchange of masters, *ye have your fruit unto holiness,* walking in that good conversation and godliness which brings glory to God, and is most comfortable to your own souls, *and the* blessed *end* and issue of which will be *everlasting life: for the wages of sin,* the accursed master whom ye formerly served, *is death,* including all miseries, both here and hereafter, of soul and body, and that to eternity: *but the gift of God is eternal life,* which he bestows not out of respect of any service or desert of ours, but as a matter of mere grace, and favour, *through Jesus Christ our Lord,* in whom this eternal life is secured to us, and for whose righteousness' sake it is bestowed upon us, purchased by the Saviour, but absolutely free to the sinner.

Let us examine ourselves then, whether we are in the faith, and with deepest self-application consider what the apostle hath here advanced. Our everlasting hopes depend on our experience of these things. We most fatally deceive ourselves, if we talk of grace, and promise ourselves heaven, and live, and die the servants of corruption.

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

We may observe in this chapter, 1. *Our freedom from the law further urged as an argument to press upon us sanctification,* ver 1—6. 2. *The excellency and usefulness of the law asserted and proved from the apostle's own experience notwithstanding,* ver. 7—14. 3. *A description of the conflict between grace and corruption in the heart,* ver. 14, 15. *to the end.*

1. KNOW ye not, [a] brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) [b] how

[a] Ch. 9. 3. & 10. 1. & 2. 18.

[b] Ch. 3. 19. with 6. 14.

that the law hath dominion over a man as long as * he liveth? 2. For [c] the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. 3. [d] So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: [e] but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. 4. Wherefore, my brethren, [f] ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that [g] ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, [h] that we should bring forth fruit unto God. 5. For when we were [i] in the flesh, the † motions of sins, which were by the law, [k] did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6. [l] But now we are delivered from the law, ‡ that being dead wherein we were held; [m] that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

* Or *it.*
c Gen. 2. 23, 24. Mal. 2. 16. Num. 5. 29. Prov. 6. 29, 32. Mat. 19. 4—9. 1 Cor. 7. 2, 10, 39. Lev. 22. 12, 13.
d Num. 5. 20, 21. Judg. 14. 20. Mat. 5. 32. See ver. 2.
e Ruth 1. 13. 1 Tim. 5. 14. Lev. 22. 12, 13.
f Ch. 6. 14. & 8. 2. Gal. 2. 19, 20. & 5. 18. Col. 2. 14. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4, 5. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Tit. 2. 14.
g 2 Cor. 11. 2. Hos. 2. 19, 20.
h Mat. 5. 16. John 15. 8. Phil. 1. 11. with Ps. 127. 3. Luke 1. 42.
i Ch. 8. 8. Eph. 2. 1. Tit. 3. 3.
† Gr. *passions.*
k Gal. 5. 19—21. & 6. 8. ch. 6. 19, 21, 23. Tit. 3. 3. Mat. 5. 19. James 1. 15.
l Ver. 4. ch. 6. 14. & 8. 2. Gal. 2. 19, 20.
‡ Or *being dead to that.*
m Ver. 4. ch. 6. 4, 11, 13, 19, 22. John 4. 23, 24. Phil. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. ch. 2. 29. Luke 1. 74, 75. Gal. 5. 22, 23.

Verses 1—6. The apostle had asserted, that we are not under the law, and in what sense he here explains. He was addressing himself to them who knew the law, and would admit it as the most obvious truth, that the law can no longer be binding, than the person lives under it. As for instance; *The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth: but if her husband be dead,* the bond of wedlock is dissolved, and, *she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but* the case is quite different *if her husband be dead, for* then *she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man.*

Now such was our case:

1. Our first marriage was to the law; we were under it as a covenant of works, and the fruits of that marriage were dreadful. *For when we,* Jews as well as Gentiles, *were in the flesh,* in our natural, corrupt, and unregenerate state, *the motions of sins,* the passions and vile affections of our fallen hearts, *which were by the law* considered as a covenant of works, which demanded a perfection we could not pay, and denounced a curse we could not endure; our corruptions, I say, were but the more irritated by the strictness of the prohibition, and the severity of the sanction, and *did work in our members* with such mighty and irresistible energy, as *to bring forth fruit unto death,* producing all those actual transgressions which spring from the original root of bitterness in our nature; and, unless we were delivered from the guilt and dominion of them, must issue in eternal death: and as long as any soul is under the law as a covenant, this must be his miserable case. But,

2. We are married to another, even to Jesus Christ. Our first husband *the law being dead, wherein we were held, we are delivered* from its obligations as a covenant, and from the curse denounced on the transgressors. We are no more in these respects under it, than a wife is subject to her departed husband. We *are become dead to the law,* and the law unto us, *by the body of Christ,* for he hath satisfied all its demands; and we are thus discharged from all connection with, and obligation to, our former husband, *that we might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead,* the risen and exalted Saviour, to whom we now pledge our fidelity, and by ties of love, that never can be dissolved, are drawn to a willing subjection to his pleasing yoke, *that we should bring forth fruit unto God,* the fruits of grace and holiness produced through the quickening influences of his Spirit, which, till this union with Christ commences, never can be brought forth, and tending to advance the divine glory, acceptable also to God, through Jesus Christ: *and that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter:* though made free from the law as a covenant of life, yet under the law to Christ, receiving from him the new heart, walking before him under the influence of new principles, and enabled to show forth a very different conversation in righteousness and true holiness, from what we ever did or could practise, when under the power of the old man; not regarding the law as a covenant of life, which only provoked, instead of restraining, the corruption of our hearts.

7. What shall we say then? [n] *Is the* law sin? God forbid. [o] Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known ‖ lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8. But sin, [p] taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. [q] For without the law sin *was* dead. 9. For [r] I was alive without the law once: but [s] when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. 10. And the commandment, [t] which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death. 11. [u] For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me.* 12. Wherefore [x] the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

n Ver. 5, 8, 11, 13. 1 Cor. 15. 56.
o Exod. 20. 17. Deut. 5. 21. with ch. 3. 19, 20.
‖ Or *concupiscence.*
p Ch. 4. 15. & 5. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 56. ver. 5, 9, 11.
q Mark 10. 20. Luke 18. 11, 12. John 15. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 56. Gal. 3. 19.
r Mat. 19. 20. Luke 18. 11, 12. Phil. 3. 5, 6.
s Ch. 3. 19, 20. & 10. 5. Gal. 3. 10. ver. 5, 7—14. Ps. 38. 4—8. & 40. 12.
t Ch. 10. 5. Lev. 18. 5. Ezek. 20. 11. with 2 Cor. 3. 7. ch. 3. 19, 20.
u Ver. 8, 9, 13. Heb. 3. 13. Jer. 17. 9. Jam. 1. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 56.
x Ps. 19. 7—9. & 119. 39, 96, 137, 138. 1 Tim. 1. 8.

Verses 7—12. An objection might be raised from what the apostle had said, as if he had most dishonourably reflected on the law. *What shall we say then? Is the law sin?* with indignation he replies, *God forbid:* the law is good; the evil is all in ourselves.

1. The law is in itself most *holy, just, and good;* it contains a transcript of God's purity, inculcates the most perfect obedience, demands nothing but what essentially flows from the very relation of Creator and creature, and in its nature is like its Author, excellent.

2. The advantages of the law are great, as it convinces the conscience, and humbles the soul under a sense of sin. *I had not known sin, but by the law;* so far is the law from leading to sin, or approving it, that it discovers and condemns the most secret workings of evil. *For I had not known lust,* the sinfulness of the first motions of corrupt desire, *except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet;* the law therefore is not sinful, *but,* as the bright mirror, discovers that deformity which would otherwise have been overlooked. The evil is all in ourselves, where *sin, taking occasion by the commandment,* raged even more violently because of the prohibition, and *wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law,* whilst in my Pharisaical state I knew not its spirituality and extensive demands, *sin was dead,* did not terrify my conscience, and to my apprehension was entirely subdued; so that I counted myself, as touching the righteousness which is by the law, blameless. *For I was alive without the law once;* in those days of my vanity, when Pharisaical pride

swelled my bosom, I counted my title to life clear on the footing of my own obedience, being a perfect stranger to the spiritual nature and extent of the law: *but when the commandment came*, laid open to my conscience by the Spirit in its purity and spirituality, conviction flashed on my mind; *sin revived*, and brought unnumbered charges against me, which I had overlooked: and I felt its living power in my heart, when I thought it had been utterly destroyed, *and* in consequence thereof, *I died;* I saw myself a condemned criminal, most justly obnoxious to the divine displeasure, and in the eye of the law under the fearful sentence of eternal death. *And the commandment which*, if perfectly obeyed, *was ordained to* be a covenant of *life* to man in innocence, *I found to be unto death;* and through the corruption of my nature rendering me incapable of keeping it, I perceived the only thing it could do for me was, to consign me over to the wrath of God as a transgressor. *For sin*, that native principle of corruption in my heart, *taking occasion by the commandment* to rebel against the law, as if it was unreasonably severe, *deceived me*, with hopes of pleasure and impunity, *and by it slew me*, like an assassin, that having misled the traveller, plunges his dagger into his heart. *Wherefore* all these dire consequences are to be ascribed wholly to our desperate corruption, whilst *the law is holy*, and no blame to be laid against it, *and the commandment is holy, just, and good.*

13. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. [y] But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. 14. For we know that the law is [z] spiritual: but I am [a] carnal, sold under sin. 15. [b] For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16. If then I do that which I would not, [c] I consent unto the law that *it is* good. 17. Now then [d] it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18. For I know that [e] in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: [f] for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. 19. [g] For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21. I find then a [h] law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22. For [i] I delight in the law of God after [k] the inward man: 23. But I see [l] another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24. [m] O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me * from the body of this death! 25. [n] I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then [o] with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

y Ver. 8—11. ch. 3. 20. & 5. 20. John 15. 22.
z Heb. 4. 12. Mat. 5. 22, 28. & 22. 37. Lev. 19. 17.
a Ver. 15, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 3. Is. 6. 5. & 64. 6. with 1 Kin. 21. 20. 2 Kin. 17. 17. Is. 50. 1, 10.
b Gal. 5. 17, 24. ver. 18, 19, 21, 23—25.
c Ver. 14, 22. Dan. 9. 5.
d Ver. 20, 22—25.
e Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Job 14. 4. Ps. 51. 5. Is. 1. 6. & 64. 6.
f Ver. 16, 22, 25. Phil. 2. 13. & 3. 12. Gal. 5. 17. 2 Cor. 3. 5.
g See ver. 15—17.
h Ver. 23, 25. ch. 8. 2. ver. 17, 20, 24. Gal. 5. 17. Eph. 6. 12. Col. 3. 5, 9. ch. 6. 6. Is. 1. 6. & 64. 6.
i Ps. 1. 2. & cxix. & 19. 7—11. & 40. 8. & 119. 77, 97, 111. ver. 12, 14, 16.
k Ch. 2. 29. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Eph. 3. 16. Luke 17. 21. 1 Pet. 3. 4. 1 John 3. 9. Col. 3. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 17. John 3. 3, 5, 6.
l Job 40. 4. Ps. 38. 4, 5. Is. 6. 5. & 64. 6. ver. 21, 24, 25. Gal. 5. 17. Jam. 4. 5. & 3. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 11. ch. 6. 18, 19. Prov. 24. 16. Eccl. 7. 20. 1 Kin. 8. 38, 46.
m 1 Kin. 8. 38.
* Or *this body of death.*
n Ps. 103. 2—5. 1 Cor. 15. 57. Phil. 4. 6. Col. 3. 17. Eph. 5. 20. 2 Cor. 12. 9.
o Ver. 15—24. Gal. 5. 17—24.

Verses 13—25. A new objection is started from the title he gives to the law as *good*. *Was then that which is good made death unto me?* might one suggest: can that which is so good in its nature be in its effects so deadly? and is the law of God the cause of all human miseries? *God forbid.* It is not the law *but* the crime committed against it, which causes the death of the malefactor. Thus *sin*, the concupiscence of my corrupted nature, *that it might appear sin*, and be discovered to my conscience in its true malignity, *working death in me by that which is good*, and taking occasion to rebel from the very purity and perfection of the holy law of God, brought the sentence of death upon me; *that sin by the commandment*, so clearly forbidden, yet rising in wilful opposition thereto, *might appear exceeding sinful;* and that this corruption of my nature, the source of all my actual transgressions, might be seen in the blackest colour that words can express, or thought conceive, (καθ' ὑπερβολην αμαρτωλος.)

Such was the apostle's state before conversion; and afterwards he still proved the severest conflicts with in-dwelling sin, and saw how unable he was to stand before the demands of a holy law. *For we know*, I Paul, and all who are enlightened to a knowledge of the truth, *that the law is spiritual*, reaching to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and requiring perfection of nature, as well as outward obedience; *but I am carnal*, feel myself a poor fallen creature, *sold under sin;* by the first man's transgression delivered into the tyrant's hands, and born the slave of corruption, the dire effects of which I daily feel, and groan under them. *For that which I do, I allow not;* when in thought, word, or deed, my wretched heart yields to the tempter's wiles, my judgment disapproves the evil I commit; and far from a deliberate choice, my soul rises against it, and I loathe both the sin and myself. *For what I would*, and in my better part approve and desire, *that I do not;* I desire always with the most intense application, that my soul should be fixed on God, and engaged in his blessed work and service; yet how short do I come of that spirituality of temper and conduct which I wish to exercise? *But what I hate, that I do;* insensibly, through infirmity, surprise, or temptation, betrayed into things that habitually I abhor. *If then I do that which I would not*, and am overcome by the power of in-dwelling sin, whilst I feel a settled aversion to this hateful service, *I consent unto the law*, (συμφημι) give my full approbation to it, *that it is good*, most excellent in itself, most becoming God to enjoin, and me to obey: and even if its fearful penalty were levied upon me, I must own the sentence righteous, just, and good. *Now then it is no more I*, as a new man, *that do it, but sin;* the old native corruption, *that dwelleth in me;* like the Canaanites, and is as burdensome to me, as they were to God's Israel. *For I know*, by sad experience, *that in me (that is, in my flesh,)* in my carnal self, there *dwelleth no good thing*, but evil, and only evil, and that continually: *for to will is present with me*, and under the influence of the divine nature, of which I am made a partaker, my judgment approves the things that are excellent, and my choice determines me to walk and please God; *but how to perform that which is good I find not;* the storms of temptation, and the current of corruption carry me out of the course I mean to steer; so that I cannot keep in the straight way of holiness, nor proceed with that steadiness and speed I hoped and purposed. *For the good that I would*, even to be found complete in all the will of God, *I do not*, cannot attain unto; *but the evil which I would not*, but condemn, disapprove, and disallow, *that I do*, feeling myself weak as an infant, and unable to make resistance. *Now if I do that I would not*, as I said before, *it is no more I that do it;* sin is in my eyes an abominable thing, and my renewed part feels an aversion to it, and a hearty approbation of the holy law of God: *but* all the evil proceeds from *sin*, that corrupted principle, *which* still *dwell-*

eth in me. I then find a law, my fallen nature acting in me with such mighty influence, *that when I would do good, evil is present with me;* some discouragement is suggested to deter me, some snare to allure me, or some evil desire rises up, quenches the gracious purposes I had formed, and turns me aside from the path of righteousness. *For I* can say with the greatest truth, *I delight in the law of God after the inward man;* my inmost soul, renewed by grace, doth not only approve the law in all its spirituality as good, but feels a complacency therein, and knows no happiness equal to that perfect conformity thereto, which it desires, and to which it hopes one day to arrive. *But*, what is the bitterest burden I groan under, *I see another law in my members*, the mighty workings of remaining corruption, *warring against the law of my mind;* my better part, which divine grace has renewed; and though habitually the power of the new nature predominates, yet the war is often sharp, *and* sometimes corruption prevails, *bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members;* whilst for a time overpowered, reluctantly I am drawn aside, not a willing slave, but an unhappy captive. *O wretched man that I am!* thus tied and bound with the chain of my sins, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* from this fallen nature, which, like a body consisting of various members, works so powerfully, and must, for any thing I can do to help myself, bring me under the sentence of eternal death. But though I feel my helplessness, and lie down under self-despair, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* By his grace I am already delivered from condemnation; by his Spirit I shall be saved from the power of evil; and his unchangeable promises assure me of a complete victory shortly, when all the remainders of sin shall be finally and utterly destroyed. *So then* the sum of the matter is shortly this: *with my mind*, in my settled judgment and choice, *I myself* (αυτος εγω) my real self, with my renewed heart in the inner man, I serve *the law of God*, with full consent, and willing subjection; but *with my flesh the law of sin*, feeling its workings in me, though disallowed and condemned, and sometimes, though reluctantly, brought under its hateful power.

Many have asserted, that Paul in his whole description personates an unregenerate man, and seem to think it highly derogatory to his high character to suppose, that so great a Christian, the chief of the apostles, should feel such a war of corruption as is here described: but if any man considers the expressions of *his hating* and *not allowing the evil he did; his consenting to the law as good; delighting in it after the inward man*, (with which compare 2 Cor. iv. 16. Eph. iii. 16.) *serving it with his mind*, &c. and contrasts herewith the state of unregeneracy described in the former chapter, ver. 12, 13, 16, 19. he will see that the apostle spoke indeed of *himself*, and not another person. And will not the experience of the dearest children of God correspond herewith, whose minds are truly enlightened to know the spirituality of the law, and the corruption of their nature? Those who are ignorant of the one, and feel not the other, may fancy themselves indeed to have attained, and be already perfect: but to that the apostle pretended not, Phil. iii. 12. and those who like him experimentally know their fallen state, and impotence to obey the perfect law of God, will still adopt his complaint, and feel the necessity of living constantly on the riches of that grace which is revealed in the gospel.

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle having fully explained the doctrine of justification *and pressed the necessity of* sanctification, *in this chapter applies himself to the* consolation *of the Lord's people. Ministers are helpers of the joy of the saints.* Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; *so runs our commission*, Isa. xl. 1. *It is the will of God, that his people should be a comforted people. And we have here such a draught of the gospel charter, such a display of the unspeakable privileges of true believers, as may furnish us with abundant matter for joy and peace in believing, that by all these immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation. And many of the people of God have accordingly found this chapter a well-spring of comfort to their souls, living and dying; and have sucked and been satisfied from these breasts of consolation, and with joy drawn water out of these wells of salvation. There are three things in this chapter,* 1. *The particular instances of a Christian's privileges*, ver. 1—29. 2. *The ground thereof laid in predestination*, ver. 29, 30. 3. *The apostle's triumph herein, in the name of all the saints*, ver. 31. to the end.

1. THERE [a] *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who [b] walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2. [c] For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the [d] law of sin and death. 3. For what the law could not do, [e] in that it was weak through the flesh, [f] God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and * for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5. [g] For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; [h] but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6. For † to be carnally minded *is* death; but ‡ [k] to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. 7. [l] Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

[a] Ch. 5. 1, 21. & 6. 22, 23. & 7. 4, 15—25. John 5. 24. Heb. 6. 18. Gal. 2. 19, 20. & 3. 13, 14. & 4. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 5. 21, 1 Chr. 1. 30. Eph. 3. 17. John 15. 4. Phil. 3. 9.

[b] Gal. 5. 16—26. ch. 7. 6, 15—25. Luke 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Phil. 3. 3, 7—14. Tit. 2. 11—14.

[c] Ch. 3. 27. Is. 2. 3. & 5. 14. John 6. 63. & 8. 32, 36. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Gal. 2. 19, 20. & 5. 1. ch. 6. 18, 22.

[d] Ch. 6. 14. & 7. 4, 6—8, 13. & 3. 19, 20. 2 Cor. 3. 7. ch. 4. 15.

[e] Ch. 3. 19, 20, 23. & 8. 7, 8. Gal. 2. 16. Heb. 10. 4. & 7. 18, 19. & 9. 9.

[f] John 1. 14. & 3. 14—17. Heb. 10. 8. Gal. 4. 4, 5. & 3. 13. 1 John 2. 2, 4, 9, 10. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. Dan. 9. 24. Ch. 3. 24—26. & 5. 6—11, 19, 21. Acts 13. 39.

* Or *by a sacrifice for sin.*

[g] John 3. 6. 1 Cor. 2 14. Phil. 3. 19.

[h] Ver. 9, 14. 1 Cor. 2. 15. Gal. 5. 22—25. Eph. 5. 9. Col. 3. 1, 2.

† Gr. *the minding of the flesh.* 1 Ch. 6. 21, 23. & 7. 10, 11. Gal. 6. 8. ver. 13. Jam. 1. 15.

‡ Gr. *the minding of the spirit.*

[k] Ver. 13. Gal. 5. 16, 22—25. Ps. 19. 11. Is. 3. 10. ch. 14. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 12. Phil. 3. 3. 1 Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Job 14. 4. Ps. 51. 5. & 53. 1—5. Is. 1. 4, 6. Jer. 17. 9. Jam. 4. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 1 John 2. 16. Eph. 2. 1—3. Tit. 3. 3. ch. 1. 28—31. John 15. 5.

Verses 1—8. This chapter opens with a most reviving view of the safety of every believer in their great covenant-head Christ Jesus, notwithstanding all the accusations of guilt, and the struggles of remaining corruption. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;* being united to him by faith as their surety, the sentence of the law is reversed; though they deserve wrath as much as others; though Satan lays many grievous charges against them; and God himself is pleased to visit sometimes their iniquities with a rod, and their sin with scourges, yet the bitterness of death is past. Since they have fled for refuge to the blood and righteousness of a Redeemer, they are safe for eternity. And they are to be known by their daily conversation, as those *who walk not after the flesh*, under the habitual dominion of their fallen nature and corrupt affections; *but after the Spirit*, directed by God's word as their rule, and under the teachings, guidance, and influence of the Holy Ghost, who hath implanted a new and divine nature in them. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, either that gospel which, where truly embraced, operates most powerfully in constraining the conscience by love unto obedience, through the quickening influence of the Divine Spirit, in its utmost perfection, both in heart and practice, Jesus, as our substitute, obeyed: and having thereby brought in an everlasting righteousness, *hath*

made me free from the law of sin and death, delivering me from the condemning sentence of that law which discovered sin to my conscience, and denounced wrath as the wages due to it; and from the enslaving power of corruption, through the grace purchased by the Redeemer's obedience unto death. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh*, because of the corruption of our nature it was impossible that, as a covenant of works, any fallen creature could obtain life and salvation by the law, and it neither provided nor admitted any atonement or expiation for guilt; *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh;* rescuing us in his infinite grace from the ruin which a broken law, never to be repaired, threatened; and this in a way so transcendently glorious, even by the incarnation of his co-equal Son, who took the human nature, with all its sinless infirmities, and stood in the sinner's stead; and laying upon him the iniquities of us all, God testified, in the sufferings of his own Son, *for* the *sin* we had committed, the abhorrence he had of sin, and exacted the punishment due to it from the incarnate Saviour; *that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*, who in virtue of our union with Jesus as our covenant-head and representative, are now personally, legally, and perfectly justified, even by that law which before condemned us; because being *complete in him*, we are now possessed of a righteousness adequate to all the demands of the law, yea, in the highest magnifying the law and making it honourable. And all *who* are thus vitally united to Christ as their head, *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;* for they are not only brought into a new state, but are made partakers of a new and divine nature, which now influences and actuates them in all their conversation. *For they that are after the flesh*, under the dominion of their native corruptions, *do mind the things of the flesh;* relish, delight in, and pursue the things that are pleasing only to the carnal mind and sensual appetite; *but they that are after the Spirit*, partakers of his effectual grace through union with Jesus the living head of vital influence to his people; they (φρονουσι) understand, are attached to, delight in, and follow *the things of the Spirit;* both the doctrines he reveals, the blessings he bestows, and the services which he enjoins, and for which he enables them. *For to be carnally minded*, to live under the reigning dominion of the fallen spirit, governed by lawless passions and sensual appetites *is death;* is a present state of spiritual death, and must end in death eternal: *but to be spiritually minded*, renewed by the Holy Ghost, under the habitual influence of his grace, and supremely and abidingly attached to, and engaged in, the pursuit of spiritual objects; this *is life and peace;* it is the proof of the divine life begun in the soul; peace of conscience is the present happy fruit which it produces, and it will issue in eternal peace and blessedness. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God*, and stands in direct opposition to his perfections and authority, abhorring the government of his providence, and hating the restraints and sanctions of his law: *for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* There is an absolute impossiblity of such a nature being brought into conformity to the holy will of God; and till a new heart and right spirit be given from above, the enmity must for ever remain inveterate and unsubdued. *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God;* whilst they continue in this state, every thing they do is defiled, and the very duties they perform, however right in themselves are abominable in his sight. So desperate is our condition by nature, till the almighty grace of God works the blessed change, enabling us to walk and please God.

m John 3. 6 Eph. 1. 17, 18. Ezek. 36. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 14. 1 John 2. 20, 29. 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. Gal. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Phil. 1. 19.

9. [m] But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

n John 17. 23. Eph. 3. 17.

o Ch. 5. 12. & 6. 23.

10. And if Christ *be* [n] in you, [o] the body *is* dead because of sin; [p] but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. 11. [q] But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that [r] raised up Christ from the dead shall also [r] quicken your mortal bodies || by his Spirit that [s] dwelleth in you. 12. Therefore, brethren, [t] we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh. 13. For [u] if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: [x] but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14. [y] For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15. [z] For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16. [a] The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

p Ch. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 15. 45. & 1. 30. Gal. 4. 19. Rev. 22. 14. Is. 3. 10.

q Acts 2. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 21. Heb. 13. 20.

r Eph. 2. 5. Col. 2. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 14.

|| *Or because of his Spirit.*

s Ver. 9. Ezek. 36 27. John 7. 38, 39. 1 Cor. 3. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 14. John 14. 17. 1 John 2. 27.

t Ch. 6. 2, 7, 11, 14, 18. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

u Col. 3. 5, 6. Eph. 5. 3—5. ch. 6. 21. Gal. 6. 8. & 5. 19—21.

x Col. 3. 1—6. Eph. 4. 22. & 5. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 11.

y Gal. 5. 16, 18, 25. & 4. 6. ver. 9. Luke 20. 36. John 1. 12.

z Heb. 2. 15. 1 John 4. 18. 2 Tim. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 12. Gal. 3. 26. & 4. 5, 6. Mark 14. 36. Is. 56. 5.

a 2 Cor. 1. 12. 22. & 5. 5. Eph. 1. 13. & 4. 30. 1 Cor. 2. 12. 1 John 4. 13.

Verses 9—16. With comfort the apostle addresses the believers at Rome, confident of their interest in the blessed Spirit of all grace. *But ye are not in the flesh*, under the dominion and influence of the carnal mind; *but in the Spirit*, being regenerate and born again; *if so be*, or *seeing that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*, as in his peculiar temple, taking up his abode in your hearts, manifesting there his presence and love, and showing his powerful and perpetual agency. But *now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ*, who is the very God from whom, as from the Father, that one Spirit proceeds, and be not renewed by his grace, and under his guidance and influence, *he is none of his;* whatever his professions may be, he doth not belong to Christ as a member of his body mystical, he is not a child of his family, nor a subject of his kingdom, and must be eternally disowned by him and separated from him, if he dies in this unregenerate state. *And*, on the other hand, *if Christ be in you* by his Spirit dwelling in your hearts, *the body* indeed *is dead because of sin*, and must lie down in the dust; *but the spirit*, the immortal part, *is life, because of righteousness*, raised from spiritual death in virtue of the Redeemer's righteousness here, and entitled to eternal life hereafter, and by the divine principle implanted in you, made meet for the inheritance among the saints in light; *but if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead*, being one in essence and co-operation with the Father and the Son, (compare 1 Cor. vi. 14. John v. 28, 29.) and concurring in the work of raising the body of Jesus, *dwell in you* as his temple, *he that raised up Christ from the dead*, as the pledge of our resurrection, and the first-fruits of them that slept, *shall quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in you;* your bodies shall by the same indwelling almighty power which raised him, be ransomed from the grave, and become immortal and glorious, fashioned like to your exalted Head. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh;* we have neither obligation nor inducement to follow the cravings of corrupt nature; but, on the contrary, are under every bond of love and duty to live for God, in the daily and habitual mortification of every vile affection; *for if ye live after the flesh*, the slaves of corruption, *ye shall die* eternally; *but if ye through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body*, denying your corrupt affections and sensual appetites, and through the power of the Spirit growing conformed to your crucified Lord, *ye shall live* with him in glory everlasting. *For as many as are led by the*

Spirit of God, under his conduct, enlightened, directed, and supported by him, *they are the sons of God*, made his children by adoption and grace, and bearing in their renewed minds his image and likeness. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear*, are not under that slavery to your lusts and passions, which was attended with a fearful looking for of judgment; nor under that legal dispensation which brought the conscience into distress and darkness, exacting an obedience that could not be paid; nor under those horrors which, on the first discoveries of your danger in a state of unregeneracy, seized on your souls; *but ye have received the Spirit of adoption;* being admitted by God's sovereign grace into that high relation of children, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, producing every childlike disposition of filial love, confidence, and delight in him, *whereby we* are emboldened to approach him with faith and joy, and to *cry, Abba, Father*, before him. *The Spirit itself*, in such approaches to God, when in simplicity we offer our hearts unto him, *beareth witness with our spirits*, shining upon his own work in our souls, and satisfying our consciences *that we are the children of God*, and may take the comfort of that blessed and honourable relation.

b Gal. 4. 7. Phil. 3. 10, 14. Luke 22. 29. Rev. 3. 21. & 21. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 9. & 3. 22.
c Acts 14. 22. 1 Pet. 4. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Luke 24. 26.
d 2 Cor. 4. 17. Mat. 5. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 13. & 4. 13. Col. 3. 4. Phil. 3. 10, 21. 1 John 3. 2. 2 Thes. 1. 10. Rev. 3. 21.
e Is. 65. 17. Acts 3. 21. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Rev. 21. 1, 5.
f Gen. 3. 17. Is. xxiv.
g 2 Pet. 3. 10, 13. Is. 65. 17. Acts 3. 21. Rev. 21. 1, 4, 5, & 22. 3.
h John 16. 21. Is. 24. 5, 6. Jer. 12. 4, 11. & 14. 4—6. Hos. 4. 2. Joel i. ii. Job 31 38. Hab. 2. 11.
* Or *every creature.*
i Ver. 15, 16. Eph. 1. 13, 14. 2 Cor. 1. 21, 22. Gal. 5. 22, 23. Eph. 5. 9. Phil. 3. 3.
k 2 Cor. 5. 2, 4. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Phil. 3. 20, 21. Eph. 4. 30. Luke 21. 28. 1 John 3. 2. Tit. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 13.
l Gal. 5. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 7. Heb. 11. 1. & 6. 11, 18, 19. 1 Pet. 3. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 16. ch. 5. 2. & 15. 13. Tit. 1. 2. Col 1. 27. Tit 2. 13. Jam. 5. 7. 2 Cor. 4. 18.

17. [b] And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; [c] if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. 18. For I reckon that [d] the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19. For the [e] earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20. [f] For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the *same* in hope; 21. Because the creature itself also [g] shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22. For we know that [h] * the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have [i] the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves [k] groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body. 24. [l] For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25. But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

Verses 17—25. The inheritance of glory is the necessary consequence of our adoption of God. To this transcendently excellent privilege the apostle therefore passeth; *and* concludes, that *if children* by adoption and grace, *then* are we *heirs*, and entitled to the eternal inheritance; *heirs of God*, made so by his Spirit, and receiving from him all the blessedness which he hath to bestow, and hath promised in his Son; *and joint heirs with Christ*, who is the first-born of many brethren, and hath secured for them, as for himself, the title to eternal life: *if so be that we suffer with him*, as we must expect to do in his service, this being the inseparable attendant of it, that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution; but the issue will be highly to our advantage; *that we may be also glorified together* at the great day of his appearing, when he shall bestow the promised crown, and before men and angels acknowledge us as his brethren. And such a prospect makes all our trials light and easy. *For I reckon* (λογιζομαι) on summoning up the account of our loss and gain, *that the sufferings of this present time*, however acute or continued, *are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us:* but, when placed against the glories of eternity, they appear trivial and momentary, and sink unnoticed as the drop into the boundless ocean. *For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God;* which some understand of the Gentile world, and the elect of God among them who through the power of Satan had been made subject to vanity and idolatry; but now, being themselves rescued from the bondage of corruption, they earnestly expected, as a woman in travail, the happy time, when, by the more abundant outpouring of the Spirit, a more general conversion should be wrought in the earth, and far greater multitudes of lost souls be rescued from the dominion of the wicked one, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Others suppose that the creature, even the whole creation in general, (πασα κτισις) animate or inanimate, is here by a noble prosopopœia introduced as waiting with eager impatience for that blessed alteration which the gospel will make, when the creatures of God shall be recovered from their present disordered state, and employed by the sons of God, according to their original design, to exalt their Maker's glory. *For the creature was made subject to vanity;* the very ground being cursed for man's sin, and all the creatures perverted, through the corruption that is in the human nature, from their original design and use; *not willingly*, by any choice or tendency of their own, or any sin in them; *but by reason of him who hath subjected the same*, and by that sin to which Adam was instigated through the malice of the devil, were involved in the miseries of his fall. Not that they should always remain under the dreadful abuses which they suffer; but they rest *in hope that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption*, under which they lie at present, *into the glorious liberty of the sons of God*, restored by them to answer the great end for which they were created, and expecting the general restitution of all things, when the *new heavens and new earth* shall arise, *wherein dwelleth righteousness. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now*, under the grievous burden of abuses which the creatures suffer, and longing for deliverance. *And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first-fruits of the Spirit*, in his present sealing, sanctifying, and comforting operations, the earnests of the eternal felicity provided for us in a better world; *even we ourselves*, notwithstanding the riches of the grace of which we have been made partakers, yet, *groan within ourselves*, under the remainder of indwelling sin, and the afflictions which still lie heavy upon us till death; *waiting for the adoption*, when Christ will publicly own the relation he bears to us before men and angels at the great day: to wit, *the redemption of our body*, when, triumphant over the grave, we shall reach the summit of heavenly felicity: our souls perfected in holiness, our bodies fashioned like to Christ's glorious body, and the whole man shall together be blessed with the fruition of God himself as his everlasting portion. *For we are saved by hope;* though we are not yet in possession of the purchased glory, we hold our title in sure and certain hope; *but hope that is seen is not hope;* when the object is possessed hope ceases: *for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not*, expecting shortly perfect deliverance from all our corruptions and afflictions; *then do we with patience wait for it*, persuaded that the Lord, in his own good time, will fulfil his promises, and

bring us at last through all our trial, to the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away, reserved for us in the heavens. And blessed and happy are all they who thus wait for him.

26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for [m] we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but [n] the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27. And [o] he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, † because [p] he maketh intercession for the saints [q] according to *the will of* God. 28. And we know that [r] all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the [s] called according to *his* purpose.

m Mat. 20. 22. Jam. 4. 3.
n Zech. 12. 10. 1 Cor. 12. 8. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Mal. 10. 20. Gal. 4. 6. Eph. 6. 18. ch. 7. 21. Ps. 6. 3.
o 1 Chr. 28. 9. Ps. 7. 9. Jer. 11. 20. & 17. 10. Rev. 2. 23. Mat. 6. 6. Ps. 5. 1. & 38. 9.
† Or *that.*
p Ver. 26. Zech. 12. 10. Jude 20. Eph. 5. 18.
q 1 John 5. 14. Mat. 7. 7, 8. & 21. 22. Jer. 29. 12. Luke 11. 9. Is. 45. 11. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 24. Jam. 1. 5. Mat. 7. 7.
r Gen. 50. 20. Prov. 12. 21. ch. 5. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Jer. 24. 5. Ps. 119. 67, 71. Heb. 12. 6—11. Deut. 8. 2, 3, 6. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Rev. 3. 19.
s Ver. 30. ch. 2. 28. & 3. 29. & 4. 11, 16. & 9. 6, 23, 24. & 11. 2, 5. Eph. 1. 4—11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. & 2. 19.

Verses 26—28. We have not only a glorious hope before us, but have *likewise* the most reviving supports by the way; for *the Spirit* of our God, quickening, comforting, strengthening us, *helpeth our infirmities*, that we may not sink under our burdens, or be discouraged by our trials, or err through our remaining darkness (συναντιλαμβάνει) having implanted the graces of hope and patience, he still supports us in the exercise of them, and particularly in our approaches to God in prayer; *for we know not what to pray for as we ought;* ignorant, and knowing not what is best for us; weak, and unable to express our wants aright; our affections so cold, our attention so distracted, and sometimes our lips sealed up, that we cannot speak before God: *but the Spirit itself*, by his gracious suggestion *maketh intercession for us*, pouring out a spirit of prayer and supplication upon our hearts, giving us such a sense of our wants, and exciting desires after God so intense and affecting as words cannot express, which can only be breathed forth *with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts*, the all-seeing God, *knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit;* though our tongue may not form an articulate sound in prayer, God regards and will answer these gracious workings of his Spirit in our hearts, *because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God*, inclining us always to ask according to the mind and will of God, and engaging us humbly to resign ourselves, for an answer to our prayers, in time, manner, and measure, to his good pleasure. *And we know*, by the assured promises of his word, by the experience of all his saints, and by our own, when thus unreservedly casting our care upon him, *that all things work together for good to them that love God;* and however dark, and for the time grievous to flesh and blood, the dispensations of Providence may appear, we are now assured, and we shall hereafter prove, that the circumstances which seemed most afflictive we could not have done without, and that they especially conduced to promote our spiritual and eternal welfare; and this is one of the inestimable privileges peculiar *to them who are called according to his* eternal *purpose*, and by the gospel, through the power of the Spirit, effectually turned to God.

29. [t] For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* [u] conformed to the image of his [x] Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. 30. Moreover, [y] whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, [z] them he also [z] justified: and whom he justified, them he also [a] glorified.

t Exod. 33. 12. Jer. 1. 5. & 31. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 9, 19. ch. 11. 2. Eph. 1. 5, 11. 1 Pet. 1. 2.
u John 17. 16, 17, 22, 23, 25, 26. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Phil. 3. 21. 1 John 3. 2. Rev. 3. 21. 1 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. John 20. 17. Heb. 2. 11—13.
x Ps. 89. 27. Heb. 1. 6. Col. 1. 15, 18. Rev. 1. 5.
y Is. 43. 1. & 51. 2. ver. 28. Acts 13. 48. ch. 1. 6. & 9. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 9. & 1. 24. & 6. 11. 2 Tim 1. 9.
z Acts 13. 38, 39. ch. 3. 22, 24, 26. & 5. 1. Rev. 1. 5.
a Ch. 5. 9, 10. & 9. 23, 24. Tit. 3. 7. Heb. 9. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 9. & 3. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. ver. 17.

Verses 29, 30. The apostle, having mentioned several of the inestimable privileges which belong to the faithful in Christ Jesus, here traces them up to their origin in God's predestination, and to their issue in our eternal glory. *For whom he did foreknow*, as the objects of his eternal love, chosen of his sovereign will and pleasure to be to the praise of the glory of his grace, *he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son*, in holiness of heart and life, in sufferings here, and in eternal glory hereafter; *that he might be the first-born among many brethren*, their Prince and Pattern, having in all things the pre-eminence, the first-begotten from the dead, and the forerunner in our name and nature, entered for us into possession of the heavenly inheritance. *Moreover, whom he did predestinate* to holiness and sufferings as the way, and heaven as the end, *them he also called* by his grace, through the gospel word, to know, embrace, and profess the faith of Jesus; *and whom he called, them he also justified*, discharging them from all guilt and condemnation, and accepted them as righteous through their covenant head and substitute; *and whom he justified, them he also glorified*, advancing them to his own right hand, and making them to sit down with him on his eternal throne. And this, being sure to be accomplished in all God's redeemed people, is spoken of as already done, because not one can perish of the many sons whom the Lord Christ is appointed to bring unto glory. *Note*, (1.) God doth not choose us for any good in us, or done by us, or which he foresaw we should do afterwards; but merely of his sovereign will and pleasure. (2.) God's predestination is so far from leading us to live as we list, as some suppose, that it is the most powerful argument to walk in holiness as Christ also walked, whereunto we are appointed. (3.) It were the height of folly to flatter ourselves we shall live with God hereafter, if we are not like him now. (4.) The Redeemer's undertaking was not uncertain; he knew that none whom he purchased should ever perish. (5.) God by his word, his providences, his Spirit, calls all those whom he hath chosen, and so effectually, that they cannot but hear and obey him. (6.) They who, obedient to the gospel call, have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them, are justified from all things, and shall never again enter into condemnation, so as finally to perish. (7.) All the redeemed must be glorified. Our salvation stands not upon our frail and sinful selves, but upon the well ordered covenant, and the perfection of our Divine Substitute: we are complete in him, and are already set down in heavenly places with and in Christ Jesus.

31. What shall we then say to these things? [b] If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? 32. [c] He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, [d] how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33. [e] Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth: 34. [f] Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35. [f] Job 34. 20. Num. 23. 8. with ch. 4. 25. & 5. 6—11, 19, 21. Mat. 20. 28. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 3. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 18—21. Heb. 1. 3. & 4. 14. & 6. 25. & 9. 24. 1 John 2. 1, 2. Jer. 50. 20. 6—11. Rev. 3. 19. 2 Cor. 11. 23—27.
[g] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or

b Num. 14. 9. 2 Kin. 6. 16. Ps. 56. 12. & 118. 6.
c Gen. 22. 12. Is. 53. 4—6, 10. Dan. 9. 24. Zech. 13. 7. John 3. 16. 1 John 4. 9, 10. ch. 3. 25, 26. & 4. 25. & 5. 6—10. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18.
d Ps. 34. 10. & 84. 11. Mat. 6. 33. 1 Tim. 4. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 4.
e Is. 50. 8, 9. Rev. 12. 10. with ch. 3. 24, 26, 30. Is. 43. 25. & 44. 22.
g John 10. 28. & 13. 1. Jer. 31. 3. Heb. 12.

peril, or sword? 36. (As it is written, [h] For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) 37. Nay, in all these things [i] we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38. For [k] I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39. [l] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, [m] shall be able to separate us from the love of God, [n] which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

h Ps. 44. 22. 1 Cor. 4. 9. 2 Cor. 4. 11. ver. 35.
i 1 Cor. 15. 57. 2 Cor. 2. 14. & 4. 8, 16. & 12. 9, 10. 1 John 4. 4. & 5. 4, 5. Rev. 12. 11. Phil. 4. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 1. Eph. 6. 10.
k 2 Cor. 4. 13. Acts 27. 25. ch. 4. 17—20. 2 Chr. 20. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 12 Is. 7. 9.
l Rev. 14. 13. 1 Thes. 4. 16. Eph. 1. 21. & 6. 12. Col. 2. 15. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 1. 17, 18.
m John 10. 28, 29. Col. 3. 3.
n 2 Cor. 5. 19. Eph. 1. 6. & 2. 4—9. Col. 1. 20.

Verses 31—39. Having enumerated the distinguishing blessings of the faithful, the apostle triumphantly exults in the assurance of God's unchangeable regard.

1. In the view of what God hath done he defies all accusers. *What shall we then say to these things?* shall we start back from sufferings, when the issue is so glorious? what can we wish or desire more transcendently glorious than these great and precious promises? *If God be for us,* with infinite wisdom to guide, almighty power to protect, and boundless love to comfort us, *who can be against us?* what have we to fear from men or devils? they cannot frustrate his purposes of grace, nor disappoint his designs. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all,* of his own good pleasure freely gave him to become incarnate, laid upon him our iniquities, and exacted from him all that punishment which his people had deserved; *how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* what can he now withhold, when, compared with the gift of his Son, every thing beside must appear but little? since he hath given *him,* we may surely conclude he will much more add all the rest, and freely enrich us with all spiritual and eternal blessings in Christ Jesus. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* be their transgressions ever so many, great, and aggravated; *it is God that justifieth* them: and, since he hath accepted them in their Surety, they can appear with boldness at his tribunal, and plead that perfect atonement and righteousness which even justice itself must approve; *who is he that condemneth?* let the law accuse, let conscience plead guilty; yet, since he who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law is our Advocate, there is no condemnation; for *it is Christ that died,* he hath paid the ransom; *yea rather that is risen again;* God hath testified his full approbation therein of his undertaking, and that his justice is completely satisfied; so that we may safely trust upon his finished salvation; *who is even at the right hand of God,* exalted to the highest dignity and glory, as a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins; *who also maketh intercession for us;* our friend in every time of need, and, in the all-prevailing merit of his atonement, pleading effectually our cause, and securing our eternal felicity. *Note,* The views of a dying, risen, ascended, glorified Redeemer, should silence all our fears and doubts, and engage us comfortably and confidently to trust him under all our trials for time and for eternity.

2. He professes his confidence that, with such a Saviour at the right hand of God, no sufferings shall ever separate our souls from Christ and his love. *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* what shall be able to quench the fervour of his affection towards us, or extinguish the sacred flame which he hath kindled in our bosoms? *shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword,* shall all the various ills that flesh is heir to, from sickness, pain, poverty, a malignant world, a corrupted nature, a tempting devil, shall these separate us from the Redeemer's arms? No. That we must suffer he hath foretold us, *as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter,* butchered without remorse by our cruel persecutors, and for the sake of Jesus are in jeopardy every hour. But do these things move us? *Nay:* so far from it, that *in all these things we are more than conquerors,* rising superior to every foe, *through him that loved us,* whose inward supports and consolations overbalance all our sufferings, and whose power and grace, continually exerted on our behalf, carry us triumphantly through our conflicts. *For I am persuaded that neither death,* with all its terrors; *nor life,* with all its allurements, *nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers;* neither the fiends of darkness, nor the persecuting rulers of the earth; *nor things present,* the afflictions and temptations now felt; *nor things to come;* the greater evils which we fear; *nor height* of prosperity, *nor depth* of adversity, *nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Till the Son be separated from the Father's bosom, we never can be separated from his love; for we are one with him in union indissoluble. When any gracious soul is tempted to doubt his final perseverance, and ready to sink under present trials, let him read this blessed chapter, and in the unchangeable love of God in Christ sweetly repose. He is faithful; therefore we shall never perish.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle, 1. *Expresses his deep concern for his countrymen who rejected the gospel,* ver. 1—5. 2. *He proves that the promises made to the fathers are nevertheless made good,* ver. 6—13. 3. *He answers the objections raised against God's sovereignty and predestination, both with regard to his dealings with Jews and Gentiles,* ver. 14—29. 4. *If the Gentiles obtained righteousness and salvation, and the Jews neither, it was because they sought it in a wrong way,* ver. 30—33.

I. [a] I SAY the truth in Christ, I lie not, [b] my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2. [c] That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3. [d] For I could wish that myself were * accursed from Christ for [e] my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: 4. [f] Who are Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and [g] the glory, and [h] the † covenants, and [i] the giving of the law, and the service *of God* and [k] the promises; 5. [l] Whose *are* the fathers, and [m] of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came,* [n] who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

a Ch. 1. 9. 2 Cor. 1. 23. & 11. 31. & 12. 19. Gal. 1. 20. Eph. 4. 17. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 2. 7. & 5. 21.
b Ch. 2. 15. & 8. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16.
c Ch. 10. 1. Phil. 3. 18. Jer. 4. 19—22. & 9. 1. Lam. i.—v. 1 Sam. 15. 35. Luke 19. 32—44. & 23. 28—30.
d Exod. 32. 32. 1 Cor. 16. 22. Gal. 1. 8.
* Or *separated.*
e Ch. 11. 1. Acts 22. 3. & 26. 3. 4. 2 Cor. 11. 22. Phil 3. 5, 6.
f Exod. 4. 22. Deut. 7. 6. & 10. 15. & 4. 1. Jer. 31. 9, 19. g 1 Sam. 4. 21. Ps. 78. 61. 1 Kin. 8. 10. Ezek. 7. 20. Ps. 63. 4. & 76. 1, 2. Num. 7. 89. h Gen. 15. 8. & 17. 2, 7, 10. Exod. 34. 27. & 24. 7, 8. † Or *testaments.* i Ch. 3. 2. Ps. 147. 19. Exod. xii. to Deut. xxvii. Heb. viii—x. k Jer. 31. 22, 31—34. Lev. 26. 1—13, 40—46. Deut. 28. 1—14. & xxx. Exod. 23. 2, 23—33. Acts 3. 25. & 13. 32, &c. with Eph. 2. 12. l Acts 3. 25. ch. 11. 28. m Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Mic. 5. 2. Mat. 1. Luke iii. ch. 1, 3, 4. 2 Tim. 2. 8. n John 1. 1. & 3. 31. & 10. 30. Col. 1. 16. & 2. 9, 10. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Phil. 2. 6—11. Heb. 1. 8.

Verses 1—5. The Jewish bigots looked upon Paul as a signal apostate, and persecuted him with peculiar virulence and enmity. He wished therefore to soften their exasperated spirits, whilst he makes profession of his own tender concern for their welfare and salvation. And there is a peculiar propriety in his introduction, when we consider the offensive truths he was about to advance.

1. He makes a solemn protestation of the very fervent regard he bore towards them. *I say the truth in Christ,* solemnly appealing to him who is the searcher of hearts, and knoweth that *I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,* to the simplicity and sincerity of what I am going to say, *that*

far from entertaining the least prejudice or ill will against my countrymen, *I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart*, feeling the acutest pangs of grief, when I think of their fearful condition, and what must be the inevitable consequences of their unbelief. *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ*, (ανα9ημα) content to be cut off from all my privileges as an apostle, and to be separated from the society of the faithful with shame and disgrace, yea to undergo the most ignominious and tormenting death, *for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*

2. He mentions the distinguished privileges with which they had been favoured of God, which could not but make their rejection peculiarly grievous to him. *Who are Israelites*, bearing the name of their eminent progenitor Jacob; *to whom pertaineth the adoption*, taken into that covenant of peculiarity in which God regarded the whole nation as his children, Exod. iv. 22. *and the glory*, the ark, the shechinah, the mercy-seat, the tokens and emblems of the Divine presence in the midst of them; *and the covenants*, the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham, and renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and that of Sinai with the whole body of Israel; *and the giving of the law*, containing God's ordinances, *moral, judicial*, and *ceremonial; and the service of God*, in what manner his worship should be performed: *and the promises* of temporal prosperity, which would be the reward of their obedience, and of the Messiah and his great salvation; *whose are the fathers*, the descendants of the famed patriarchs; *and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came*, the promised seed of Abraham in his human nature; but *who*, in his divine, *is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Note*, (1.) The divinity of our incarnate Saviour is a chief article of our creed. Thereon depends the perfection of his work on our behalf. (2.) As God, the Lord Jesus is the great object of worship, and our prayers and praises must be addressed immediately to him.

o Is. 55. 11. Acts 13. 32, 33. ch. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 13. Num. 23. 19. Heb. 6. 17, 18. with Gen. 17. 7. & 22. 18.

p Ch. 2. 28, 29. & 11. 25. Gal. 6. 16. John 8. 39.

q Gen. 21. 12. Gal. 4. 23. Heb. 11. 18.

r Ver. 6, 7. ch. 4. 11, 16. John 8. 37, 39. Gal. 4. 28. & 3. 26—29. & 6. 15, 16. Jam. 1. 18. John 1. 13.

s Gen. 18. 10, 14. Heb. 11. 11, 12.

t Gen. 25. 21. Acts 7. 8.

u Ch. 4. 17. & 8. 28—30. Eph. 1. 4. & 2. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 3. 5. ch. 11. 5—7, 29. 1 c. 46. 10. ver. 16, 18.

x Gen. 25. 23. with 2 Sam. 8. 14.

‡ Or *greater*.

‖ Or *lesser*.

y Mal. 1. 2, 3.

z Gen. 29. 30. Deut. 21. 15. Prov. 13. 24. Mat. 10. 37. Luke 14. 26. John 12. 25.

6. ° Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For ᵖ they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7. Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, ᵠ In Isaac shall thy seed be called: 8. That is, ʳ They who are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9. For this *is* the word of promise, ˢ At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. 10. And not only *this;* but ᵗ when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; 11. (For ᵘ *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12. It was said unto her, The ˣ ‡ elder shall serve the ‖ younger. 13. As it is written, ʸ Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I ᶻ hated.

Verses 6—13. Grief for his unhappy countrymen filled the apostle's heart: but, though the generality of them perished, the promise made to Abraham would not be frustrated. He would *not* therefore have them suppose *as though the word of God had taken none effect*, and failed of its accomplishment, because they believed not. *It is not possible* (as the words may be rendered) *that the word of God should fail. For they are not all Israel*, true Israelites, and savingly interested in the spiritual blessings of the covenant, *which are of Israel*, the offspring of Jacob; *neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children* of God, and sure of acceptance with him and of salvation, as they flattered themselves. External privileges never entitled any soul to life and glory. And they might very early observe that,

1. In the difference made between the two sons of Abraham, not in Ishmael, *but in Isaac*, (says God, Gen. xxi. 12.) *shall thy seed be called*, from him the Messiah was to spring, in his line only was the favoured posterity of Abraham to be reckoned, and like him were the spiritual seed to be, the children of the free woman, Gal. iv. 22. and partakers of eternal blessedness. *That is, They which are the children of the flesh*, the natural descendants of Abraham, *they are not* all *the children of God, but* as was evident from the first in the case of Ishmael and Isaac, *the children of the promise are counted for the seed*, even those who, as Isaac, are born not of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God, and through faith embrace the great promise of salvation through Jesus Christ. *For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.* When Sarah had been long since past childbearing, this son, the type and figure of the spiritual seed, was raised up through the supernatural agency of God, according to his promise.

2. The same distinction is also observable between the sons of Isaac, though sprung from the same mother, and this too before they were born, and could have done any personal acts to cause the difference which God was pleased to put between them. *And not only* was *this* the case with the sons of Abraham, *but when Rebecca, also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac*, though twins in the same womb, God preferred one to the other. (*For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil*, there could be nothing in them to influence God's choice, both being alike born in sin: yet were they sovereignly distinguished from each other, *that the purpose of God according to election might stand* firm and immutable, *not of works*, either done or foreseen, *but of him that calleth* effectually, according to the good pleasure of his will.) When therefore the children were yet in the womb, *it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger*, Jacob inheriting the birthright and blessing, whilst Esau was rejected; and in after ages the posterity of the elder became tributary to Israel, 2 Sam. viii. 14. *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* Which some refer to the election and rejection of their posterity, others of their persons, God sovereignly choosing Jacob to be an heir of grace, and leaving Esau under the corruption and wrath of a fallen nature. *Note*, Though none are damned but for their sins, yet all who are saved owe it to God's free and sovereign grace alone.

14. ª What shall we say then? ᵇ *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15. For he saith to Moses, ᶜ I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16. ᵈ So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17. For ᵉ the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, ᶠ Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18. ᵍ Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and

a Ch. 3. 5. & 4. 1. & 6. 1.

b Gen. 18. 25. Deut. 32. 4. Job 8. 3. & 34. 10. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Ps. 92. 15. & 11. 6, 7.

c Exod. 33. 19. ver. 11, 16, 18.

d Ver. 11, 15, 18, 20, 21. Ps. 115. 3. Is. 65. 1. Mat. 11. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 4. 7. & 1. 26—31. Ps. 11d. 3. Phil. 2. 13. 2 Thes. 2. 13, 14. Tit. 3. 5.

e Gal. 3. 8, 22.

f Exod. 9. 16 & 10. 1. & 14. 4, 17. Prov. 16. 4. Ps. 58. 10, 11. & 9 16. & 83. 17, 18.

g Luke 10. 21. & 12. 32. ch. 5. 20 21. & 11. 5—7. see ver. 5, 11, 16, 20—24. Tit. 3. 5.

whom he will he [h] hardeneth. 19. Thou wilt say then unto me, [i] Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? 20. Nay but, O man, [k] who art thou that * repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? 21. Hath not the [l] potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22. [m] *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath [n] fitted to destruction: 23. [o] And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24. [p] Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

h Exod. 4. 21. & 8. 15, 32. 1 Chr. 21. 1. 1 Kin. 22. 21 22. ch. 1. 24, 26, 28. Ps. 81. 12. 2 Thes. 2. 11.

i Gen. 50. 20. 2 Chr. 20. 6. Job 9. 19. & 41. 10. Is. 46. 10. Jer. 49. 19. & 50. 44.

k Job 9. 12. 14, 15. & 23. 13. & 33. 13. & 34. 31, & 40. 2, 4, 5. Is. 29. 16. & 45. 9. Dan. 4. 35. Mat. 20. 15. ver. 21.

* Or *answerest again*, or *disputest with God?*

l Jer. 18. 6. Is. 64. 8. Prov. 16. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 20. ver. 11, 15, 16, 18.

m Prov. 16. 4. ch. 2. 4, 5. & 11. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 2. 8. Jude 4. 1 Thes. 5. 9.

n Or *made up.* Gen. 15. 16. Mat. 23. 32, 33. ch. 2. 5. Jam. 5. 3.

o Ch. 5. 20, 21. & 8. 28. & 2. 4, Eph. 2. 7, 8. & 1. 3—7, 18. Col. 1. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 9. & 2. 21. 2 Cor. 5. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 1. p Heb. 2. 1. ch. 8. 28, 30. 1 Pet. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. ch. 3. 22, 29, 30. & 4. 11, 12, 16. & 10. 12, 13. & 11. 11—32. Gal. 3. 28. Eph. 2. 12—20. Col. 1. 6, 23. & 3. 11.

Verses 14—24. The apostle proceeds to vindicate the ways of God to men, and to answer the objections which every fallen spirit naturally raises against the sovereignty of God. *What shall we say then?* If he thus of his mere pleasure chooses one, and leaves another, *Is there not unrighteousness with God?* Is not this procedure unjust and partial? *God forbid.* His grace is his own. The favour shown to some is no injustice to others from whom he is pleased to withhold it.

1. He sovereignly extends mercy to some. *For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.* And such an exercise of his power and grace, in rescuing some of the apostate race of mankind who deserve nothing from him, can be no injustice to the rest. His prerogative it is to do what he will with his own; and whatever he doth must be right. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;* the sinner's salvation comes not from any works, or will, or ability of his own, recommending him to the divine favour in preference to another, but is an act of sovereign mercy, according to God's eternal purpose.

2. He sovereignly passes by others, and leaves them to the miseries of their fallen nature; as in the case of Pharaoh. *For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up* to the throne of Egypt, *that I might show my power in thee,* making this impious king's stubbornness and rebellion, the means of more gloriously displaying his own might, and showing, that those who walk in pride he is able to abase; *and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth,* in the manifestation of my patience and righteous vengeance towards my enemies, and of my love and faithfulness to my chosen.

3. *Therefore,* it is evident, *he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy,* according to the good pleasure of his own will; *and whom he will he hardeneth,* leaving them, like Pharaoh, to the stupidity and pride of their fallen hearts; and, when they have resisted all his warnings and corrections, he delivers them up to judicial blindness and impenitence. And herein he is righteous: as he owes no man any thing, those who are left to themselves have no right to complain, since they are alone the authors of their own miseries; whilst those who are rescued from the ruin of their fallen nature, ascribe their recovery to his sovereign and boundless grace.

4. The apostle foresees an objection which would immediately be started against the sovereignty of God in bestowing his peculiar and distinguishing grace on some, and withholding it from others. *Why doth he yet find fault?* and threaten to punish the disobedience he will not prevent? *for who hath resisted his will?* if he gives them up to follow their own hearts, and they cannot but do evil, how can that be construed resistance against him, which he abandons them to commit? *Note,* When we hear the same objections now raised against us, as were of old against the apostle, it is a strong presumption that our doctrine is the same; and we will answer as he doth.

5. *Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?* what arrogance for a despicable worm to dispute with his Creator? for a fallen sinner to question a holy God on his procedure? and for folly itself to arraign infinite wisdom at its bar? *shall the thing say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* in the dispensations of thy providence and grace leaving me to perish, whilst others equally guilty are saved? *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?* and hath not God the same authority, out of the same mass of the human nature, to form vessels of wrath and mercy; exalting some to undeserved blessedness, and leaving others to most deserved contempt. *What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known* in punishing the wicked, *endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction;* Is this unrighteous? No. The objects of his vengeance most justly suffer. They are corrupted creatures, children of wrath by nature, have rejected his warnings, abused his patience, and filled up the measure of their iniquities; *and* if God had taken this course *that he might* more eminently *make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory,* can any man object to the riches of his grace, manifested to those who in his eternal purposes were appointed, and in the fulness of time prepared, for the inheritance among the saints in light? Surely he hath full right to exercise such sovereign grace to others as he hath done *even* to *us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.* If they are the objects of his love, and the people of his choice, it matters not of what nation they are, he regards them as Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. *Note,* (1.) How hard is it to submit to God's sovereignty, and to be satisfied to lie passive as the clay in the hands of the potter? (2.) None go to hell but those whose sins have fitted them for destruction: none go to heaven but those whom God hath afore prepared unto glory. For which place then are we on the wheel?

25. As he saith also in Osee, [q] I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved. 26. [r] And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God. 27. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, [s] Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: 28. [t] For he will finish † the work, and cut *it* short in righteousness: because a short work will the LORD make upon the earth. 29. And as Esaias said before, [u] Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

q Hos. 2. 23. 1 Pet. 2. 10. with Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 32. 43. Ps. 22. 27—31. & xlv, xlvii, lxvii, lxviii, lxxii, xcvi—c, cxviii, Is. 9. 7. & 24. 16. & xl—lxvi. Jer. iii, xxx, xxxi, &c.

r Hos. 1. 1. with Is. 11. 10. & 43. 6. & 49. 12. & liv. & 56. 8. & 27. 12, 13. & lx—lxii, &c.

s Is. 19. 22, 23. Ezek. 6. 8. ch. 11. 5. Jer. 5. 10. & 46. 28.

t Is. 28. 22. Jer. 1. 16. & 14. 22. Is. 30. 13, 14.

† Or *the account.*

u Is. 1. 9. with 6. 13. Ezek. 22. 30. Gen. 19. 24. Is. 13. 19. Jer. 49. 18. & 50. 40. Lam. 3. 22. & 4. 6. Ezek. 16. 46—52. Amos 4. 11. Zeph. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 6. Jude 7.

Verses 25—29. As it was a truth so hard to be digested, and so contrary to the apprehensions of the Jews concerning the promises made unto their fathers, the apostle from the Old Testament proves, that the calling of the Gentiles to all the privileges of children of Abraham had been long since foretold.

1. In Hosea it was said, *I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved;* bringing the Gentiles, who before were aliens, and disregarded of God, into a covenant relation as his chosen; and treating them as the objects of his peculiar love. *And,* again in another place, *It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God,* admitted to all the privileges of adoption and grace.

2. In Isaiah the rejection of the far greater number of the Jews is declared, into whose room the Gentiles were to succeed. Thus *Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant* only according to the election of grace, *shall be saved: for* the prophet in another place adds, *He will finish the work,* and close his accounts, *and cut it short in righteousness,* consuming with just vengeance the apostates: *because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth;* those who are left as monuments of grace will be comparatively but few, whilst the generality of the Jewish nation will quickly be consumed from the face of the earth. *And,* again, *as Esaias had said before* to the same purpose, he adds, *Except the Lord of Sabaoth,* at whose disposal are all the hosts of heaven and earth, *had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and made like unto Gomorrha,* utterly cut off as these devoted cities. *Note,* Considering the sinfulness of man, the wonder is not that so few, but that any should be saved. When justice might well have destroyed all, it is a matter of astonishing grace that mercy hath been extended to so many.

30. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which [x] followed not after righteousness, [y] have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31. But Israel, which [z] followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32. Wherefore? [a] Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they [b] stumbled at that stumbling-stone; 33. As it is written, [c] Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence; and [d] whosoever believeth on him shall not be ‡ ashamed.

x Ch. 1. 18—32. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Eph. 2. 12. Tit. 3. 3. Eph. 4. 17—19. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Is. 65. 1.
y Ch. 3. 22, 30. & 4. 11. & 10. 20. & 11. 11, 12. & 15. 8—19.
z Ver. 32. ch. 10. 2, 3. & 11. 7. Gal. 3. 21. & 5. 2, 4. Mat. 9. 13.
a Mat. 19. 16. John 6. 28. ch. 10. 3.
b Luke 2. 34. Mat. 13. 57. 1 Cor. 1. 23. John 15. 22, 24.
c Is. 8. 14. & 28. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 6. Ps. 118. 22.
d Ch. 11. 11. Ps. 2. 12. Is. 45. 22. & 55. 1, 4, 7. Joel 2. 32. Mark 16. 15, 16. John 6. 37, 40. & 3. 16, 36.

‡ Or *confounded.*

Verses 30—33. Having proved the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, he suggests the reason. *What shall we say then,* farther in vindication of God's free grace in saving some and leaving the rest to perish? It is evident, *that the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness,* neither knew their malady nor sought their remedy, have notwithstanding *attained unto righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith,* being accepted of God, as righteous through faith in Jesus Christ: *but Israel which followed after the law of righteousness,* and sought justification before God by their own obedience, *hath not attained unto righteousness,* not being capable of performing that perfect righteousness which the law demands, and therefore being left under the curse as transgressors. *Wherefore* have they not attained? *Because they sought it not by faith* in the righteousness of another; *but as it were by the works of the law,* placing their dependence upon their own doings and duties, either in part or in the whole, for their acceptance with God: *for they stumbled at that stumblingstone,* the crucified Galilean, whose lowly appearance offended them, and they could not think of embracing him as their Messiah. *As it is written,* in Isaiah, *Behold, I lay in Zion a stumblingstone, and rock of offence,* that Messiah who should be the *tried stone* and *sure foundation* to those who believed, and would to those who rejected him be as the rock which dashes those to pieces who fall thereon: *and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed;* though the generality perish in their impenitence and unbelief, yet those few who dare trust him for pardon, life, and salvation, shall never be disappointed of their hopes, but find him a Saviour to the uttermost. *Note,* Nothing is so fatal to the soul as dependence upon our own righteousness, either in whole or in part, for acceptance with God; whilst those who, self-despairing, fly to the righteousness of faith revealed in the gospel, are sure to be justified from all things, and saved with an everlasting salvation.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle again, (1.) *Repeats his hearty wish for the salvation of his brethren.* (2.) *Shows the difference between the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of the law, by which they ought to be justified,* ver. 5—11. (3.) *Declares that Jews and Gentiles are on a level, with respect to justification before God,* ver. 12—18. (4.) *He proves this from their own scriptures,* ver. 19—21.

1. BRETHREN, [a] my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2. For I bear them record that they [b] have a zeal of God, [c] but not according to knowledge: 3. For they, being ignorant of [d] God's righteousness, and [e] going about to establish their own righteousness, [f] have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4. For Christ *is* [g] the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

a Ch. 9. 1—3. Ps. 51. 18. & 10. 2, 13. & 122. 6—9. & 137. 5, 6.
b John 16. 2. Acts 21. 20. & 22. 3. Gal. 1. 14. & 4. 18. Phil. 3. 6. ch. 9. 31.
c Is. 27. 11. Hos. 4. 6. with John 17. 3. & 6. 44. & 1. 11.
d Ps. 11. 7. Deut. 32. 4. or ch. 1. 17. & 3. 22, 26. & 5. 19, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 1.
e Ch. 9. 31, 32. Luke 18. 11. Mat. 19. 16. John 6 28.
f Ch. 9. 32. Heb. 10. 29.
g Ch. 3. 25, 26, 31. & 8. 3, 4. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4, 5. Mat. 3. 15. & 5. 17, 18. Dan. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 9. Gal. 3. 24. Acts 13. 38, 39. Gal. 2. 16. Deut. 27. 26.

Verses 1—4. The apostle here,

1. Expresses his fervent desire for the salvation of his countrymen. *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.* Notwithstanding what he was, in the discharge of his office, compelled to say concerning the general rejection of the Jews, he was yet affectionately desirous of their salvation, and ceaseless in supplications at a throne of grace that they might yet be convinced and converted, and thereby plucked as brands from the burning. *Note,* (1.) Those we preach to, we must fervently pray for, that God may give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. (2.) They who know the value of immortal souls, will feel their eternal interests warm upon their hearts.

2. He speaks most respectfully of them. *For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God,* a fixed aversion to idolatry, a strong attachment to his law and divinely instituted ordinances, and in their persecutions of Christianity really think they do God service: *but* they are misguided, and do *not act according to knowledge:* they understand not the nature and design of the law, and have imbibed the strongest prejudices against the true Messiah and the way of salvation, which he hath brought to light by the gospel. *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness,* ignorant of the perfection of obedience which he requires, as the only title to life by the law: ignorant of the strictness of his justice, which can overlook no flaw, and will accept nothing but

what is absolutely complete; and ignorant of that righteousness which he hath provided in the incarnate Redeemer whom they rejected, *and going about to establish their own righteousness*, resting their acceptance before God on the footing of their own moral and ceremonial services, *have not submitted to the righteousness of God*, even that divine righteousness which he hath provided and accepted in his dear Son, and which, embraced by faith, is, and can be, the only ground of the sinner's justification before God. *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* He alone perfectly fulfilled the *moral* law, and in his life and death fully satisfied the demands of divine justice. He hath abolished the *ceremonial* law, being himself the substance of which that was the shadow; and the righteousness complete and perfect which he hath wrought out is the only one, which being embraced by faith, can justify the sinner before God: to which all, both Jew and Gentile, must flee or perish. *Note*, Nothing is more fatally dangerous to the soul, than ignorance of the spirituality of God's law, and of our own inability to answer its demands. The more zealously we strive to commend ourselves to God, on the footing of our own duties, the more fearfully do we seal up our souls under wrath.

5. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, [h] That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 6. But the [i] righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, [k] Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to [l] bring Christ down *from above:)* 7. Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to [m] bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8. But what saith it? [n] The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9. That [o] if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and [p] shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10. For with the heart man believeth [q] unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made [r] unto salvation. 11. For the scripture saith, [s] Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

h Lev. 18. 5. Ezek. 20. 14. Neh. 9. 29. Gal. 3. 10, 12. Jam. 2. 10.
i Ch. 3. 22, 27, 31. & 4. 13. & 9. 30, 31. Phil. 3. 9. Heb. 11. 7. with Gal. 3. 8, 22. ch. 4. 3. Gen. 15. 6.
k Deut. 30. 11—13.
l John 1. 8. Eph. 4. 8—10. Ps. 110. 1. Heb. 1. 3. & 8. 1.
m 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. Mark 15. 46. & 16. 9.
n Dent. 30. 14. ch. 1. 16, 17. Acts 2. 39. & 3. 26. & 13. 26, 46. & 28. 28. & 10. 36. Is. 57. 19.
o Mat. 10. 32. Luke 12. 8. 1 John 4. 15. ver. 13.
p John 6. 69. Acts 8. 37. 1 John 5. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 21. Mark 16. 16.
q Ch. 1. 17. & 3. 22. Gal. 2. 16.
r Mat. 10. 32. 1 John 4. 15. ver. 13.
s Is. 28. 16. & 49. 23. Jer. 17. 7. ch. 9. 33.

Verses 5—11. There are two methods of righteousness.

1. By the law; and that righteousness is thus described by Moses. *The man that doeth those things*, all that is written in the book of the law, perfectly, universally, abidingly, without failure, flaw, or infirmity, *shall live by them*, and be entitled to life eternal. But no fallen creature ever did, or ever can do this; therefore justification and salvation are not this way attainable.

2. By the Redeemer's substitution and obedience in our stead. The law, in our present condition, only preaches despair; *but the righteousness which is of faith*, which God hath provided and accepted, and faith embraces, *speaketh on this wise*, to the conscience burdened with sin and guilt, *Say not in thine heart*, as if despairing of justification before God, *Who shall ascend into heaven, that is, to bring Christ down from above* to make atonement for sin; it is needless, seeing by one oblation, once offered, he hath perfected for ever his redeemed: *or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.* This is already done, and God, by the resurrection of Jesus, hath testified the full satisfaction which hath been made to his law and justice; so that the bar to our acceptance before God is now removed. Instead therefore of the impossibilities, which guilty fear and unbelief would suggest, the gospel opens a door of hope to the miserable and the desperate. *But what saith it?* Why, all that we can wish and desire, to silence our terrors and revive our drooping hearts. *The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart;* brought near in the gospel revelation, acknowledged, and made effectual by the Spirit to the heart: *that is, the word of faith which we preach*, holding up Christ as the glorious object, whom faith embraces for righteousness and salvation: the tenor of our declarations, as authorized of God to speak, is this, *that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus*, as the true Messiah, *and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* No works of the law, nor other title whatever, is needful to eternal life but this; and all who, renouncing themselves, repose their whole confidence upon Jesus, as delivered for their offences, and raised for their justification, are built on that foundation which never can be moved. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;* faith is not a mere notion entertained in the head, but the cordial submission of the heart to the Redeemer's righteousness, as a matter in which it is deeply interested: *and with the mouth confession is made* of our faith before God and men *unto salvation*, there being an inseparable connection between true faith and eternal blessedness; *for the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed;* whatever his condition hath been, he will never be ashamed of Christ; and however great his guilt, no condemnation shall lie against him, either in time or eternity, but he shall have boldness in the day of judgment. Lord, in this faith may I be found, living and dying! making mention of thy righteousness only.

12. [t] For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13. [u] For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14. [x] How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and [y] how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15. [z] And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, [a] How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! 16. [b] But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, [c] Lord, who hath believed * our † report? 17. So then [d] faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. 18. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, [e] their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. 19. But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, [f] I will provoke you to jealousy by [g] *them that are* no people, *and* by a foolish nation I will anger you. 20. But Esaias is very bold, and saith,

t Acts 10. 34, 35. & 15. 9. & 10. 36. ch. 3. 22, 29, 30. & 4. 11, 12, 16. & 8. 24. Eph. 1. 7. & 2. 4, 7. 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. Ps. 103. 17 & 130. 4, 7, 8.
u Joel 2. 32. Acts 2. 21. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. Is. 45. 22. Ps. 98. 3. Mark 16. 16.
x Heb. 11. 6. ch. 14. 23.
y Mark 16. 15, 16. Is. 52. 15. & 53. 1. John 15. 22. Prov. 29. 18. Eph. 2. 12. Tit. 1. 3.
z Jer. 23. 32. Heb. 5. 4. Mat. 9. 38.
a Is. 52. 7. Nah. 1. 15. Rev. 14. 6. Mark 16. 15. Luke 2. 10, 11, 14. Acts 13. 26.
b Heb. 4. 2. Acts 28. 24. John 10. 26. ch. 11. 7.
c Is. 53. 1. John 12. 38—40.
* Gr. *The hearing of us.*
† Or *preaching.*
d Luke 16. 29. 1 Cor. 1. 21. Eph. 1. 13. Heb. 11. 13. ver. 14. ch. 1. 16, 17.
e Ps. 19. 4. Mat. 24. 14. & 26. 13. & 28 19. Mark 16. 15. Acts 2. 5. ch. 1. 8. & 15. Col. 1. 6, 23.
f Deut. 32. 21. with 4. 6. Acts 22. 21, 22. 1 Thes. 2. 16. ch. 11. 11.
g Hos. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 2. 10. Mat. 21. 43. Jer. 10. 8. 1 Cor. 12. 2. Tit. 3. 3. ch. 1. 21—31.

[b] Is. 65. 1. & 10. & 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6, 22. & 60. 3. & 52. 15. & 55. 4, 5 ch. 15. 19. & 9. 30.

[h] I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. 21. But to Is-

[i] Is. 65. 2. Prov. 1. 24. 1 Thes. 2. 14, 15. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 26—31. Acts 13. 45, 46. ch. 11. 7, 8, 20.

rael he saith, [i] All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Verses 12—21. Under the gospel dispensation mankind are on a level, without respect to any people or nation. *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek;* both have sinned and come short of the glory of God; both must be saved freely by grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, or perish everlastingly: *for the same* Redeemer, who is *Lord over all, is rich* in grace, and boundless in mercy *unto all that call upon him,* as perishing and helpless without him. *For,* so it was foretold, Joel ii. 32. *whosoever,* without exception, *shall call upon the name of the Lord* Jesus, depending upon his atonement and righteousness alone, *shall be saved,* from guilt and sin, and wrath and hell, and advanced to eternal glory. But if the Gentiles are included in the dispensation of the gospel, then,

1. It was needful that the gospel should be preached to them; and Paul's brethren had no just grounds for their enmity against him, because he was appointed the apostle of the Gentiles. For *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?* Faith is essential to the very being of prayer, and without it, the service of the lip and the knee is vain and unprofitable: *and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* They must hear of Jesus in his saving offices, before they can possibly trust in him: *and how shall they hear without a preacher,* to make known to them the revelation of God's will? *and how shall they preach, except they be sent* with a divine commission? *Note,* Before any presume to preach, let it be clear that they have a mission from God. To run unsent is insolent presumption.

2. The gospel contains the best news which ever reached mortal ears, and should be matter of joy wherever it is carried, *as it is written,* Isa. lii. 7. *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!* which prophecy terminated not in the joyful messages of Israel's deliverance from Babylon, but looked forward to the great redemption of Jesus, and that gospel which his ministers should publish, *a gospel of peace,* where God was in Christ, reconciling sinners to himself, and proclaiming the glad news of pardon and salvation to guilty and perishing souls; and they who feel the comfort of the message cannot but, for its sake, delight in and honour the messengers.

3. Though the gospel in itself contained such a welcome message, yet in general, both among Jews and Gentiles, it hath been rejected. *But they have not all obeyed the gospel,* and yielded themselves up to the Saviour. No, contrariwise, the generality of those to whom it is preached, harden their hearts. *For Esaias saith,* foreseeing the little success which the ministers of Christ should meet with, *Who hath believed our report?* How few are found faithful among the many called? Yet the gospel report is the savour of life unto life in them who are saved. *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,* this being the ordinary means, and made effectual by the Spirit's power, *that arm of the Lord,* which reveals Christ to the heart.

4. *But I say, have they not heard,* both Jews and Gentiles, the gospel word? *Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.* And this extensive spread of the gospel, by those preachers whom he sent forth, however the multitude rejected the counsel of God, was a token of his good will to the Gentiles, and of his design to gather out of them a people to be to the praise of the glory of his grace.

5. *But I say, did not Israel know* that God designed to show mercy to the Gentiles? Had they attended to their own prophets, they would have seen how groundless their imaginations were that the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom should be confined to them, and the Gentiles excluded. For *first, Moses saith,* for whom they profess peculiar veneration, *I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation will I anger you.* The Gentiles were long excluded from God's regard, and, amidst all their wisdom, were entirely ignorant of spiritual things: to have them now brought into favour, and made wise unto salvation, should have provoked a holy emulation in the Jewish nation; but it wrought a contrary effect, exciting the greatest bitterness and enmity against the converted Gentiles. (2.) He produces another Scripture, strongly proving the divine determination, with regard to the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews. Moses had intimated it, *But Esaias is very bold,* and, with great plainness and freedom, foretells to his countrymen this mortifying event, *and saith, I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me,* preventing the Gentiles with blessings of his goodness, and the calls of his grace, when they were without one thought of God, worshipping their idols, and had not so much as a desire in their hearts after him. *But to Israel he saith,* now to be rejected for their impenitence and obstinacy, *all day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people;* his patience therefore being wearied out, especially by their opposition to the gospel, he abandons them to ruin. *Note,* (1.) If God had not first sought us, we should never have inquired after him. (2.) When the Lord had waited long to be gracious, and used the most powerful means to work upon the sinner's heart, if he still rejects the counsel of God against his own soul, justly doth God decree, My Spirit shall not always strive, and leaves him to the destruction which he hath chosen.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle having reconciled that great truth of the rejection of the Jews with the promise made unto the fathers, is in this chapter farther labouring to mollify the harshness of it, and to reconcile it to the divine goodness in general. It might be said, Hath God then cast away his people? *The apostle therefore sets himself in this chapter to give an answer to this objection; and that two ways:* 1. *He shows at large what the mercy is, that is mixed with this wrath,* ver. 1—32. 2. *He infers from thence the infinite wisdom and sovereignty of God; with the adoration of which he concludes this chapter and subject,* ver. 33—36.

1. I SAY then, [a] Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. [b] For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of* the tribe of Benjamin. 2. [c] God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3. [d] Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine [e] altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4. But what saith the answer of God unto him? [f] I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of* Baal. 5. [g] Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6. [h] And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no

[a] 1 Sam. 12. 29. Ps. 94. 14. Jer. 31. 37. with Gen. 17. 7. Deut. 32. 9.

[b] 2 Cor. 11. 22. Phil. 3. 5. ch. 9. 3. Acts 22. 3. & 26. 3.

[c] Ch. 8. 28—30. & 9. 6, 8, 23. John 10. 14, 28, 29. Acts 13. 48.

[d] 1 Kin. 19. 10, 14. & 18. 4, 30.

[e] Judg. 6. 24. & 21. 4. 1 Sam. 7. 17. & 11. 15. & 16. 2, 5. 2 Sam. 24. 18, 25. Exod. 20. 24. Deut. 27. 6.

[f] 1 Kin. 19. 18. with Jer. 2. 8. & 11. 13. & 19. 5. & 23. 27. & 32. 35. Hos. 2. 8. Zeph. 1. 4.

[g] Ch. 9. 27. Acts 13. 48. ver. 6, 7

[h] Deut. 9. 4. Gal. 5. 2, 4. & 2. 21. ch. 4. 4, 5. Eph. 2. 4—9. Tit. 3. 5. ch. 3. 27, 28.

more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 7. What then? [i] Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the [k] election hath obtained it, [l] and the rest were [m] blinded 8. (According as it is written, [n] God hath given them the spirit of * slumber; eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. 9. And David saith, [o] Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them: 10. [p] Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. 11. I say then, [q] Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* [r] through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. 12. Now, [s] if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the † diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; [t] how much more their fulness? 13. For I speak to you Gentiles; [u] inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14. [x] If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them. 15. For [y] if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving *of them be*, but [z] life from the dead? 16. [a] For if the first-fruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches. 17. And [b] if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, were graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree; 18. [c] Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, [d] thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19. Thou wilt say then, [e] The branches were broken off that I might be graffed in. 20. Well; [f] because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou [g] standest by faith. [h] Be not high-minded, but fear: 21. For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. 22. Behold therefore [i] the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou [k] continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. 24. For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be graffed into their own olive-tree? 25. For I would not, brethren, that [l] ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be [m] wise in your own conceits; that [n] blindness in part is happened to Israel, [o] until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26. And so [p] all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, [q] There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27. [r] For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. 28. As concerning the gospel, [s] *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for [t] the fathers' sakes. 29. For [u] the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance. 30. For [x] as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; 31. [y] Even so have these also now not ‡ believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32. For [z] God hath ‖ concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

1 Ch. 9. 31, 32. & 10. 3.
k Ch. 3. 28—30, 33. & 9. 23. Acts 13. 48. 2 Tim. 2. 19. John 10. 27, 28.
l John 12. 40. 2 Cor. 3. 14. & 4. 3, 4. Deut. 29. 4. Acts 28. 27. ch. 9. 31. & 10. 3.
m Or *hardened.* Ch. 9. 18.
n Is. 29. 10. & 6. 9. & 44. 18. ch. 1. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 11. Deut. 29. 4. Jer. 5. 21. Ezek. 12. 2. Mat. 13. 14. Acts 28. 26, 27.
* Or *remorse.*
o Ps. 69. 22. & 28. † Prov. 1. 32. Deut. 32. 15—15. Is. 8. 14, 15. & 66. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 2. 8.
p Ps. 69. 23. ver. 8. John 12. 38—40. 2 Cor. 3. 14. Deut. 28. 64—68.
q Ezek. 18. 23, 32. & 33. 11.
r Acts 13. 42, 45, 46. & 18. 6. & 28. 25, 28. ch. 10. 19. ver. 31.
s Mat. 8. 11, 12. ver. 11, 31.
† Or *decay* or *loss.*
t Ver. 15, 31. Rev. 11. 15—19. & xix—xxii. Is. lx—lxiii, lxv, lxvi. Jer. xxx, xxxi, xxxiii. Ezek xxxiv—xlviii. Zech. 2. 11. & 8. 20—23. & ix—xiv.
u Ch. 15. 16, 19. Gal. 2. 2, 7, 8. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 26. 17.
x Ch. 9. 1—3. & 10. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 16. Jam. 5. 20. ver. 5. 11. 1 Cor. 7. 16.
y Ver. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Eph. 1. 10. Col. 1. 20, 21.
z Dan. 12. 2. Ezek. xxxvii. Rev. 11. 11. & 20. 4—6.
a Lev. 23. 10, 11. Num. 15. 17. with Gen. 17. 7. 1 Cor. 7. 14. ver. 11, 18.
b Jer. 11. 16. Mat. 21. 43. & 8. 11, 12. Eph. 2. 12—20. Acts 18. 45, 46. ver. 11, 15. John 1. 16. Acts 9. 32. Eph. 3. 6.
c Ver. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 7. & 10. 12.
d John 15. 16. ch. 4. 16. Eph. 2. 19, 20. & 3. 6.
e Ver. 11, 12, 15, 17.
f Acts 13. 45, 46. & 18. 6.
g 2 Cor. 20. 20. Is. 7. 9. Rom. 5. 1, 2. & 14. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Eph. 6. 13, 14.
h Jer. 13. 15. Prov. 28 14. Is. 66. 2. ch. 12. 16. Phil. 2. 12. Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5. 1 Cor. 10. 6, 11, 22.
i Ch. 9. 18, 22, 23. Mat. 8. 11, 12. & 21. 43.
k John 15. 2, 4. 1 Cor. 15. 2. Heb. 3. 6, 14. Gal. 6. 9. 2 Cor. 3. 16. ver. 11, 12, 15, 24, 25, 31. Ps. 68. 22. Is. 11. 11—16. & 24. 23. & 27. 12, 13. & 49. 14—26. & 51. 22. & liv, lv, lx—lxii, lxv, lxvi. Jer. iii, xxx, xxxi. & 32. 37—44. & xxxiii. Ezek. xxxiv, xxxvi—xlviii. Hos. 3. 5. & 1. 10, 11. & 2. 14—23. Joel 3. 16—21. Mic. iv, v. Amos 9. 11—15. Zeph. iii. Zech. ii, viii—xiv.
l Ps. 3. 2. & 107. 43. Hos. 14. 9. Deut. 32. 29. with ch. 16. 25. Eph. 3. 3, 6. Col. 1. 27.
m Ch. 12. 16. Prov 3. 5, 7. & 26. 12, 16. Is. 5. 21.
n Or *hardness.* Ver. 5, 7. ch. 9. 18. 2 Cor. 3. 14—16.
o Hos. 3. 5. Rev 11. 15. & xix—xxii. Zech. 14. 8—21. & 8. 20—23. Is. 11. 9, 10. & lv. lx. Ezek. xxxiv—xlviii. Luke 21. 24. Rev. 7. 9.
p Jer. 3. 18. & 30. 3. & 31. 1, 8, 9. Ezek. xxxvii. Is. 60. 15.
q Is. 59. 20. Ps. 14. 7. Is. 27. 9. Jer. 31. 31. Ezek. 20. 40.
r Jer. 31. 31—34. & 32. 38—40. Heb. 8. 8—12. & 10. 16.
s Mat. 12. 43. Acts 13. 45, 46. & 28. 24, 28. ver. 11, 20, 25, 30.
t Lev. 26. 44. Exod. 32. 13. Gen. 17. 7. & 26. 4. & 28. 14. Deut. 7. 8. & 4. 31.
u Gen. 17. 7. Num. 22. 19. Deut. 7. 7. & 9. 5. & 10. 15. Jer. 4. 27. & 46. 28. Hos. 13. 14.
x Eph. 2. 3, 12, 19, 20. & 3. 6. Col. 3. 6, 9, 10. Tit. 3. 3, 5, 7. 1 Cor. 6. 9—11.
y Ver. 15, 25.
‡ Or *obeyed.*
z Ch. 3. 9. Gal. 3. 22. ver. 30, 31. John 12. 32.
‖ Or *shut them all up together.*

Verses 1—32. Nothing could be more grating to the Jews than the subject of their rejection; and some one might say, *Hath God cast away his people,* universally and finally? *God forbid.*

1. Though some are cast off, yet not all.

2. If the nation of the Jews in general be at present abandoned, the Gentiles are called into the Messiah's kingdom.

3. The time will come when the Jews shall be brought back, and admitted into the church of the redeemed.

1. Though some are cast off, yet not all: of this Paul was himself an instance, *For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin;* and though none showed greater bitterness against the gospel, yet have I obtained mercy; and multitudes besides, of the Jewish people, share the same blessing, for *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew,* having a chosen generation, whom he from eternity decreed to bring unto glory, though the generality should perish in their unbelief; and these were more than might be at first imagined, as was the case in the days of Elias, when, on account of their general defection to idolatry, and persecution of God's prophets, that zealous reformer complained to God as if he was left alone, and his life daily in jeopardy; and, from the melancholy appearances, could not but conclude that the people were ripe for ruin. But God informs him that, bad as things were, he had still reserved seven thousand faithful worshippers, who had not bowed to Baal; *even so then at this present time also there is a remnant*

according to the election of grace. Note, (1.) There are many more faithful souls than we, looking round on the general apostasy, are ready to suppose. (2.) In every age the children of God have been but few, like these seven thousand, compared with the myriads of Israel. (3.) If any soul be kept from swimming down the stream of general corruption, it is of God's mere grace, or we had been exactly like our neighbours. (4.) When religion is out of countenance, it is a great thing to dare to be singular, and not bow the knee to Baal. (5.) If there had not been an *election of grace,* the whole human race had been as the angels which left their first estate, and had perished with them. *And if* this election of some, in preference to others, be *by grace,* of God's mere sovereign and undeserved favour, *then is it no more of works,* either done by them, or foreseen in them, as the motive for his choice of them; for, *otherwise, grace is no more grace.* The very idea of grace would be destroyed, if any thing in the objects recommended them in preference to others, to the divine regard. *But if,* on the other hand, *it be of works,* in any sense whatever, *then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work,* these standing in direct opposition to each other. Salvation must therefore be wholly of the one or the other: but it cannot be of works, for we have none which can bear the severity of God's justice: it must therefore be of grace, or not at all. *What then* is the case? Why the fact is evident; *Israel hath not attained that which he seeketh for;* the reason of which is given, chap. ix. 31, 32. *but the election hath obtained it,* through faith in Jesus, professing that righteousness which entitles them to life eternal, *and the rest were blinded,* left to their impenitence and unbelief, and perishing by the sentence of that law, for their obedience to which they expected justification before God. *Note,* (1.) Our election of God is the ground-work of all our hopes and happiness in time and eternity. (2.) They who trust in whole or in part on their works for salvation, make Christ to have died in vain, and the grace of God of no effect. (3.) They who trust on their own righteousness, are ever most hardened against the gospel method of salvation.

In proof of what he had alleged, terrible as it might appear to some, he appeals to the Scriptures, *according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day.* They are sunk into stupidity and insensibility, and in just judgment for their rejection of all the means, mercies, and corrections vouchsafed to them, especially for their wilful unbelief of the gospel, God hath abandoned them to a reprobate mind: and unto this day it continues. *And,* to the same effect, *David saith,* when speaking of the enemies of the Messiah, *Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them.* The altar, and all the ritual service on which they depended, would prove the means of their ruin; or those bounties of Providence, which they abused to pride and luxury, should intoxicate them, and, like drunken men, for the punishment of their infidelity, they should stumble into perdition. *Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see;* since they hate the light, they shall be left in blindness: *and bow down their back alway,* under perpetual bondage and servitude, enslaved by the powers of earth, and more enslaved by worldly-mindedness, by sin and Satan. *Note,* (1.) Of all judgments, spiritual ones are most to be dreaded, and yet are usually least perceived. (2.) They who mind earthly things cannot but walk in darkness.

2. Though the Jews were cast off for a while, the Gentiles were called into the church.

I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall, utterly and irrecoverably? *God forbid:* but rather, so hath God ordered it in his providence, *through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles,* (See Acts xiii. 46, 47.) *for to provoke them to jealousy;* that, ashamed to be outdone by the Gentiles, they may be stirred up to a noble emulation. *Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles,* God in his infinite wisdom and mysterious designs making the apostasy and obstinacy of the Jews the occasion of spreading his gospel the sooner among the Gentiles, whom he is pleased to enrich with the abundance of his grace; *how much more* will the Gentiles be confirmed in the faith, and the multitude of converts increase, when they shall see *their fulness,* the restoration of the dispersed Jews to their forfeited privileges, when at the last they shall be turned to the Lord? *For I speak to you, Gentiles,* for your comfort and caution, *inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles,* particularly appointed of God to preach the gospel to you: *I magnify mine office,* I glory in my employment, and bless God for having honoured me so far as to appoint me thereunto. And this I say, *If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh,* to outstrip the Gentiles, ashamed to be exceeded by them in faith and holiness, *and might* thus *save some of them,* by leading them to Christ for pardon, grace, and eternal life: *for,* as I said, *if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world,* the gospel, through their infidelity, being sent unto the Gentiles, *what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?* How surprising and delightful will that great event be, when the Jews in general shall be converted to Christ, and restored to the church as men raised from the dead; and their conversion inspire the Gentiles with fresh life and vigour! *For if the first-fruits be holy,* and some few converts of the Jewish people now appear the pledges and earnests of what God will do for the nation hereafter, *the lump is also holy,* and they shall at last be wholly consecrated as a nation to God; *and if the root be holy,* Abraham and the patriarchs, from whom the Jews descended, considered as their federal head, to whom and his seed the promises were made, *so are the branches:* they have a relative holiness in virtue of their descent, and though at present their unbelief cuts them off from all the privileges of the covenant, yet for their fathers' sakes, in future ages God's love to them, as a nation, shall appear, and they shall again be received into the bosom of his church. *And if some of the branches be broken off,* for their unbelief, *and thou* a Gentile, *being a wild olive-tree,* by birth an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger to the covenants of promise, *wert graffed in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree,* admitted in common with Abraham's natural descendants, who believe, to share in all the blessings and privileges of the covenant of grace, *boast not against the branches,* looking down with scorn on the Jews, who for their infidelity are broken off; *but if thou boast,* and grow proud of thy advancement, remember, *thou bearest not the root, but the root thee,* and all the mercies thou enjoyest are from the Jews; from them according to the flesh, Christ descended: the first preachers of the gospel were of their nation; and all church privileges are derived from Abraham, the great father of the faithful: therefore this people, though now fallen, must not be trampled upon. *Thou wilt say then,* perhaps, *The branches were broken off that I might be graffed in;* I was preferred to them, and have reason to esteem myself above them. *Well; because of unbelief they were broken off;* it was not on account of any goodness in you, but because of their own infidelity; *and thou standest by faith,* not holding your privileges on account of any descent, but through God's free grace in Christ Jesus; and therefore all boasting is excluded. *Be not* then *high-minded, but fear,* lest ye also fall through the same example of unbelief. *For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee;* if the Gentiles imitated their pride and unbelief, they might much more apprehend he would deal with them in the same manner, and deprive them of all the privileges to which he had admitted them. *Behold, therefore,* and admire *the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell,* he hath exercised just *severity,* cutting them off from his church, and depriving them of all the privileges of his people; *but towards thee,* unworthy as thou art, he hath shown the most transcendent *goodness,* admitting thee, a despised idolatrous Gentile,

into his kingdom, and will continue to bless thee, *if thou continue in his goodness*, and do not abuse the merciful dispensation, under which you at present stand, by pride and infidelity: *otherwise thou also shalt be cut off*; and no nominal profession of Christianity, if the heart prove apostate, will secure any man from the wrath of God.

3. There is still hope in the end, that all Israel, notwithstanding their present rejection, shall at last be converted and saved. *And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in:* and when they receive the gospel, and believe in Jesus, as the Messiah, shall be re-admitted into the church of the redeemed; *for God is able to graff them in again*, as the children of believing Abraham. Nor is this at all inconceivable or improbable; *for if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature*, sprung from the Gentile stock, which was out of the covenant, *and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive-tree*, which is like graffing a wild scion on a good tree; *how much more shall these which be the natural branches*, and descendants of Abraham, *be graffed into their own olive-tree*, and be received into the gospel church, which was once wholly confined to their people and nation? *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits;* puffed up with an opinion of your own excellence, and fancying that the favour of God is henceforth to be confined to you alone,) *that blindness in part is happened to Israel*, and they are left to their unbelief for a while, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*, when in the latter days the nations of the earth shall, in a more general manner than ever, become obedient to the faith. *And so all Israel shall be saved;* in general they shall be brought into the gospel church and converted to the Lord: *as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob;* the adored Messiah in the last days shall go forth in the power of his gospel, and by the efficacy of his word and Spirit shall turn these disobedient unto the wisdom of the just: so that all their iniquities shall be pardoned, and the enmity of their hearts be subdued by his almighty grace. *For this is my covenant unto them*, and he will fulfil his promises, as will be seen in the latter day; *when I shall take away their sins*, freely pardoning, for his name's sake, all that is past, and receiving them into the arms of his everlasting love.

Upon the whole then the state of the case stands thus. *As concerning the gospel, they are* at present *enemies* to it, and permitted so to be *for your sake*, that the gospel might be the sooner and farther diffused through the Gentile world, (Acts xiii. 46, 47.) *But as touching the election* of them as a nation to be his peculiar people, *they are beloved for the fathers' sakes;* and though for the present abandoned, yet there is still mercy in store for them. *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;* God is in one mind and cannot change; and having made his promises to Israel, as a chosen nation, they shall assuredly be called again into his church, and the elect among them be made partakers of eternal salvation. *For as ye in times past have not believed God*, but lived without him in the world, serving stocks and stones, *yet have now obtained mercy*, through God's boundless grace admitted into the fellowship and privileges of the gospel, *through their unbelief*, who put that gospel from them: *even so have these also now not believed*, but have been left to infidelity *that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy;* provoked to emulation by you, and led by faith to embrace the same Redeemer, through whom the Gentiles have found acceptance with God. And this conversion of the Jews is at least as likely, and will be as sure, as the conversion of the idolatrous Gentiles. *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief;* both Jews and Gentiles have been left by turns under the power of infidelity; *that he might* glorify the riches of his grace towards both, and *have mercy upon all:* upon the body of Jews and Gentiles in general, making them at last one fold under one Shepherd.

Some suppose this conversion of the Jews is already past, and that after the destruction of their city and temple, multitudes were convinced, and converted to Jesus as the Messiah; but I am much more inclined to think, that this prophecy is yet to receive its accomplishment. And it is a very remarkable circumstance, that the Jewish people, in all their dispersions, are still as distinct from the nations among whom they dwell as ever, and no doubt, are thus by divine providence preserved for this great event.

33. [a] O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34. [b] For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35. [c] Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36. [d] For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: [e] to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

[a] Job 5. 9. & 9. 10. & 11. 7. & 28. 12, 14. & 37. 23. & 26. 14. Ps. 36. 6, 7. & 77. 19. Eccl. 3. 11. Dan. 4. 35.
[b] Job 15. 8. & 36. 22, 23. Ps. 92. 5, 6. & 40. 5. Is. 40. 13. Jer. 23. 18. 1 Cor. 2. 16.
[c] Ps. 35. 7. & 41. 11.
[d] Job 33. 6. Prov. 16. 4. 1 Cor. 8. 6. & 10. 31. Col. 1. 16. Acts 17. 25. 28. Rev. 21. 6.
[e] Gal. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 11.

Verses 33—36. Having evidently reconciled the rejection of the Jews with the justice and goodness of God, and shown that there was mercy yet in store for them; in the view of this astonishing dispensation the apostle breaks out, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Farther the apostle dares not pry into the divine counsels, but stands admiring on the ocean's brink, and cries, O the depth of the riches of that grace, which both Jews and Gentiles experience, unworthy as they are of the least of it! What wisdom and knowledge appear in the contrivance of this admirable scheme, planned in the divine mind, to make even the rejection of the Jews subservient to the calling of the Gentiles; and their conversion, the means at last of restoring the Jews to the divine favour. These counsels are too deep for us to fathom, the reasons of his determinations are hid in his own eternal mind; and the methods which in his providence he takes to effect his own purposes, are beyond our ken; we are lost in the labyrinth, of which he who is infinite in wisdom alone holds the clue. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord?* what creature ever pried into the deep things of God, or could discover his eternal counsels? *Or who hath been his counsellor?* nor man nor angel were consulted in planning his designs of grace, where all was fixed by his infinite wisdom according to his sovereign pleasure. *Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* Who can claim any thing by right from him? He is debtor neither to Jew nor Gentile; and how then dare any arraign his procedure, or say unto him, What doest thou? *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things;* all things in nature and providence own him their former and upholder, their efficient cause, and ultimate end; and, in the dispensation of his grace especially, the whole of the sinner's salvation, from first to last, is derived from him; arising from his sovereign pleasure, the effect of his infinite wisdom and love, accomplished by his power, and designed for the advancement of his glory; *to whom therefore* it is most fit that the redeemed upon earth, and the exalted spirits in heaven, should ascribe *glory for ever!* and all who have tasted of his grace, will add their joyful Amen! *Note,* Though we have the deepest insight into the mysteries of grace, the wisest must own, that they know but a part of God's ways. There are many things which our short line cannot fathom, and we can only resolve into the divine sovereignty: our business, therefore, is not to dispute, but believe; not to demand God's reasons,

but to acquiesce in his determinations; not to cavil, but to admire and adore.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle having at large cleared and confirmed the prime fundamental doctrines of Christianity, comes in the next place to press the principal duties. We mistake our religion, if we look upon it only as a system of notions, and a guide to speculation: No: it is a practical religion, that tends to the right ordering of the conversation. It is designed not only to inform our judgments, but to convert our souls, and amend our lives. The riches of grace, revealed in the gospel, are designed to engage our hearts to God, and to make us holy and happy. This chapter contains an exhortation to believers, engaging them, 1. *To dedicate themselves wholly to God,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *To walk humbly before him,* ver. 3—5. 3. *To use faithfully their gifts to God's glory, and their brethren's edification,* ver. 6—8. 4. *To discharge the various duties which adorn the Christian character,* ver. 9—21.

1. I [a] BESEECH you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, [b] that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. 2. [c] And be not conformed to this world: but [d] be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may [e] prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 3. [f] For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, [g] not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think * soberly, [h] according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4. For [i] as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; 5. So [k] we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6. [l] Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; 7. [m] Or ministry, *let us wait* on *our* ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: 8. [n] He that † giveth, *let him do it* ‡ with simplicity; [o] he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. 9. [p] *Let* love *be* without dissimulation. [q] Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10. [r] *Be* kindly affectioned one to another || with brotherly love; [s] in honour preferring one another; 11. [t] Not slothful in business; [u] fervent in spirit; serving the LORD; 12. [x] Rejoicing in hope; [y] patient in tribulation; [z] continuing instant in prayer; 13. [a] Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. 14. [b] Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. 15. [c] Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 16. *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but [d] condescend to men of low estate. [e] Be not wise in your own conceits. 17. [f] Recompense to no man evil for evil. [g] Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18. [h] If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19. Dearly beloved, [i] avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, [k] Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the LORD. 20. [l] Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21. [m] Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

a 2 Cor. 5. 20 & 10. 1. Eph. 4. 1. John 4. 19. Ps. 116. 12.
b 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. ch. 6. 4, 6, 13, 16. 1 Cor. 9. 27. & 6. 19, 20. Col. 1. 22. Heb. 10. 22. with Lev. 1—vii. Num. xxix.
c Exod. 23. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 14, 18. 1 John 2. 15, 16.
d 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Col. 3. 10. Eph. 1. 18. & 4. 22—24.
e Ch. 2. 18. Phil. 1. 10. Eph. 1. 18. & 5. 10, 17. 1 Thes. 4. 3. Col. 1. 21, 22. & 3. 10. with ch. 7. 12, 14. 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. Ps. 19. 7—10.
f Mark 2. 11. Gal. 5. 16. with ch. 1. 5. & 15. 15. 1 Cor. 3. 10. & 15. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Eph. 3. 8. ver. 6, 8.
g Prov. 25. 27. Eccl. 7. 15. ch. 11. 20. Gal. 6. 3. Prov. 26. 12, 16.
* Gr. *to sobriety.*
h 1 Cor. 3. 10. & 12. 7—11. & 15. 10. Gal. 1. 15. & 2. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 7. Luke 19. 13.
i 1 Cor. 12. 12—27. Eph. 4. 16. Col. 2. 19.
k Ver. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 17. & 12. 12—28. Eph. 1. 23. & 4. 4, 25. & 5. 21, 23, 30. Col. 1. 24. & 2. 19.
l 1 Cor. 12. 7—11, 28—30. & 6. 14. & 14. 1, 3. & 13. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. Acts 11. 27. & 13. 1. & 15. 32. & 21. 9. 2 Cor. 10. 13. Eph. 3. 5. & 4. 11.
m 2 Tim. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 16. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. Acts 20. 28, 31. Ezek. 3. 17—21. & 33. 7—9. Col. 4. 17. Jude 3, 29. with Eph. 4. 11, 12.
n Deut. 15. 7. Prov. 22. 8. Acts 6. 3, 5. Phil. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 9. 7. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.
o 1 Cor. 12. 28 2 Thes. 5. 12, 13. Heb. 13. 17. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.
p 1 Tim. 1. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 4. 8. 1 John 3. 18.
q Ps. 34. 14. & 36. 4. & 97. 10. & 101. 3. & 119. 104. & 139. 21. 1 Cor. 13. 6. Amos 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 11.
r Heb. 13. 1. Job 1. 4. Ps. 133. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 8. & 4. 8. & 1. 22. & 2. 11. 2 Pet. 1. 7. Eph. 4. 3. 1 Thes. 4. 9.
|| Or *in the love of the brethren.*
s Mat. 20. 26. Phil. 2. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Gen. 13. 9.
† Eccl. 9. 10. Gal. 6. 10. Heb. 6. 10. Mat. 25. 26. see Prov. 6. 6, 9. & 19. 15. & 10. 4. & 13. 4. & 22. 29.
‡ Or *liberally.*
t Acts 18. 26. Rev. 3. 15, 16.
u Ch. 5. 2. & 13. Luke 10. 20. Phil. 3. 1, 3. & 4. 4. Ps. 71. 20—24. & 73. 24—26. & 138. 7, 8. 1 Thes. 5. 16. Col. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 19.
x Luke 21. 19. Ps. 37. 7. Rom. 5. 3, 4. Heb. 6. 12. & 10. 36. & 12. 1, 2. Jam. 1. 3, 4. & 5. 7, 10, 11. 2 Pet. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 20.
y Acts 1. 14. & 2. 42, 46. & 6. 4. Eph. 6. 18, 19. Col. 4. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Heb. 3. 6, 14. Luke 18. 1—7.
z Gal. 6. 10. Heb. 6. 10 & 13 16. Deut. 15. 8. & 10. 19. Is. 58. 7. Eccl. 11. 1, 2. Mat. 5. 42 Luke 6. 35, 36. Phil. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 16. 1. Gal. 2. 10. 1 Tim. 3. 2. & 2. 9. Eph. 4. 28. & 5. 2. Tit. 1. 8. Heb. 13. 2, 16. 1 Pet. 4. 9. 1 John 3. 17. Jam. 2. 15, 16.
a Mat. 5. 44. Luke 6. 28. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 9. & 2. 23. Is. 53. 12. Luke 23. 34. Acts 7. 60.
b Ch. 5. 2. 1 Cor. 12. 26. Luke 1. 58. 2 Cor. 11. 29. Neh. 1. 4. Heb. 13. 3.
c Ch. 5. 2. 1 Cor. 12. 26. Luke 1. 58. 2 Cor. 11. 29. Neh. 1. 4. Heb. 13. 3.
d Or, *be contented with mean things.* Ps. 131. 1. Prov. 18. 12. & 29. 23. Jer. 45. 5. ch. 15. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 1. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 2. & 3. 16. Col. 2. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 8. & 26. 12, 16. Is. 5. 21. ch. 11. 20, 21.
e Prov. 3. 7.
f Mat. 5. 39. 1 Thes. 5. 15. Prov. 20. 22. 1 Pet. 3. 9. & 2. 23.
g Prov. 3. 4. ch. 14. 16. 1 Cor. 6. 6, 7. & 8. 13. & 10. 32. 33. & 13. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 8. 21.
h Mark 9. 50. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 11. Jam. 3. 17, 18. Ps. 34. 14. Zech. 8. 16, 19. Eph. 4. 3. 2 Cor. 13. 11.
i Ver. 14, 17 Lev. 19. 18. Prov. 19. 11. & 24. 29. Ezek. 25. 12. Mat. 5. 39. Luke 6. 29. & 9. 55. 1 Pet. 3. 9.
k Deut. 32. 24. Heb. 10. 30. 1 Prov. 25. 21, 22. Mat. 5. 44. Exod. 23. 4. 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17. & 26. 21.
m Prov. 24. 17. Luke 6. 27—30. Mat. 5. 39—45. 1 Pet. 2. 23. & 3. 9. ver. 14, 17.

Verses 1—21. The doctrines of grace are so far from leading to licentiousness, that nothing but these can effectually engage the heart to walk in holiness as Christ also walked.

1. The apostle exhorts them to yield themselves wholly to God. *I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God;* by the consideration of that sovereign, boundless, undeserved grace, which you have tasted; *that,* constrained by a sense of such distinguishing and astonishing love, *ye* as spiritual priests, *present your bodies,* not the carcass of a dead animal, but a nobler oblation than any which were offered under the law, even *a living sacrifice;* your whole selves to be employed for God's glory, *holy,* without allowed guile; in spirit, temper, and conduct, conformed to his will; and *acceptable to God* through Jesus Christ, in whom your persons and services are regarded as a sacrifice of a sweet smell; all *which is your reasonable service,* to be performed with all the powers of your rational souls, and most fit and right, considering the infinite obligations lying upon you. *And* in order hereunto, *be not conformed to this world,* to its temper, maxims, fashions, manners; *but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,* after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness, *that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God;* discerning what is the mind of God in his word; commending to others the excellence and importance of the revelation he hath made; and cast into the very mould of the gospel, the best proof of your approbation of it. *Note,* (1.) No argument is so powerful to engage the ingenuous heart, as a sense of the mercies of God. (2.) The most acceptable sacrifice to God is the surrender of our whole selves to him at the foot of the cross of Jesus, the altar which sanctifies the

gift. (3.) They who yield themselves to God, must prove their simplicity in all holy conversation and godliness. (4.) Religion is indeed a reasonable service; the more we consider what we owe to God, the more shall we be bound to acknowledge, that he deserves to be served with every faculty of our soul, and every member of our body. (5.) They who partake of the true grace of God, and experience its transforming efficacy upon their tempers and conduct, they die unto the world, and live only for God.

2. He enforces upon them humility and lowliness of mind, that great ornament of the Christian character. *For I say, through the grace given unto me,* in virtue of the office with which I am invested, *to every man that is among you,* whatever his rank or attainments may be, *not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think;* affecting a superiority over others, or pretending to be wise above what is written, and to intrude into things that are too high for him; *but to think soberly* and lowly of his gifts, graces, and attainments, *according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith;* and acknowledging, that whatever measure of faith he possesses, or however distinguished his endowments by nature or grace may be, yet he had nothing which he *hath not received,* and therefore all boasting is excluded. And as our talents are merely lent us for our own soul's good, and the edification of others, it will become us to see that our profiting appears. *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office,* but each discharges his separate function, and all are alike needful in their place, and contribute to the good of the whole; *so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another;* united under our adored Head, each occupying his respective place according to the measure of the gift of Christ; and therefore, instead of being puffed up in pride, and despising one another, we should give diligence to discharge the several services allotted to every member, acknowledging the mutual obligation which one hath to the other, and contributing heartily to the prosperity of the whole. *Having then, gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us,* as the Lord hath sovereignly been pleased to dispense to every man, let it be our care to improve them, according to our respective offices and stations, for the glory of God, and the good of our fellow-members, *Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.* They who are put in trust with the gospel, must preach it with all fidelity and diligence, according to the measure of light, faith, and experience which they have received; or *according to the analogy of faith;* in exact consistence with the grand principles laid down in the word of God, in Scripture language, and with attention to the context. *Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering,* in the inferior departments of the church, where attention, care, and constancy are required. *Or he that teacheth, on teaching;* opening, explaining, and defending the doctrines of the Scripture. *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation;* with warmth applying the word to the conscience, warning the unruly, supporting the feeble-minded, reproving the guilty, comforting the dejected, and according to the different state of the people's souls, suiting his discourse for their edification and consolation. *He that giveth,* and is intrusted with the distribution of the public stock appropriated to charitable uses, *let him do it with simplicity;* without fraud, favour, or affection, according to the real wants of the church's poor. *He that ruleth,* and hath the management of affairs, must do it *with diligence,* careful that proper discipline be observed. *He that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness;* ready to every work and labour of love; not dragged reluctantly to visit the sick or afflicted; or grudging the time, trouble, or expense; not treating the poor with coldness, or sternness, but with that affability, tenderness, and compassion, which bespeak the pleasure that he takes in assisting them. *Note,* (1.) Pride is a busy sin; we can never be enough on our guard against it. The very gifts and graces of God (such is our corruption) we are ready to abuse, and plume ourselves upon them. (2.) If God hath put us in trust with any office, our business is to approve our fidelity to him, employing the talents which he hath lent us; not puffed up with any distinction which he may have made between us and others, but remembering the solemn account we must shortly make before him, when he calleth us to give an account of our stewardship. (3.) Ministers have different gifts, all excellent in their place. One is blessed with a clearer judgment, another with a warmer heart, and all for the edification of the body of Christ.

3. The apostle proceeds to urge Christians in general to walk before God and man, in such a way as may most eminently adorn the doctrine they profess, and glorify their Divine Master.

Let love be without dissimulation. Let your love to God in Christ be supreme, and your love to your brethren unfeigned and hearty; the living principle of every good word and work, and without which all our doings are nothing worth.

Abhor that which is evil. Turn away with abhorrence from all manner of iniquity, harbouring no allowed sin in yourself, and testifying your hatred of it wherever it appears, though in those who are nearest and dearest to you. And, on the contrary, *cleave to that which is good,* to God, his people, his word, his worship, will, and ways; never deterred by any danger, or seduced by any allurements, from the path of duty.

Be kindly affectioned one to another; tenderly desiring to promote each other's happiness; delighting in each other's prosperity; bearing each other's burdens; and ready to every word and work which fervent charity dictates: *with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another;* casting the veil of oblivion over the faults of others, and humbly acknowledging your own; thinking and speaking honourably of the gifts, graces, and attainments of your brethren, and entertaining lowly thoughts of yourselves.

Not slothful in business. In the business of your station be vigorous and active, and what thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; but especially in all the work of God be lively, *fervent in spirit,* animated with burning love and holy zeal for his glory: *serving the Lord,* in prayer and praise, and all ordinances; in persevering obedience to his will, and submission to his providences, approving your fidelity unshaken to the adored Jesus.

Rejoicing in hope: believing the faithfulness of God to his promises, and going forward with cheerfulness and delight in his work and ways, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Patient in tribulation; resigned to the divine providence; calm under every provocation; with holy courage sustaining the rudest shocks of opposition and persecution; and under the longest afflictions, quietly waiting to see the salvation of God.

Continuing instant in prayer; fervently and frequently approaching a throne of grace; seeking help and strength for all the work and service to which you are called; deeply conscious of your own insufficiency, without continual supplies of power from on high, to do any thing aright before God.

Distributing to the necessity of saints; cheerfully, liberally, according to their wants, and your abilities. *Given to hospitality;* welcoming to your house and table those who for the sake of Christ are destitute, and giving them that warm and cordial reception which true charity dictates.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Speaking of them and to them respectfully; commending what is praise-worthy in them, never returning railing for railing; never harbouring a thought of resentment against your most malignant revilers; forgiving them, and praying to God, that he would forgive them also, and turn their hearts.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice; sharing their joys, and, instead of envying, sincerely partaking of their prosperity; *and weep with them that weep;* feeling the tenderest sympathy with

them in their sufferings; and by prayer, advice, and every assistance, desirous to alleviate or remove the sorrows of the miserable.

Be of the same mind one toward another; united as much as may be in sentiment; and where any lesser difference in judgment subsists, still preserving the same warm affection towards each other; wishing all good to your brethren, and seeking to promote each other's happiness.

Mind not high things; affect not pre-eminence; aspire not after the honours and dignities of the world; nor court the company of the great: *but condescend to men of low estate:* treating your inferiors with kindness: and to whatever eminence or affluence you may arrive, be courteous, affable, and free to the lowest; ready to stoop to every proper office of love for the service and comfort of the meanest saint of God. Or, *condescend to low things*, as the words may be rendered: let your mind be humbled to your condition, and cheerfully acquiesce in every dispensation of providence, however strait and necessitous your circumstances may be.

Be not wise in your own conceits. Beware of entertaining a high imagination of your own abilities, gifts, or graces; treating the advice and admonitions of others with scorn, as if you were above all teaching, and satisfied in your own self-sufficiency.

Recompense to no man evil for evil, neither in looks, words, or works.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men; not only taking care of your families and worldly concerns, but so ordering the general course of your conduct and conversation, that the unprejudiced part of mankind, at least, may bear you an honourable testimony; and that none may be able to reproach you with any thing mean, or unbecoming your Christian character.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men; studiously avoiding whatever may bring on disputes or uneasiness; and, as far as is consistent with truth, charity, and the glory of God, cultivating a spirit of love and peace; that at least, if through the perverseness of others it be not possible to avoid contentions, you may have the satisfaction of your own conscience in the reflection, that *as much as lieth in you*, it hath been your endeavour to please all men for their good to edification.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: forgive the injuries you receive; take no private revenge: suppress the angry passions which naturally rise within you; give the soft answer which turneth away wrath; nor, by opposing, irritate; but however unreasonable others may appear, yield, or go away till the storm hath subsided: and if, after all, you meet with implacable resentment, refer the matter to God; *for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.* This is his prerogative, and not to be invaded by us. As magistracy is his ordinance, in some cases, for the good of society, we are bound to have recourse thereto; in others, where ourselves are only concerned, we must wait the great decisive day, when every man shall receive according as his work is. *Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head;* either by such instances of kindness you will melt him down, (as the refiners do their metals,) into repentance, and gain his heart to love you; or, if he continues obstinate in hatred, it will exceedingly aggravate his condemnation, to add base ingratitude to his unprovoked enmity.

Finally, *Be not overcome of evil;* let no ill-usage, however aggravated, repeated, or persisted in, discompose your spirit, weary out your patience, or quench your charity; so as that you should give way to anger, be enslaved by corruption, and afford the enemy an occasion to triumph over your infirmity. *But overcome evil with good*, which is the most glorious conquest, the proof of the noblest spirit, and the assured evidence that you are born of him who causeth his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and upon the unjust. Lord Jesus, give me such a heart, and stamp this thy image on my soul!

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

There are three good lessons taught us in this chapter: 1. *A lesson of subjection to lawful authority*, ver. 1—6. 2. *A lesson of justice and love to our brethren*, ver. 7—10. 3. *A lesson of sobriety and godliness in ourselves*, ver. 11. *to the end.*

1. LET every [a] soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are *ordained of God. 2. [b] Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3. [c] For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4. For he is [d] the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is [e] the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5. [f] Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. 6. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also:† for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7. [f] Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due:* custom to whom custom; [g] fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

a Titus 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13—17. with 1 Cor. 7. 21. Jude 8. 2 Pet. 2. 10. Prov. 8. 15, 16. Dan. 2. 21. & 4. 32. John 19. 11.

* Or *ordered.*

b 1 Sam. 29. 9. Jer. 27. 8. Tit. 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

c Prov. 14. 35. & 16. 13. 1 Pet. 2 14. & 3. 13. Deut. 25. 1.

d Ver. 1, 2, 6. 1 Chr. 28. 7. 2 Chr. 19. 6. 1 Kin. 10. 9. Jer. 25. 9. & 27. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. John 19. 11. Dan. 2. 21. & 4. 32. Prov. 8. 15, 16. 1 Chr. 29. 23.

e 1 Sam. 24. 5. Eccl. 8. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 13. ver. 1—3.

† The question, Is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar? was much agitated at this time, not in Judea only, but also in all the heathen countries where the Jews were settled.

f Mat 22. 21. Mark 12. 17. Luke 20. 25. Acts 5. 57.

g Eph. 5. 23. & 6. 5. Mal. 1. 6. Exod. 20. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 17.

Verses 1—7. From the duties they owed to each other, as members of civil society, the apostle proceeds to enforce submission in all lawful things to the authority of the civil government under which they lived. The Christian doctrine makes no alteration in the natural and civil rights of mankind. Dominion is not founded in grace; therefore, *let every soul be subject unto the higher powers;* respectful and obedient to all lawful magistrates, from the highest to the lowest, and willingly observant of the laws, with the execution of which they are intrusted. *For there is no power but of God;* he is the source of all authority, dignity, and honour; by him kings reign. *The powers that be are ordained of God;* whatever be the mode of government, whether the ruling power be lodged in the hands of one person or many, submission is our duty; and though the men who are invested with the authority be ever so vile and wicked, their lawful commands are nevertheless to be obeyed; and the magistrate is to be honoured, however despicable the man may appear. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power*, and refuses obedience to the lawful orders of the established government, *resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation*, (κριμα) the punishment due to their offence, according to the laws, from the sword of the magistrate, and judgment also from God, for the transgression against his ordinance. *For rulers are not a terror to good works:* they who are quiet and submissive have nothing to fear, for such subjects the magistrates are bound to protect and cherish;

but they are appointed *to* restrain *the evil* actions of men, which tend to disturb the peace of society, to dishonour God, or injure their neighbour. *Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good,* peaceable and obedient to the laws, *and thou shalt have praise of the same;* in every well-ordered government such subjects will be protected and encouraged. *For he is the minister of God,* appointed to preserve the peace of the state, to redress injuries, administer justice, suppress vice, profaneness, and immorality; to punish offenders, and promote the general welfare: and therefore if thou art found obedient, the office of magistracy will be *to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil,* and violate the established laws, *be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain;* being obliged by his very office impartially to inflict the penalty due to every offence; *for he is the minister of God,* who puts the sword of judgment into his hands, as *a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil;* not out of any private personal resentment, but coolly as God's vicegerent, without partiality or favour, according to the dictates of justice. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath,* merely through fear of punishment and penalties, *but also for conscience' sake;* from a principle of duty towards God, whose ordinance is binding, and obedience for his sake is due to human laws, though no pains or penalties were annexed. *For, for this cause pay ye tribute also;* the taxes and duties necessary for the support of the government, whose protection you enjoy; *for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing;* and therefore every fraud committed against the public is even more criminal than if it merely affected an individual. *Render therefore to all their dues,* according to the laws human or divine: *tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom;* all subsidies, taxes, &c. imposed by lawful authority: *fear to whom fear* and reverence should be paid; *honour to whom honour* is due according to the superior rank and relation in which by the providence of God they are placed.

h Mat. 7. 12. Prov. 3. 27, 28. Gal. 5. 15.

8. [h] Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: [i] for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9. For this, [k] Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, [l] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10. [m] Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

i 1 Tim. 1. 5. Jam. 2. 8.

k Exod. 20. 12—17. Deut. 5. 16—21. Mat. 19. 18, 19. James 2. 11.

l Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Gal. 5. 14. Jam. 2. 11.

m 1 Cor. 13. 4—7. Mat. 22. 40.

Verses 8—10. From the payment of dues to magistrates, the apostle passes on to enforce the discharge of every debt, to whomsoever due.

Owe no man any thing; never run in debt where you have no immediate prospect of paying, nor continue in debt when you have ability to discharge it; and in every relation of life be ready to fulfil the duty which you owe. One debt there is, however, and *but* one, where, though ever paying, you neither wish nor desire that it should be less, and that is, *to love one another* as men, and especially as Christians, seeking to promote each other's present and eternal welfare; and this, as the great and reigning principle in all your conduct; *for he that loveth another,* and, from a sense of the love of God in Christ, experiences this Godlike charity, *hath fulfilled the law;* if his love were perfect, he would be complete in all the will of God; which is not indeed the lot of man in this life; it is reserved for the felicity of a better. Yet so far as love is in vigorous exercise, so far will his spiritual obedience advance towards perfection; *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,* and act conscientiously towards them, as, were our circumstances reversed, we might reasonably expect they should behave towards us; for then, were there no human restraints or punishments, love would itself effectually prevent every violation of our neighbour's person, goods, or fame; we cannot hurt the body, which we love; we cannot defraud those we love; we cannot speak evil of those we love; we cannot defile those we love; though lawless lust (which is real hatred) often covers its horrid features with the false vizor of this sacred name. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour,* neither in act nor intention; *therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

11. And that, knowing the time, that [n] now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: [o] for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12. [p] The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore [q] cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on [r] the armour of [s] light. 13. [t] Let us walk † honestly, as in the day; [u] not in rioting and drunkenness, [x] not in chambering and wantonness, [y] not in strife and envying. 14. But [z] put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and [a] make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof.*

n 1 Cor. 15. 34. Eph. 5. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 6. Mat. 25. 5.

o Luke 21. 28. Jam. 4. 14. Rev. 22. 7, 12, 20.

p Song 2. 17.

q Eph. 5. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 7. John 3. 20. Job 24. 14—17. Col. 3. 5, 8. Eph. 5. 3.

r 2 Cor. 6. 7. Col. 3. 10—17. 1 Thes. 5. 8. Eph. 6. 11—18.

s John 1. 4, 9. & 3. 19. & 8. 12. & 12. 35. or Mat. 5. 16. Phil. 2. 15, 16.

t Phil. 1. 27. & 4. 8. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Acts 24. 16. ch. xii, xiii. Eph. 5. 15. iv—vi. 1 Thes. v. & 4-12. 1 Pet. 2. 12. † Or *decently.* u Luke 21. 34. Gal. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 3. x Gal. 5. 19. Eph. 5. 3—5. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Col. 3. 5. 1 Thes. 4. 3, 5. 1 Pet. 4. 3. y Jam. 3. 14—16. & 4. 1. Gal. 5. 15, 26. z Gal. 3. 27. & 2. 20. Eph. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10. Rev. 16. 15. & 19. 8. Is. 61. 10. Gal. 5. 16. a Gal. 5. 17, 24. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 1 John 2. 16. Col. 3. 5, 8. Eph. 5. 3, 4. Luke 21. 34.

Verses 11—14. The apostle enforces what he had been recommending to their practice by a very awful consideration. *And this* duty of love I press upon you, *knowing the time,* the day of gospel grace and light having broke upon us; *so that now it is high time to awake out of sleep,* and shake off all spiritual sloth, and carnal security; *for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed;* and as our journey's end draws nearer, we should mend our pace, not loiter, when the mansions of eternal rest are, as it were, in view. *The night is far spent,* the night of trials and afflictions, of remaining ignorance and corruption, is drawing to an end, *the day* of our complete redemption from darkness, trouble, sin, and suffering, *is at hand,* when in eternal glory our sun shall rise to set no more: *let us therefore cast off the works of darkness;* as persons rising from their beds remove the clothes, so must we reject and put far away all those sinful tempers and practices, which are opposite to the light of truth, are usually done in secret, and for which the blackness of darkness is the reserved punishment; *and let us put on the armour of light;* all those bright and shining graces of the Spirit, which adorn our holy profession, and enable us to stand against the assaults of sin, the world, and Satan, till triumphantly we shall appear in all the lustre of eternal glory. Therefore *let us walk honestly as in the day,* showing a conversation such as becometh godliness in the eyes of men; guided by the light of truth, and the spirit of purity; and able to bear the strictest scrutiny of our observers; *not in rioting and drunkenness,* indulging to excess in meat and drink our sensual appetites, *not in chambering and wantonness,* for which sensuality supplies the fuel; but restraining every lascivious thought, immodest word, indecent action, as well as abstaining from the grosser pollutions which are in the world through lust; *not in strife and envying,* contentions, quar-

relsome, and grieved, instead of rejoicing in the prosperity of our neighbours. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*, that you may be complete in him; put on his righteousness, as your glorious dress; put on his image, that being like him, you may come to be with him; put on his holy profession, owning your own entire dependence upon him, as your prophet, priest, and king, that all who see you may take knowledge of you that you indeed belong to him; *and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof;* let your soul, and your eternal interests, be your great concern, without anxiety about a wordly provision; and, especially mortify your sensual appetites in whatever would tend to inflame the native corruption of your hearts; and to as many as walk after this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and on the Israel of God.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle, in order to cultivate mutual love and peace between the Jewish and Gentile converts, (1.) *Cautions the one against judging, and the other against despising their brethren in indifferent things,* ver. 1—13. (2.) *He exhorts the Gentiles rather to forego the use of their Christian liberty, than offend their Jewish brethren in these things,* ver. 14—23.

1. HIM [a] that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* * not to doubtful disputations. 2. For [b] one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, [c] eateth herbs. 3. [d] Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. 4. [e] Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up: for God is [f] able to make him stand. 5. [g] One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. [h] Let every man be † fully persuaded in his own mind. 6. He that ‡ regardeth the day, regardeth *it* [i] unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for [k] he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. 7. [l] For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. 8. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. 9. [m] For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. 10. But [n] why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for [o] we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. 11. For it is written, [p] *As* I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12. So then [q] every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13. [r] Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, [s] that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in *his* brother's way.

a Is. 42. 3. & 35. 3, 4. Ezek. 34. 4, 6. Mat. 18. 10. ch. 15. 1, 7. 1 Cor. 8. 11. & 9. 22.

* Or *not to disputatious reasonings.*

b 1 Cor. 10. 25. 1 Tim. 4. 3. Tit. 1. 15.

c Dan. 1. 12. Lev. 17. 10—14.

d Acts 10. 34, 44. Col. 2. 16.

e 1 Cor. 4. 4. Jam. 4, 11, 12.

f Will make, as ch. 4. 21. & 11. 23. Heb. 2. 18. ver. 3.

g Gal. 4. 10. Col. 2. 16.

h Phil. 3. 15. ver. 23.

† Or *fully assured.*

‡ Or *observeth.*

i 1 Cor. 10. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 11.

k 1 Cor. 10. 26, 28. Mat. 14. 19. & 15. 35. & 26. 26. 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4.

l 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. Gal. 2. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Eph. 1. 12. Phil. 1. 21—23. Rev. 14. 13.

m Acts 10. 42. Rev. 1. 18. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Acts 2. 36. Mat. 28. 18. Phil. 2. 9—11.

n Ver. 3, 4.

o 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eccl. 12. 14. Mat. 25. 32. John 5. 22. Rev. 20. 12.

p Is. 45. 23. Phil. 2. 10. Rev. 5. 13.

q Mat. 12. 36. Luke 16. 2. Heb. 13 17. 1 Pet. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 3. 8. & 4. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 10 Gal. 6. 4, 5.

r Ver. 3, 4. Mat. 7. 1, 2. Jam. 4. 11. & 3. 1. & 2. 4.

s 1 Cor. 8. 9. & 10. 32. 2 Cor. 6. 3. Mat. 18. 7—9. Luke 18. 2.

Verses 1—13. As many of the Jewish converts still retained a high veneration for the Mosaical institutions, and were scrupulous in observing a distinction of *meats* and *days*, from which the Gentile Christians justly apprehended themselves entirely at liberty, the apostle therefore recommends a kind condescension to the educational prejudices of the Jewish brethren, and that there should be no coolness or distance between them on account of these indifferent matters. *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye*, heartily embracing and welcoming them, *but not to doubtful disputations*, not perplexing them with useless disputes about things of a trivial nature.

1. Respecting *meats*. *One believeth that he may eat all things*, and, satisfied about the abolition of the ceremonial law, counts nothing any longer common or unclean, eating without scruple whatever kind of wholesome food is set before him. *Another who is weak*, through the prejudice of education, or want of light, fearful of using any meat but what is permitted by the law of Moses, and killed according to the manner there prescribed, (Lev. xvii. 10—14.) when he is invited to eat with Gentiles, lest he should incur ceremonial defilement, abstains from their victuals, *and eateth* only *herbs*. *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not*, as weak and superstitious, priding himself on his superior knowledge, and clearer views of his Christian liberty: *and*, on the other hand, *let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth;* and being prejudiced and narrow in his own conceptions, dare uncharitably to censure his brother as a loose liver, and irreligious professor, because he hath no such scruples about indifferent matters: *for God hath received him* into his favour, and therefore, whom he accepts, none should condemn. *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.* It is the highest arrogance to usurp God's throne, and sit in judgment on our brother, who is responsible to God alone, and uses only that liberty which he is in conscience satisfied God allows. Yea, and whatever rash censures the weak and superstitious may cast upon him, he shall *be holden up;* the Lord will strengthen and preserve him through faith unto salvation, *for God is able to make him stand*, persevering in fidelity unto the end, and appearing with boldness in the day of judgment. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of charity than rash and hasty censures. (2.) We are to leave every man to the great Judge, nor should pretend to decide upon their everlasting state, without the clearest warrant of God's word.

2. Respecting *days*. *One man esteemeth one day above another*, as the Jewish converts did, who paid a particular regard to the passover, pentecost, new moons, and other feast and fast days, as more sacred than others: *another esteemeth every day alike*, counting all those Jewish distinctions abolished. *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;* and, being satisfied in his own conscience, be content that others should judge for themselves, allowing them the same liberty we claim ourselves; charitably concluding, that *he that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord*, intending therein to glorify the Lord Jesus, who on mount Sinai, at first enjoined the ceremonial law; *and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it*, from the same principle, and with a view to the Redeemer's glory, by whose authority they suppose the Mosaical institutions

are laid aside. *He that eateth*, as the converted Gentile, every kind of meat without scruple, *eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks*, and is persuaded that all the creatures of God are good, when sanctified by the word of God, and by prayer: *and he that eateth not*, supposing that the prohibition of a variety of meats enjoined by Moses is still in force, *to the Lord he eateth not*, pursuaded in conscience he ought to abstain, *and giveth God thanks* for the food which he hath allowed him under the law. In these points, therefore, we should bear and forbear; nor for such trifles dispute and break the bonds of Christian love.

3. Our grand end and aim in these things, and all others, should be the glory of God. *For none of us liveth to himself;* we are not our own, and must not live as self-seekers, or self-pleasers; we are bought with a price, that we should glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are his: *and no man dieth to himself*, wishing to get rid of his troubles, or to gain a name; or selfishly desiring his crown before the time when God shall appoint him an end to his warfare; *for whether we* (who are truly the servants of Jesus) *live, we live unto the Lord*, desirous to be, and do, and suffer, according to his holy will and pleasure; *or whether we die*, a natural, lingering, sudden, or violent death *we die unto the Lord*, resigned to his will, committing all our concerns into his hands, and with our departing breath desiring to exalt his great and glorious name, and to commend the goodness of our God; *whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's*, belong to him as his devoted servants; as his inseparable property depending on him, and singly aiming at his glory. And thus, whether we are weaker or stronger believers, we have all one purpose, one end, one home. *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived*, having made the great atonement for the sins of his people, and being raised in token of God's approbation of his undertaking, and seated on the mediatorial throne, *that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*, as head over all things to his church; invested with universal dominion and authority, to rule the living, to revive the dead; and when in the day of his appearing and glory, the dead shall rise, the living be changed, he will be the object of their everlasting praises. Since then we are Christ's, and he alone hath dominion over us, it becomes us never to usurp authority over the consciences of our brethren, or to pass censures on the dead or the living. We have one Master only, whose approbation we need be solicitous to secure.

4. We must each, shortly, answer for ourselves before God; and therefore to his judgment all should be referred. *But why dost thou judge thy brother*, as lax and latitudinarian, because you are rigid and scrupulous? *or why*, on the other hand, *dost thou set at nought thy brother*, as an ignorant, weak, and despicable bigot, because he thinks that evil, which you know to be innocent? This is to take the matter out of God's hands, and to erect an unhallowed tribunal: *for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ*, and by his sentence, and no other, must stand or fall for ever. *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God:* owning me the eternal Jehovah, acknowledging my eternal glory and Godhead, and bowing before the sceptre of my judgment, as accountable to me alone, and expecting from my lips the decision of their eternal state for happiness or misery: *so then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God*, to Christ to whom all judgment is committed, and who is essentially very God. *Let us not therefore judge one another any more*, with any rash and precipitate censures: *but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way;* and whatever knowledge he may have of Christian liberty, yet to be careful so to use it, as not willingly to grieve or ensnare his brother, by tempting him to sin, by giving him a handle for censure, or emboldening him to do what his conscience may not be satisfied is right. *Note*, Our great concern is to prepare for a judgment-day, and the best means to be ready for it is to keep it often in our view, and to bring ourselves thither in self-examination, before the Lord shall cite us to his bar.

14. [t] I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing * unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be * unclean, to him *it* [u] *is* unclean. 15. But if thy brother be † grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou [u] not † charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat [x] for whom Christ died. 16. [y] Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17. [z] For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but [a] righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18. [a] [b] For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19. [c] Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. 20. [d] For meat destroy not [e] the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21. [f] *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. 22. Hast thou [g] faith? have *it* to thyself before God. [h] Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. 23. And he that [i] doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

[t] Gen. 1. 31. Mat. 15. 11. 1 Tim. 4. 4. Tit. 1. 15. 1 Cor. 8. 7—10.
* Gr. *common.*
[u] 1 Cor. 13. 4. & 8. 11. ver. 20.
† Gr. *according to charity.*
[x] 1 Tim. 2. 6. Heb. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 John 2. 2.
[y] Ch. 12. 16. 1 Cor. 10. 29, 30.
[z] 1 Cor. 4. 20. Luke 17. 21. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Gal. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 8. 8. ch. 2. 28, 29. Heb. 13. 9.
[a] Mat. 6. 33. 2 Cor. 5. 21. John 14. 27. & 16. 33. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Rom. 5. 2—5. & 8. 16. & 12. 12, 18. & 15. 13. Gal. 5. 22, 23. Phil. 3. 3.
[b] Acts 24. 16. Phil. 1. 10, 11, 27. & 2. 15, 16. Col. 1. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 12—15, 20. & 3. 13, 16.
[c] Ch. 12. 18. & 15. 2. Ps. 34. 14. Phil. 3. 16. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Cor. 14. 12, 26. 2 Cor. 12. 19. Eph. 4. 29. 1 Thes. 5. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 3. 11. 2 Cor. 13. 11.
[d] Ver. 14, 15. Mat. 15. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 9, 16. & 8. 10. Tit. 1. 15. ver. 23.
[e] Ver. 10, 15. Eph. 2. 10.
[f] 1 Cor. 8. 13. Mat. 18. 6—10. Luke 18. 2.
[g] Ver. 2, 5, 14.
[h] 1 John 3. 21.
Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12.
[i] Or *discerneth and putteth a difference between meats.* [i] Tit. 1. 15. ver. 5, 14. or *staggers.* Rom. 4. 20. Jam. 1. 6.

Verses 14—23. The apostle had just intimated, that they should desire mutual edification, and not abuse their Christian liberty to others' detriment.

1. As to his own sense of these ceremonial things, he saith *I know, and am persuaded, by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself*, the ceremonial law concerning meats being wholly abrogated, and these communicate no moral defilement to the conscience; *but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*, as he would act against his conscience if he should eat; and though his conscience be erroneous he would do evil.

But, 2. Whatever conviction any man may have of the lawfulness of all kinds of food, yet, *if thy brother be grieved with thy meat*, through his educational prejudices, and you unkindly persist in the use of your liberty, and eat before him what he esteems forbidden, *now walkest thou not charitably; destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died;* destroy not the peace of his mind, by giving him unnecessary offence; or at least, be not the means of stumbling such, as in the judgment of charity, we may reckon among the redeemed. Those who are really the purchase of Christ's blood can indeed never perish; but what hath in its nature but the most distant tendency to endanger them must carefully be avoided.

3. Another reason why you should abridge yourself of something of your Christian liberty, is this: *Let not then your good be evil spoken of;* do not provoke those who are misinformed to

speak evil of you, for that which is itself lawful; nor do any thing which may lessen you in men's esteem, and prevent your usefulness: nor give occasion to the enemy, by needless contentions, to speak evil of Christianity itself.

4. As the greatest points of Christianity stand distinct from all these trivial matters, no stress should be laid upon them. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink;* consists not in using or abstaining from the ceremonial institutions which the law prescribed concerning these things; *but* it is *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* These are the grand essential matters; *Righteousness,* imputed and implanted; *peace* with God through Jesus Christ, and the sense of his love kindling ours, and engaging us to live peaceably with all men; *and joy in the Holy Ghost,* which this divine Spirit communicates to our souls, making us happy in God and his holy ways. *For he that in these things serveth Christ;* faithful to his cause, and in simplicity designing his honour, whatever his practice or sentiments may be in unessential matters, *is acceptable to God;* his person and services are accepted in the beloved, *and* he is *approved of men,* as a sincere convert, at least by all those of sound judgment and solid experience.

He therefore exhorts, 5. *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace,* laying aside all uncharitable contentions; *and things whereby one may edify another,* not seeking our own pleasure merely but others' good. *For* so trivial a consideration as this or that kind of *meat, destroy not the work of God,* nor disturb the peace, and love, and harmony, which should subsist between fellow Christians, and which it is the great design of God in his gospel to produce in the hearts of the faithful. *All things indeed are pure,* I will admit, to those who have knowledge; *but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence;* and the liberty of using any meat, which in itself was lawful, becomes criminal, when we choose rather to offend a weak brother, than forego the gratification of our appetite for his sake. In such a case *it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.* It would be right and prudent to abstain from any of these creatures, however good in themselves, and lawful to be used, rather than be a hinderance to the weak, grieve or discourage the less enlightened, or tempt our brother rashly to censure us, or with a doubting conscience to follow our example. *Hast thou faith,* and art satisfied concerning the abrogation of the ceremonial institutions; *have it to thyself before God,* and use thy liberty to God's glory on proper occasions. *Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth,* and never exposes himself to the just reproaches of his conscience, by warping his better judgment to gratify his covetousness, his pleasure, or his pride. *And* where this is the case, *he that doubteth* about the propriety of what he is going to do, supposes there may be a difference between meats lawful and unlawful, and therefore hesitates whether he shall eat or not, *is damned if he eat;* his conscience will condemn him, *because he* is not sure that he hath God's warrant for what he doth, *and eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* God's word must be our rule; we must ever from thence receive our directions; and where our minds are not fully satisfied concerning his will, nothing must tempt us to take one step farther. We are safe, though mistaken, when we through jealousy abridge ourselves of our liberty; but where we presumptuously act, though doubts remain, we show an evident disregard to God's authority, and violate the sacred dictates of conscience.

CHAP. XV.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle in pursuance of his discourse, (1.) *Directs the strong in faith to bear with the weak,* ver. 1—6. (2.) *That all should receive one another as brethren,* ver. 7—12. (3.) *Draws to a conclusion of his epistle,* ver 13—33.

1. WE [a] then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2. [b] Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. 3. [c] For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. 4. [d] For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. 5. [e] Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be [f] like-minded one toward another, *according to Christ Jesus: 6. That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the [g] Father of our LORD Jesus Christ.

a Exod. 23. 5. ch. 14. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 22. Gal. 6. 1, 2.
b Ch. 14. 19. 1 Cor. 9. 19. & 13. 5. & 10. 24, 33. Phil. 2. 4, 5.
c Is. 53, 4, 5. Mat. 26. 39. John 5. 30. & 6. 38. Ps. 69. 9, 20. & 89. 50, 51.
d Ch. 4. 23, 24. 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. 2 Pet. 1. 19, 20. Heb. 13. 5. Acts 13. 40, 41. 1 Cor. 10. 11. & 9. 10. ch. 5. 3. & 8. 25.
e Exod. 34. 6. 2 Cor. 1. 3. Ps. 86. 5. & 103. 8.
f 1 Cor. 1. 10. Acts 4. 32. ch. 12. 6, 16. Phil. 2. 2, & 3. 15, 16. Acts 2. 1. & 4. 32. Eph. 3. 9. Zech. 14. 9.
* Or *after the example of.*
g 2 Cor. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 3. 1 John 5. 7.

Verses 1—6. The apostle infers from what he had advanced in the foregoing chapter,

1. That, *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves:* having compassion towards them; making every kind allowance for their prejudices and scruples; not provoked by their rash censures, and desirous to prevent them by foregoing our own pleasure for their profit. *Let every one of us* therefore *please his neighbour for his good to edification;* not complying with him in any thing that is sinful, but in all indifferent matters ready to yield to him, in order to insinuate into his confidence, for the advantage of his soul.

2. He enforces his exhortation by the strongest motive of Christ's example. *For even Christ pleased not himself;* when he was under no obligations to us, he freely submitted to all hardships and sufferings for our sakes; *as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me;* he willingly bore the contradiction of sinners against himself; and all the reproaches which transgressors by their offences had cast on the blessed God, he bore in his own body on the tree when he made atonement for them. And in this Scripture, as well as others, we are not to suppose David speaks of himself, but of Christ, and with a view to the edification of his people, *For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning: that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope;* animated by the example there set forth, to show the same meekness, patience, and forbearance: revived by the views of the great and precious promises, and comforted in the assured hope of eternal life therein revealed to us. *Note,* (1.) Christ's pattern should be ever in our view. "Would the Lord Jesus in our situation have thus thought, spoke, and acted?" should be our inquiry. (2.) They are the truly wise who are learned in the Scriptures, and know the way to everlasting life. (3.) The Scriptures afford us the most powerful arguments for patience under all our trials and provocations, and furnish us with the most substantial comforts under all our discouragements, both in the precious promises of present divine support, and in the prospect of the glory which shall be revealed.

3. He seconds his exhortations with his prayers. We can only speak to the ear; God must make it effectual to the heart. *Now the God of patience and consolation,* who is so long suffering towards us, and ready to comfort the afflicted, and is the source and author of all patience to us, and the giver of all consolation, *grant you to be like-minded one towards another;* united in sentiment and affection; *according to Christ Jesus;* copying his

example, and obedient to his holy will; *that ye may with one mind and one mouth*, as if animated by one soul, in your religious assemblies, and in social converse, *glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;* in spirit and conversation desirous to exalt his great and glorious name, and show forth his praises. *Note*, (1.) Christians should be united in one mind, and join in the same worship: all schismatical divisions are God's abhorrence. (2.) Our prayers must follow our preachings, that God may give the blessing.

7. Wherefore [h] receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, [i] to the glory of God. 8. Now I say, that [k] Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers: 9. [l] And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, [m] For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. 10. And again he saith, [n] Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. 11. And again, [o] Praise the LORD, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. 12. And again Esaias saith, [p] There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust. 13. Now the [q] God of hope [r] fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

h Ch. 14. 15. Eph. 3. 6. John 13. 34. & 6. 37.
i Ver. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 10. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 11.
k Mat. 15. 24. John 1. 11. Acts 3. 25, 26. & 13. 46. ch. 3. 3. & 9. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 20. Acts 10. 43.
l John 10. 16. ch. 9. 23, 24. & 11. 22, 30. Eph. 1—iii.
m Ps. 18. 49. 2 Sam. 22. 50.
n Deut. 32. 43. Is. 24. 14, 16. & 42. 11.
o Ps. 117. 1. & 47. 1. & 66. 1, 4. & 67. 3—5. & 68. 32. & 96. 1. & 97. 1.
p Is. 11. 1, 10. & 9. 6, 7. & 42. 1, 4, 6. & 49. 6, 22. & 54. 3, 5. & 60. 3, 5. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Mic. 5. 4. Rev. 5. 5. & 22. 16.
q Jer. 14. 8. & 17. 7. Ps. 22. 4. 1 Tim. 6. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 3.
r Phil. 4. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 16, 18. 2 Thes. 2. 16, 17. ch. 14. 17. Heb. 6. 11, 18, 19. ch. 12. 12, 18.

Verses 7—13. The apostle returns to enforce his former exhortation. *Wherefore receive ye one another*, with brotherly affection, in friendly intercourse, and holy communion, *as Christ also received us*, whether Jews or Gentiles, notwithstanding all our infirmities, *to the glory of God;* as this was the end he had in view, the same must we propose to ourselves.

1. Christ had received the Jewish converts. *Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision;* submitted himself to that bloody rite, and personally ministered to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, *for the truth of God*, to display his faithfulness to his covenant, and *to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*, that of their seed Christ should come. Now as this put a peculiar honour upon the Jews, their Gentile brethren should not despise them, because of any weak attachment to the ceremonial institutions.

2. Christ had also received the Gentiles to the participation of the same privileges, *and* therefore this should engage the brotherly regards of their Jewish brethren, since the salvation that Jesus obtained was to extend to them, *that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy*, who now at last looked with compassion upon them, and had called them into his church: *as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.* Because thou hast given me the heathen for my inheritance, I will declare thy word among them, and call upon them to offer their thanksgivings for the inestimable blessings of which in the gospel they are made partakers. *And again*, in another prophecy, *he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people:* incorporated with them, sharing their privileges, and therefore happy in the experience of the same gospel grace. *And again*, it is said, *Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud him, all ye people;* joining your voices together in the great congregation, the partition wall being taken down. *And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse*, the divine Messiah, *and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles*, exalted to the mediatorial throne, and extending his conquests over the souls of sinners to the ends of the earth; *in him shall the Gentiles trust;* placing their dependence upon him as their only Lord and Saviour. All which prophecies clearly show, that the time should come when the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body; and therefore the Jewish converts should with hearty affection embrace their Gentile brethren as all one in Christ Jesus.

3. The apostle adds his affectionate prayer for them both. *Now the God of hope*, who in Christ Jesus is the ground and author of our hope of all the spiritual and eternal blessings, *fill you with all joy and peace in believing;* enabling you to lay hold of the promises of the everlasting covenant, and giving you the abundance of divine consolations, and of that peace which passeth all understanding; *that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost;* in the fullest assurance of possessing the eternal blessedness above, the earnests and foretastes of which the Spirit gives, in the light, strength, and comforts which he now communicates. *Note*, (1.) When faith is in exercise, then our souls will be happy even here below. (2.) The Christian's hope never makes ashamed, because it never can disappoint him. (3.) They who would abound in hope, peace, and joy, should be much in prayer to him who is the giver of every good gift, and whose face none need seek in vain.

14. [s] And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 15. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written [t] the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of [u] the grace that is given to me of God. 16. That I should be [x] the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, [y] that the † offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

s Heb. 6. 9. & 3. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 12. 1 John 2. 21. Phil. 1. 7, 11. Col. 1. 10. Eph. 5. 9. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 1 Thes. 5. 14. Heb. 10. 24.
t 2 Cor. 2. 3. 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 15. & 3. 1. Heb. 13. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 6. & 2. 14. Jude 3, 5.
u Ch. 1. 5. & 12. 6. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 15. 10. & 3. 10. Gal. 1. 15. & 2. 9.
x Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 26. 17, 18. ch. 11. 13. 1 Cor. 3. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Gal. 1. 16. & 2. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11. Eph. 3. 8.
y Is. 66. 19, 20. Phil. 2. 17. ch. 12. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 2. 5. Phil. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 16.
† Or *sacrificing*.

Verses 14—16. St Paul here,

1. Expresses the high estimation in which he held them. *And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren*, from the gracious testimony borne to you by those who are acquainted with your state, *that ye also are full of goodness:* enriched with every gracious fruit of the Spirit, with tender benevolence and sympathy, willing to bear and forbear, and united in love and peace, notwithstanding any lesser differences of opinion; *filled with all knowledge*, in the great essential points of the gospel revelation; *able also to admonish one another*, and to communicate your gifts for mutual edification.

2. He elegantly apologizes for the freedom he had taken in reproving, advising, and exhorting them, who were themselves so eminent in gifts and graces. *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you, in some sort, as putting you in mind;* rather as your monitor, to refresh your memory, than, setting up myself for your instructor, as if you were ignorant. The liberty he used with them was what his office obliged to: *because of the grace that is given to me of God;* honoured by him with apostleship: *that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God*, discharging the office of a Christian priest with unwearied diligence, fidelity, and zeal; *that the offering up of the Gentiles*, their spiritual

sacrifices of prayer and praise, *might be acceptable*, through Jesus Christ, *being sanctified by the Holy Ghost*, and thereby infinitely more excellent than any of the oblations that were ever made at the temple.

17. [z] I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. 18. [a] For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, [b] to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, 19. [c] Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; [d] so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. 20. Yea, [e] so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: 21. But, as it is written, [f] To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

z Ps. 115. 1. 1 Cor. 3. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 2. 14—16. with Heb. 5. 1.
a Prov. 25. 14. 2 Cor. 10. 15.
b Ch. 1. 5. & 16. 26. 1 Cor. 4. 15. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.
c Acts 19. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 12. 12. Heb. 2. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 12.
d Acts 9. 22, 29. & 12. 25. & 13. 2. 11. & 14. 10, 26. & 16. 18. & 7. 1, 10, 16. & 18. 9. & 9. 6, 11. & 20. 2, 20, 27. & 21. 19. & 23. 5, 8. Gal. 2. 8. Acts 20. 20. 2 Tim. 4. 7.
e 2 Cor. 12. 15, 16. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 5. Eph. 2. 20.
f Is. 52. 15. & 65. 1. Mark 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Eph. 3. 8.

Verses 17—21. Having mentioned his office, as the apostle of the Gentiles, he glories therein. *I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ*, by whose grace I have been so supported, and who hath given such eminent success to my labours, *in those things which pertain to God*, wherein his glory is so greatly concerned, and in the conversion of the Gentiles so highly exalted. Or the words may be rendered, *I have therefore a rejoicing in Christ concerning the things of God*; that is, the Gentiles, who are offered up to him as living sacrifices, in which he felt the most unfeigned satisfaction. *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me*; far be all arrogant boasts from me; nor would I ascribe the least honour to myself, but only to him whose efficacious grace, under my preaching, hath wrought powerfully, *to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed*: showing forth by an open confession, and a becoming conversation, the reality of their conversion to God, *through mighty signs and wonders*, which were wrought in confirmation of my divine mission, *by the power of the Spirit of God*, whose mighty influence gives energy and demonstration to the word preached: *so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ*; diffusing with indefatigable labours the light of truth through Syria, Lesser Asia, and Greece; and keeping back nothing of the whole counsel of God concerning the free and perfect salvation of sinners through the great Redeemer. *Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named*; but with a holy ambition I went rather to the places where he was wholly unknown, *lest I should build upon another man's foundation*, and so be thought to be inferior to those who went before, and to have borrowed my knowledge from them, and so should have wanted a signal proof of my doctrine and office, as immediately received from Christ himself. *But as it is written*, (Isa. lii. 15.) so hath it been fulfilled by my ministry; *To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and they that have not heard, shall understand*: the Gentiles, who lay in darkness, utterly ignorant of the Messiah and his kingdom, shall see the light of life, and be made wise unto salvation. *Note*, Whatever success attends our labours, God must have all the glory, who alone giveth the increase.

22. For which cause also [g] I have been ‡ much hindered from coming to you. 23. But now, having no more place in these parts, and having [h] a great desire these many years to come unto you; 24. Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled [i] with your *company*. 25. [k] But now I go unto Jerusalem ‖ to minister unto the saints. 26. [l] For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. 27. It hath pleased them verily, * and their debtors they are. [m] For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. 28. When therefore I have performed this, and [n] have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. 29. And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in [o] the fulness of the blessing of the gosoel of Christ.

g Ch. 1. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 18. Acts 9. 21. & 23. 11.
‡ Or *many ways*, or *oftentimes*.
h Ch. 1. 10, 12. 1 Thes. 3. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 4. ver. 32.
i Gr. *with you*. ver. 32.
k Acts 18. 21. & 19. 21. & 20. 22. Gal. 2. 10.
‖ Of this journey, the apostle gave an account to Felix, Acts 24. 17.
l 1 Cor. 16. 1. 2 Cor. viii. ix. Acts 11. 27—30. 1 Cor. 9. 11. Gal. 6. 6. ch. 11. 17. Acts 1. 4, 8.
* This repetition is very emphatical.
m Acts 1. 4, 8. ch. 11. 17. 1 Cor. 9. 11. Gal. 6. 6. Is. xlix, liv, lx.
n Phil. 4. 17.
o Ch. 1. 11. Eph. 3. 8.

Verses 22—29. St Paul had travelled far, but he intended still to extend his labours to a wider circle, and visit Rome also, and the regions beyond it.

1. He had long proposed to visit them, but his many avocations had hitherto prevented him. *For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you; but now having no more place in these parts*, the gospel being fully preached, and Christian churches planted throughout the country between Jerusalem and Italy, *and having a great desire these many years to come unto you*, that I might impart to you some spiritual gift, and be comforted by you; *whensoever I take my journey into Spain*, where I purpose, God willing, to erect the gospel standard, *I will come to you*, and take you in my way, *for I trust to see you in my journey, and*, according to the kind reception I have met in other churches, *to be brought on my way thitherward by you*, some of you going with me, and giving me such directions and necessaries as may conduce to the success of the expedition: *if first I be somewhat*, or *in part, filled with your company*; enjoying the satisfaction of their conversation, rejoicing in their steadiness, and tasting a little of the sweetness of that communion of saints which he hoped in perfection to enjoy with them in heaven. *Note*, (1.) When duty detains us from those whose company we most delight in, we are ever cheerfully to forego our own pleasure, for the sake of our Master's service. (2.) All our purposes should be formed in subordination to Divine Providence. (3.) Christian fellowship is one of the greatest joys on earth, and a little foretaste of what we expect, when we shall join the spirits of the just made perfect.

2. He at present was obliged to return to Jerusalem with the collections of the several churches for their poor brethren in Judea, who by persecution and the famine were in great distress. *But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints*, to distribute among them the generous contributions of their Gentile brethren; *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily*, thus freely and liberally to contribute of their substance, and afford a noble ex-

ample of Christian benevolence: *and their debtors they are*; gratitude as well as charity required this at their hands. *For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things*, and have been called by them, to share in those privileges that were long peculiar to the church of Israel, *their duty is also*, in return, *to minister unto them in carnal things*, (λειτουργησαι) honouring God by a conscientious and liberal supply of their wants.

3. When he had finished this work, he expresses his confidence that he shall come to them. *When therefore I have performed* my present journey and service, *and have sealed to them this fruit*, careful that it be rendered up to them undiminished, *I will come by you into Spain. And I am sure, that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*, as a merchant vessel richly fraught, bringing with me the inestimable treasures of the gospel-word, for your most abundant edification and comfort. *Note*, It is a happy meeting between a minister and his people, when he thus comes to them in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ.

30. [p] Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me; 31. [q] That I may be delivered from them that ‖ do not believe in Judea; and that [r] my service which *I have* for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; 32. [s] That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. 33. Now [t] the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

p Phil. 2. 1. Col. 4. 3, 12. 2 Cor. 1. 11. Eph. 6. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 5. 25. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
q Acts 20. 3, 23. & 21. 27. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16.
‖ Or *disobedient.*
r See ver. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 16. 1—3. 2 Cor. 8. 4. & 9. 1.
s Ver. 23, 24. Acts 18. 21. ch. 1. 10—13. 1 Cor. 1. 9. Jam. 4. 15.
t Ch. 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 4. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 23. 2 Thes. 3. 16. ch. 5. 1. Luke 2. 14. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Eph. 2. 14, 15.

Verses 30—33. Having declared to them his purpose, he entreats their prayers, that he may be able to accomplish it.

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, by every powerful argument, which can be drawn from the grace which is in him, whose I am, and whom I serve; *and for the love of the Spirit*, who visited your souls with his blessed influence; and as a proof of your being possessed of this divine principle, *that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me*; fervently and importunately joining me in my earnest cries to God, *that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea*, those most envenomed foes, his own infidel and wicked countrymen: *and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints*; that all their prejudices against him and the Gentile converts might be removed, and this benevolence thankfully and cheerfully received, to the cementing a nearer union between them. And also, *that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God*, having found success in this ministry, if the Lord so pleased; *and may with you be refreshed*, in the enjoyment of your company, and the communication of our mutual happy experience. *Now*, in return for the favour I ask, may *the God of peace be with you all*, uniting your hearts in love to his blessed self, and to one another; and filling you with all peace and prosperity in your souls. *Amen.* I pray that this may, and trust that it will be your happy case. *Note*, (1.) We are bound to desire each other's prayers, and should count these among the greatest obligations which can be conferred upon us. (2.) Our applications to a throne of grace must be fervent and agonizing, as becomes those who know the inestimable value of the prize for which they wrestle.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

Paul is now concluding this long and excellent epistle; and he doth it with a great deal of affection. 1. *He recommends one friend to the Roman Christians, and particularly salutes several among them*, ver. 1—16. 2. *He gives a caution to take heed of those who caused divisions*, ver. 17—20. 3. *Salutations are added from some who were with Paul*, ver. 21—24. 4. *He concludes with a solemn celebration of the glory of God.*

1. I COMMEND unto you Phebe our sister, which is a [a] servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: 2. That ye [b] receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. 3. [c] Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus: 4. Who have for my life [d] laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5. Likewise *greet* [e] the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who [f] is the first-fruits of Achaia * unto Christ. 6. Greet Mary, who [g] bestowed much labour on us. 7. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my [h] fellow-prisoners, who are [i] of note among the apostles, who also were [k] in Christ before me. 8. Greet Amplias my [l] beloved in the Lord. 9. Salute Urbane, our [m] helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. 10. Salute Apelles, [n] approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' † *household*. 11. Salute Herodion my [o] kinsman. Greet them that be of the ‡ *household* of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. 12. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who [p] labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord. 13. Salute Rufus, [q] chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14. Salute [r] Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the [s] brethren which are with them. 15. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all [t] the saints which are with them. 16. [u] Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

a Ver. 2. Luke 8. 3. It is probable Phebe held the office of a female deacon in the church at Cenchrea. Both Origen and Chrysostom so understand the term here used.
b Phil. 2. 29. 3 John 6. ver. 6.
c Acts 18. 2, 26. 2 Tim. 4. 19. ver. 9, 21.
d Hazarded their lives. Acts 18. 6, 17. & 17. 5. & 19. 23, 30.
e Mat. 18. 20. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Col. 4. 15. Philem. 2.
f 1 Cor. 16. 15. Acts 18. 10.
* Rather *Asia*, i. e. Proconsular Asia.
g Luke 8. 3. 1 Tim. 5. 10.
h Rev. 1. 9. Phil. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 12. Eph. 3. 1. & 4. 1.
i Gal. 1. 2, 9. Acts 1. 15. or Acts 2. 41. & 4. 4.
k 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 2. 10. Gal. 6. 15.
l 1 John 3. 14. & 5. 1. & 4. 21.
m Ver. 3, 21.
n Ch. 5. 2, 8. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Phil. 2. 22.
† Or *friends.*
o Ver. 7, 21.
‡ Or *friends.*
p Ver. 2, 3, 6, 9.
q Eph. 1. 4. 2 John 1. Mat. 20. 16. & 22. 14.
r Mat. 12. 49. John 19. 27.
s Heb. Gal. 3 1. 3. 2 3. John 20. 17. Heb. 2. 11, 12.
t Is. 60. 21. & 62. 12. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Tit. 3. 5. & 2. 11, 12, 14.
u 1 Cor. 16. 21. 2 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 5. 12.

Verses 1—16. The apostle now takes his leave of them:

1. With commending to them the bearer. *I commend unto you Phebe our sister* in the Lord, *which is a servant*, or a deaconess *of the church which is at Cenchrea*, in the neighbourhood of Corinth. She was one of those who devoted her time and substance to the service of the cause of Christ: probably her house served for the assemblies of the church, and she entertained those who came to preach the gospel among them. Therefore he desires, *That ye receive her in the Lord*, with all holy affection, in the Redeemer's name, and for his sake, *as becometh saints*,

such as ye profess yourselves to be; *and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you,* showing her every mark of kindness and respect: *for she hath been a succourer of many,* and hath most hospitably received and entertained them; *and of myself also;* with gratitude therefore I desire to acknowledge her kindness and generosity. *Note,* The least return we can make for favours is to testify our gratitude to our kind benefactors.

2. He sends his affectionate salutations to many at Rome.

(1.) To Priscilla and Aquila, of whom he speaks with the deepest regard as his *helpers in Christ Jesus,* who had been particularly assistant to him in his labours at Corinth, and had for his *life laid down their own necks,* and when he was in danger rescued him at the hazard of their lives, Acts xviii. 12—17. For which noble instance of generous love, saith he, *not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles,* who owe the continuance of my ministry to their zeal and interposition. *Likewise greet the church that is in their house;* either their family, who were all professors of the faith; or the saints who usually assembled there for public worship.

(2.) To Epenetus, whom he entitles his *well-beloved.* So tenderly affectionate was the apostle's heart towards his spiritual children, and especially to Epenetus, as being the first-fruits of his ministry in Achaia unto Christ, and the earnest of that plenteous harvest which followed.

(3.) To *Mary,* whom he distinguishes as having *bestowed much labour on us,* peculiarly assiduous in every kind office of love towards me and my fellow-labourers.

(4.) To Andronicus and Junia, whom some suppose to be husband and wife, but others, more probably, to be brothers. They were Jews, near kinsmen to the apostle, had been endeared to him by confinement in the same prison for Christ, were persons eminent for their gifts, graces, sufferings, and services, and, he adds to their honour, *who were in Christ before me,* called among the earliest converts, and preaching the faith whilst he destroyed it.

(5.) To divers others, the most of whom he mentions with some note of distinction. *Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord,* who bears his image, and is most amiable in the relation wherein he stands to the same Divine Master. *Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ,* and fellow-labourer in the glorious gospel; *and Stachys my beloved. Salute Apelles, approved in Christ,* whose constancy and fidelity have appeared in many trials. *Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household. Salute Herodion my kinsman* both in the flesh and in the spirit. *Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord,* vitally united by faith unto him. *Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa,* those excellent women, *who labour in the Lord,* in their place and station, indefatigable to serve the interests of the gospel. *Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord,* remarkably diligent in her sphere to advance the cause of God. *Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord,* eminent for gifts and graces, and an elect vessel of distinguished honour: *and his mother and mine,* whose kindness to me lays me under such obligations of filial love as if I were by birth her son. *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them,* and belong to their families, from the highest to the lowest. *Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them,* of their respective households. *Salute one another with a holy kiss,* loving one another out of a pure heart fervently. *The churches of Christ salute you,* joining me in the most affectionate remembrances, prayers, and good wishes.

x Mat. 18. 8, 17. Acts 15. 1, 5, 24. 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11. Gal. 1. 9. & 5. 9. Phil. 3. 2. Col. 2. 6. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. 1 Tim. 6. 3—5. 2 Tim. 3. 2—5. Tit. 3. 10. 2 John 10. 11.

17. Now I beseech you brethren, [x] mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. 18. For [y] they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. 19. For your obedience is [z] come abroad unto all *men.* I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you [a] wise unto that which is good, and ‡ simple concerning evil. 20. And the [b] God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. [c] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

y Phil. 3. 19. Is. 56. 10—12. Ezek. 13. 18. 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 23. Col. 2. 4. 1 Thes. 2. 3. 2 Thes. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 17. & 3. 2—6. & 4. 3. Tit. 3. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 3. Jude 2. 2 Thes. ii. Mat. 24. 11, 24. Prov. 14. 15.

z Ch. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 1. 8.

a Mat. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 21. Luke 16. 3.

‡ Or *harmless.*

b See ch. 15. 33. Heb. 13. 20. with Gen. 3. 15. 1 John 3. 8.

Heb. 2. 14. c Ver. 24. ch. 15. 33. 1 Cor. 16. 23. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18. Eph. 6. 24. Phil. 4. 23. Col. 4. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 28. 2 Thes. 3. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 22. Tit. 3. 15. Heb. 13. 25. Rev. 22. 21.

Verses 17—20. Having testified his own warm affection towards them, and sought to unite them in mutual love, he adds,

1. A solemn caution. *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences,* so opposite to the spirit of vital Christianity, and so *contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned. Mark,* with holy jealousy, those deceivers, who, under plausible pretences of greater purity of worship, rend the peace of the church, *and avoid them,* join not with them in communion, and shun, as the greatest evil, whatever would introduce or perpetuate needless divisions.

2. He discovers to them the true character of these pretenders, as the strongest argument to avoid them. *For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ;* whatever plausible pretences and professions they make, they have not really his glory and interest at heart, *but their own belly,* designing some mean, selfish, sinister, worldly advantage; *and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple,* who credulously follow them in their destructive ways. Of you I am persuaded better things; *for your obedience is come abroad unto all men,* and, to your honour, mention is made through all the churches of your professed and exemplary subjection to the gospel of Christ. *I am glad therefore on your behalf,* that you are so well established, and have not been beguiled by these false teachers: *but yet* knowing the weakness and folly of our fallen nature, and the subtlety of deceivers, I warn you to watch against their first efforts; *for I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil,* cautious to discern truth from error, and joining the wisdom of the serpent to the harmlessness of the dove.

3. He expresses his confidence in the Lord's preservation of them from all their enemies and seducers. Now *the God of peace,* reconciled to you in a covenant of everlasting love, to whose blessing and protection I have recommended you, *shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly,* and all his instruments, though ever so crafty. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you,* to strengthen, stablish, settle you, and make you more than conquerors. *Amen. Note,* (1.) None do the devil's work more effectually than those who foment needless divisions among the people of God. (2.) Satan is a vanquished foe; and whomsoever it is possible for him to deceive, he cannot, we know, deceive the elect. (3.) The confidence of victory secured for us in Christ, is the greatest encouragement boldly to conflict with our spiritual enemies. (4.) The time is short; if faith and patience hold out, a moment longer, we shall be placed for ever out of the reach of sin and Satan, and reign triumphant with him who shall make our foes become our footstool. (5.) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ must do all for us, and, therefore to his glory must all our victories be ascribed.

21. [d] Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius, and [e] Jason, and Sosipater, my

d Acts xvi—xx. Phil. 2. 19. 1 Thes. 3. 2. Heb. 13. 23.

Acts 19. 22. & 20. 4. with 3 John 8. 1 Cor. 1. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 20. e Acts 17. 5. & 20. 4.

kinsmen, salute you. 22. [f] I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord. 23. Gaius * mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus, the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother. 24. [g] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

f Perhaps Silas or Silvanus. Acts 15. 22, 32—40. & xvi—xviii. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1.

* Generally supposed to have been Gaius of Corinth, whom Paul baptized, 1 Cor. 1. 14.

g See ver. 20.

Verses 21—24. As the apostle had before saluted many of the saints by name, he adds,

1. The affectionate remembrances of some of those who were at present his companions. *Timotheus my workfellow*, as a son with a father, serving with me in the gospel; *and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you. I Tertius, who wrote this epistle*, as the apostle's amanuensis, *salute you in the Lord. Gaius mine host, and of the whole church*, whose hospitable doors are ever open to the faithful, *saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you;* such had been his high office, and perhaps he still continued in his post, though converted to the faith, one of the *not many noble* who were called; *and Quartus a brother* in Christ Jesus; for all who have him for their Saviour, have one Father, even God.

2. He repeats his fervent prayers for their spiritual prosperity. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.* May you experience his pardoning, comforting, strengthening, sanctifying grace below, and come to his complete and eternal glory above. *Amen!* I pray it may be so. I trust it shall be.

25. Now to him that is [h] of power to stablish you [i] according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (according to the revelation of the mystery, [k] which was kept secret since the world began, 26. But [l] now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, [l] according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the [n] obedience of faith:) 27. [o] To God [p] only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

¶ Written to the Romans from Corinthus, *and sent* by Phebe, servant of the church at Cenchrea.

h 2 Tim. 3. 1, 12. Eph. 3. 20. Jude 24. Heb. 7. 25. 1 Thes. 3. 13. 2 Thes. 2. 17. & 3. 3.

i Ch. 2. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24, & 2. 2. Eph. 3. 8.

k 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 3. 5, 9. Col. 1. 26. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 20. ch. 3. 21.

l Ch. 1. 5. Col. 1. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Tit. 1. 3.

m Mark 16. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Is. 11. 9.

n Ch. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. Acts 6. 7.

o Ch. 9. 5. & 11. 36. Gal. 1. 5. Phil. 4. 20. Eph. 3. 20, 21. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 6. 16. 2 Tim. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. & 5. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 18. Jude 25. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 13.

p Ps. 147. 5. Dan. 2. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 17. ch. 11. 33, 34.

Verses 25—27. Once and again, when he seemed to close his epistle, some new matter arose to his mind, here he solemnly takes his leave of them.

1. He commends them to God and the word of his grace. *Now* I commend you *to him that is of power to stablish you*, and keep you from falling, *according to my gospel*, which, by divine authority commissioned, I here declare unto you, *and* according to *the preaching of Jesus Christ*, agreeably to what he himself taught, and I speak in his name, pointing him out as the great sum and substance of the gospel, the hope and the help of his people; *according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began*, wholly hid from the Gentiles, and but obscurely intimated to the Jews in types and dark prophecies; *but now is made manifest* by the ministry of the divinely illuminated servants of Jesus, *and by the Scriptures of the prophets* which, having received their accomplishment, are unveiled, and clearly understood; *according to the commandment of the everlasting God*, who hath given his ministers an express commission to declare the unchangeable purposes of his grace, that they might be *made known to all nations*, Gentiles as well as Jews, *for* this glorious end, that they might be brought to *the obedience of faith* receiving the testimony of his word, and from the divine principle of faith, which worketh by love, engaged to walk before him in righteousness and true holiness.

2. He concludes with a doxology. *To God only wise*, essentially wise in himself, and seen especially to be so in the amazing contrivance of the gospel method of salvation, *be glory* and honour ascribed, *through Jesus Christ* the only Mediator, *for ever. Amen.* May his saints on earth perpetuate with their latest breath his praises! and in heaven he shall for ever be to all his hosts the glorious object of their unceasing adorations. Amen and Amen!

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

Introduction.

CORINTH was a famed city of that part of Greece called Achaia, situated on the neck of land which joined the Peloponnesus, now called Morea, to Greece. Its very situation made it a most convenient mart; and, in consequence of the vast trade carried on there, it became exceeding rich and populous: so that the place was noted for pride and luxury, and lewd to a proverb. Here was the gospel standard erected by the blessed Paul, and abundant fruit of his labours appeared during his two years' stay: but, on his absence, faction arose; false teachers sought to raise a party against the apostle; disputes followed; disorders in discipline, doctrine, and morals, were introduced; and these grievous abuses, which had come to the apostle's ears, are severely reprehended. After a short introduction at the beginning of the epistle, he first blames them for their discord and factions, enters into the original and source of them, shows them how much pride and vanity, and the affectation of science, learning, and eloquence, flattered by false teachers, had contributed to the scandalous schism; and prescribes humility and submission to divine instruction, to the teaching of God by his Spirit, both by external revelation and internal illumination, as a remedy for the evils that abounded amongst them. He shows them the vanity of their pretended science and eloquence on many accounts. This he doth through the first four chapters. In the fifth he treats of the case of the incestuous person, and orders him to be put out from amongst them. Nor is what the ancients say improbable, that this incestuous person was a man in great esteem, and head of one party at least amongst them. The apostle seems to tax them with being puffed up on his account, chap. v. 2. In the sixth chapter he blames them for their lawsuits carried on before heathen judges, when their disputes about property should have been amicably determined amongst themselves: and in the close of the chapter warns them against the sin of fornication, and urges his caution with variety of arguments. In the seventh chapter he gives advice upon a case of conscience, which some of that church had proposed to him in an epistle, about marriage; and shows it to be appointed of God as a remedy against fornication; that the ties of it were not dissolved though an husband or wife continued an heathen when the other became a Christian, and, in short, that Christianity made no change in men's civil states and relations. He gives also some directions here about virgins, in answer, as is probable, to the Corinthians' inquiries. In the eighth he directs them about meats offered to idols, and cautions them against abusing their Christian liberty. From whence he also takes occasion in the ninth chapter to expatiate a little on his own conduct upon this head of liberty; for though he might have insisted on a maintenance from the churches where he ministered, he waved this demand, that he *might make the gospel of Christ without charge:* and did in other things comply with and suit himself to the tempers and circumstances of those among whom he laboured for their good. In the tenth chapter he dissuades them, from the example of the Jews, against having communion with idolaters, by eating of their sacrifices, inasmuch as they could not be at once partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils; though they were not bound to inquire concerning meat sold in the shambles, or set before them at a feast made by unbelievers, whether it were a part of the idol sacrifices or no, but were at liberty to eat without asking questions. In the eleventh chapter he gives direction about their habit in public worship, blames them for their gross irregularities and scandalous disorders in receiving the Lord's supper, and solemnly warns them against the abuse of so sacred an institution. In the twelfth chapter he enters on the consideration of spiritual gifts, which were poured forth in great abundance on this church, upon which they were not a little elated. He tells them in this chapter, that all came from the same original, and were all directed to the same end. They issued from one Spirit, and were intended for the good of the church; and must be abused when they were not made to minister to this purpose. Towards the close he informs them that they were indeed valuable gifts, but he could recommend to them somewhat far more excellent. Upon which he breaks out, in the thirteenth chapter, into the commendation and characters of charity. And then in the fourteenth directs

them how to keep up decency and order in the churches in the use of their spiritual gifts, in which they seem to have been exceedingly irregular, through pride of their gifts, and a vanity of showing them. The fifteenth chapter is taken up in confirming and explaining the great doctrine of the resurrection. The last chapter consists of some particular advices and salutations, and thus the epistle closes.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The preface or introduction to the whole epistle,* ver. 1—9. 2. *One principal occasion of writing it hinted,* viz. *their divisions, and the original of them,* ver. 10—13. 3. *An account of Paul's ministry among them, which was principally preaching the gospel,* ver. 13—17. 4. *The manner wherein he preached the gospel, and the different success of it, with an account how admirably it was fitted to bring glory to God, and beat down the pride and vanity of man,* ver. 17, ad finem.

1. [a] PAUL, called *to be* [b] an apostle of Jesus Christ [c] through the will of God, and [d] Sosthenes *our* brother, 2. [e] Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that [f] are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with [g] all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: 3. [h] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. 4. [i] I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; 5. [k] That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance and *in* all knowledge; 6. Even as [l] the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7. So that [m] ye come behind in no gift; [n] waiting for the * coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8. Who shall also [o] confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be* [p] blameless in [q] the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9. [r] God *is* faithful, by whom ye were [s] called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

a See Rom. 1. 1. Acts 13. 9.
b Mat. 10. 2. John 20. 21. Eph. 4. 11. ch. 9. 1, 2.
c 2 Cor. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 15. Acts 13. 2.
d Acts 18. 17.
e Acts 18. 1—17.
f John 17. 19. Acts 15. 9. Rom. 1. 7. & 8. 28—30. ver. 30. Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 9. & 2. 21. Jude 1. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Thes. 4. 7. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 4.
g Joel 2. 32. Rom. 10. 12. ch. 8. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Zeph. 3. 9. Ps. 45. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 2.
h 2 Pet. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 2.
i See Rom. 1. 8. 2 Cor. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 3. Phil. 1. 3, 4. Col. 1. 3, 4. 1 Thes. 1. 2, 3. 2 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 3, 5.
k 2 Cor. 8. 7. Eph. 1. 3. Col. 1. 9. ch. 4. 8, 10. & 10. 15. & 12. 8. & 14. 26.
l Ch. 2. 1, 2. Acts 20. 24. 2 Tim. 1. 8. Rev. 11. 2. & 19. 10. Mat. 24. 14. 2 Cor. 1. 20, 21. 2 Thes. 1. 10.
m See ver. 5.
n Phil. 3. 20. Col. 3. 4. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Tit. 2. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28. & 10. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 13. 2 Pet. 3. 12. * Gr. *revelation.*
o Ch. 10. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 24. 2 Thes. 3. 3. Heb. 10. 23. 2 Cor. 1. 21.
p Eph. 5. 27. Phil. 2. 15. Col. 1 20. 1 Thes. 3. 13. & 5. 23. 2 Pet. 3. 14. Jude 24.
q Phil. 1. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 19. & 3. 13. & 4. 15. 5. 23. 2 Thes. 7. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 12. 1 John 2. 28. 1 Tim. 6. 14.
r Ch. 10. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 24. 2 Thes. 3. 3. Heb. 10. 23. & 11. 11. Jer. 32. 40. Is. 49. 7. Tit. 1. 2.
s See ver. 2. Col. 1. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Is. 27. 13. ver. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 17—21.

Verses 1—9. The apostle opens his epistle,

1. With an assertion of his apostolic character, which some among them affected to traduce and vilify, as if he had assumed an honour to which he was in no wise entitled. He affirms therefore the divine authority upon which he acted; not self-constituted, but called of Jesus Christ to the high honour and important charge of apostleship. And Sosthenes, a fellow-minister, joins him in affectionate salutations. *Note,* There are times when to vindicate our real character and magnify our office, is not pride, but a debt we owe to the church of God.

2. He addresses himself to the church of God at Corinth, as *to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus,* set apart by God's eternal designation in Christ their head, separated by his grace from the world which lieth in wickedness, incorporated in his name, and making open profession of their faith in him by baptism; *called to be saints,* justly so denominated, and proving by their conduct the propriety of the name they bore; *with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours,* in whom we have a joint interest, and are all one in him. *Note,* (1.) All who profess the name of Jesus are called to prove their relation to him by the holiness of their walk. (2.) Since Christ is proposed to us as the object of our worship, he must needs be very God. (3.) The life of a Christian is a habitual course of calling upon God. To live without prayer is the surest mark of a Christless soul.

3. He gives them his apostolic benediction. *Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace,* the source of every blessing, and *peace* with a reconciled God through Jesus Christ. *Note,* (1.) Every mercy a sinner enjoys in time, or hopes for in eternity, flows purely from the sovereign, free, and boundless grace of God in Jesus Christ. (2.) All solid peace of conscience can only arise from a sense of God's favour, and reconciliation through the Redeemer.

4. He thanks God, on their account, for the graces and gifts which were bestowed upon them. *I thank my God* (and blessed and happy are they who can call him so) *always on your behalf,* (so constantly did he feel a tender concern for them upon his heart) *for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ,* as the great Head of his people, to whom they are united, and from whom, as the fountain of vital influence, they draw continual supplies of strength and consolation. And as he charitably hoped the generality of them were partakers of the grace of God in truth, he had also another cause for thankfulness, *because in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance and in all knowledge,* endued with clear views of that rich salvation which is in a crucified Jesus, and capable of expressing themselves on the subject with singular fluency of speech and energy of diction; *even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,* the Holy Ghost giving the fullest demonstration to their consciences of the truth of that gospel which was preached unto them; *so that ye come behind in no gift,* in nothing inferior to any church which had been planted; in these distinguished gifts of the Spirit; *waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,* according to the declarations of his word, which they had heard and embraced, preparing to meet him, and, with patient but joyful expectation, looking for the day of his appearing. *Note,* They who are Christians indeed cannot but rejoice in the prospect, that, when Christ who is our hope shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.

5. The apostle professes his confidence in them, that they will never be moved from the hope of the gospel. *Who shall also confirm you unto the end,* in faith and holiness, enabling you to persevere unshaken amidst all your trials, *that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ,* being found complete in him, and then transformed wholly into his image. And this his expectation Paul builds on the surest foundation, even because *God is faithful* to all his promises, and never can or will fail his people; *by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;* and the same almighty grace which brought you into this blessed estate is engaged to cement the union, till

it shall be perfected in glory. *Note*, (1.) They who are Christ's are sure finally to overcome: none can pluck them out of his hand. (2.) The faithfulness of God should be the matter of our frequent meditation; since nothing so much enlivens the heart with hope, and quickens it to walk in holiness, as the assured confidence that nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

10. Now I [t] beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [u] that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no † divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are [x] contentions among you. 12. Now this [y] I say, that every one of you saith, [z] I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13. [a] Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 14. I thank God that [b] I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius: 15. [c] Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16. And [d] I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

t Rom. 15. 30. Phil. 2. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 5. 20. & 10. 1. ch. 5. 4.

u Rom. 12. 16. & 15. 5, 6. ch. 11. 18. 2 Cor. 13. 9, 11. Eph. 4. 1—7. Phil. 3. 15, 16. & 2. 2. 1 Pet. 3. 8.

† Gr. *schisms.*

x Prov. 13. 10. Jam. 4. 1. ch. 3. 3. & 11. 18.

y Ch. 7. 29. & 15. 50. 2 Cor. 9. 3. Gal. 3. 17.

z Ch. 3. 4. & 16. 12. Acts 18. 24. John 1. 42. ch. 13. 4.

a 2 Cor. 11. 4. Gal. 1. 7. Eph. 4. 5.

b Acts 18. 8. Rom. 16. 23.

c Mat. 10. 16. Eph. 5. 15. ch. 3. 10.

d Ch. 16. 15, 17. Acts 16. 15, 33.

Verses 10—16. One chief end of writing this epistle appears to be the healing those divisions of which Paul had been informed. He therefore,

1. Exhorts them to union among themselves; in sentiment and affection to have their hearts knit together, avoiding, as the most dangerous rock, those disputes and divisions, which must be the bane of Christian charity, and could not but end in the ruin of the church. And he urges this by the most powerful motive, even *by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;* not only as one authorized to enjoin this upon them, but suggesting that the very mention of the endearing name of Jesus should silence every jar, and fill their souls with love to him and one another. *Note*, Internal divisions among the members of Christ have more wounded his cause than all the external attacks of earth or hell.

2. He informs them whence he received his information of those evils which he so justly condemns; and solemnly remonstrates against their making so ill a use of his name, as well as of his brethren, to range themselves in different parties; while some said, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, or Peter, depreciating the one and exalting the other; as if it mattered ought by whose instrumentality they were converted to the faith; whilst others, as if above all means and instruments, boasted, *I am of Christ*, and so immediately under the teachings of his Spirit as to need no other instructor. But how absurd were these pretensions, and how dangerous these discords! *Is Christ divided?* so as to act separately from the means of his own appointment? or can there be the least sort of division between him and those who act by his authority? and with whom he hath promised to be to the end of the world? or can his church, which is his body, and one with him, be disjointed, and his members subsist separately from each other? surely no. And as for those ministers, under whose names you range yourselves, let me ask, applying it to myself, *Was Paul crucified for you?* Did I, or my brethren, ever pretend that we were your saviours, *or were ye baptized in the name of Paul*, by my authority, as my disciples, professing your faith in me, or obedience to my service? God forbid. Neither I, nor my fellow-labourers, ever taught you to hope for any other atonement but in a crucified Jesus, nor baptized you in any other name but his. *I thank God*, since this matter hath been so abused by many of you, *that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name*, and sought to set myself at the head of a party. *I baptized also the household of Stephanus: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. Note*, A faithful minister of Christ rejects with abhorrence all attempts to set him at the head of a party, solicitous only that his Master should be glorified, and jealous above all things never to rob him of his peculiar honours.

17. For Christ sent me [e] not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: [f] not with wisdom of ‡ words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18. For [g] the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19. For it is written, [h] I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20. [i] Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21. [k] For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 22. For [l] the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23. But we preach [m] Christ crucified, [n] unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24. But unto them [o] which are called, both Jews and Greeks, [p] Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25. [q] Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that [r] not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called:* 27. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29. [s] That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30. But of him are ye [t] in Christ Jesus, who [u] of

e John 4. 2. Acts 10. 43. Mark 16. 15. Acts 26. 17, 18. Rom. 15. 20.

f Ch. 2. 1, 4, 13. 2 Pet. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 2.

‡ Or *speech.*

g Ver. 23, 24. Acts 17. 18. Rom. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16.

h Job 5. 13. Is. 29. 14. Jer. 8. 9.

i Is. 33. 18. & 44. 25. Job 12. 17. & 20. 24. Rom. 1. 22.

k Rom. 1. 21, 22, 28. Mat. 11. 25. Luke 10. 21.

l Mat. 12. 38. & 16. 1. Luke 11. 16. John 2. 18. & 4. 48.

m Ch. 2. 2. Gal. 3. 1. Acts 8. 32, 33, 35. Gal. 6. 14. Eph. 3. 8.

n Ch. 2. 14. Mat. 11. 6. & 13. 57. & 24. 10. Is. 8. 14. Luke 2. 34. John 6. 60, 66. Acts 17. 18. Rom. 9. 32. Gal. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Is. 53. 2, 3.

o Luke 7. 35. Rom. 8. 28, 30. & 9. 24. ver. 2, 9.

p Prov. 8. 12. Rom. 1. 4, 16. Eph. 1. 19, 20. Col. 2. 3. ver. 30.

q 1 Kin. 3. 12. 24. 2 Cor. 4. 7. Ps. 147. 5.

r 1 Sam. 17. 49. Ps. 8. 2. Mat. 11. 22. & 19. 25. Luke 16. 15. John 7. 48. Acts 4. 13. & 6. 9, 10. & 7. 54. & 17. 34. & 13. 16. Rom. 4. 17. ch. 2. 3, 6 2 Cor. 4. 7. & 10. 5. Rev. 6. 15. Jam. 2. 5, 7. Mat. 11. 5. Zeph. 3. 12. Zech. 11. 7, 11. Ps. 68. 10. & 72. 12—14.

s Eph. 2. 9. Rom. 4. 2. & 3. 19, 27. ver. 31.

t Eph. 1. 4, 6. 7. & 2. 10. & 3. 17. John 17. 21—23.

u Rom. 11. 36. 2 Cor. 5. 18—21. Eph. 1. 3, 4. John 3. 16, 17.

x Col. 2. 3. Is. 48. 17. & 6. 1—3. 2 Cor. 4. 6. John y 14. 9, 10. & 1. 18 Col. 1. 15. z redemption: 31. That, according as it
y Is. 45. 24, 25. & liii. & 54. 17. Jer. is written, b He that glorieth, let him
23. 6. Dan. 9. 24. Rom. 3. 22. 24— glory in the Lord.
26. & 5. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. Jer. 33. 16. z John 1. 14, 16. & 14. 6. & 17. 17, 19. ch. 6. 11 a Rom. 3. 24. & 4. 25. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Tit. 2. 14. Rev. 5. 9. Hos. 13. 14. Gal. 1. 4. & 3. 13.
b 1 Sam. 2. 10. Is. 65. 16. Jer. 9. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 10. 17.

God is made unto us x wisdom, and righteousness, and z sanctification, and a

Verses 17—31. Having vindicated himself from every insinuation that he designed to form a party by baptizing disciples, he disclaims here every attempt to aggrandize himself in the manner in which he preached the gospel unto them. *For*, saith he, *Christ*, from whom immediately I received my commission, *sent me not to baptize* as my principal business, *but to preach the gospel*, according to the revelation made known unto me; and he informs them,

1. Of the manner in which he preached, *not with wisdom of words*, with affected flourishes of oratory, or to gratify philosophic pride, *lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect*, the simple truth of a crucified Jesus should be obscured, its efficacy defeated, its honour tarnished, and the success be ascribed not to the divine simplicity and native force of the truth, but to the art and eloquence of those who preached the gospel. *Note*, Though eloquence, without ostentation, is both lawful and laudable, yet, as Luther says, he is the best preacher that can speak the most familiarly, and suits his discourse best to the capacity and understanding of the hearer, more solicitous to be understood than to be admired.

2. Of the effect of his preaching. *For the preaching of the cross*, and the great salvation obtained by the bloodshedding of the Redeemer on the ignominious tree, *is to them that perish, foolishness.* They who are puffed up in pride on their own sufficiency, or ignorant of their guilt and sinfulness, and their need of the redemption which is in Christ, reject the gospel as nonsense and absurdity, and perish in their impenitence and unbelief. (1.) The doctrine of the cross was to the Jews *a stumblingblock*, ver. 23. They could not bear to receive him for their Messiah, who made so mean an appearance in his life, and died as a malefactor on a tree. Rejecting all the amazing miracles which he wrought, they required a sign from heaven, Matt. xii. 38. expecting he should appear in all worldly pomp and grandeur, as their temporal, instead of a spiritual, Redeemer. (2.) To the Greeks this doctrine *was foolishness. They sought after wisdom*, ver. 22. they received nothing but what was demonstrable on what they termed the principles of reason: and since their philosophic minds could perceive no connection between a man who was crucified, and the redemption of sinners; nor esteemed it possible, on their principles, that he who could not, as they conceived, save himself from the cross, should be able to save others from death and hell; they stamped the declaration with folly, and rejected it as absurd. But, (3.) Unto us who are called, and *saved* by grace, however proud Greeks or self-righteous Jews may think of it, *Christ*, and the doctrine of salvation through his cross, appears to be *the power of God, and the wisdom of God. The power of God is seen* to be most gloriously displayed in the Mediator's undertaking and sufferings: in his miracles, resurrection, ascension; and especially in the mighty efficacy with which his gospel is attended, through the influences of his Spirit, effectually quickening the dead in trespasses and sins, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. *The wisdom of God* is astonishingly displayed in the stupendous scheme of man's redemption, wherein the sinner, consistent with the glory of every divine perfection, can be received into the bosom of mercy; and pardon, righteousness, and glory, be bestowed on him, without dishonour to God's government or law, and this through the substitution of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven in our stead.

3. He shows the triumph of this doctrine of a crucified Jesus over all the inventions of the wisest sages; their schemes and systems could never relieve a guilty conscience, or lay a solid foundation for the sinner's hope. The Lord therefore, according to his word, Isa. xxix. 14. stamps all human wisdom as folly *Where is the wise* philosopher? *Where is the* learned *scribe*, deep read in traditions? *Where is the disputer of this world*, whether Jew or Gentile? Can the one or the other give the least satisfactory account, how a guilty sinner can be reconciled to an offended God? *Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* and left philosophers and Rabbins to grope for the wall as blind? *For after that*, or *since in the wisdom of God*, it was so ordered, *that the world by wisdom knew not God*, but their most learned sages were permitted to become vain in their imaginations, see Rom. i. 21, 22. ignorant of God, his worship, and ways: *it pleased God*, in his infinite grace and love, to make a more transcendent display of his own glory, *by the foolishness of preaching*, (for so would a wise world call the doctrine of the cross,) *to save them that believe*, making it effectual to their eternal peace and joy. This contrivance of divine wisdom, to save lost souls by the incarnation of Jesus, is deemed the greatest folly; but *the foolishness of God is wiser than men*, infinitely excelling all their boasted researches, and ingenious systems; *and the weakness of God is stronger than men*, however inadequate the gospel method in their eyes may appear; and however weak the instruments are, which are chiefly employed in the work, yet it was clear to demonstration, that what all the precepts of philosophy, and the power of oratory, never produced, the doctrine of the cross effected, destroying the kingdom of sin and Satan in the hearts of men, and causing such an evident change in their tempers and conduct, as spoke the finger of God. *Note*, Wherever the gospel is truly preached, however weak the instrument may be, God will bear testimony to his own word, that the excellency of the power may appear to be of God and not of us.

4. He appeals to them for the truth of what he had advanced, as verified by experience. *For ye see your calling brethren*, and cannot but observe who are the partakers of the gospel salvation; *how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called;* some few singular instances of these may be observed, whom the sovereign grace of God hath effectually wrought upon: *but*, in general, the proud philosopher, the self-righteous scribes, and the men of high birth and affluence, refuse to submit to the humbling and self-denying doctrines of the cross: and leaving them to their folly and ruin, *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise*, that an illiterate Christian should shame the proud philosopher, and show the surpassing influence of the doctrine of Jesus, above all his learned precepts. *And God hath chosen the weak things of this world*, men in the meanest outward circumstances *to confound the things that are mighty*, to stamp vanity on human grandeur, and to show that his kingdom stands without any earthly supports, nay, in defiance of all worldly power and influence; *and base things of the world, and things which are despised*, even the poor Gentiles, whom the self-righteous Jews would scarce deign to put among the dogs of their flock, these *hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not*, who never had a name or place in the church of God before, *to bring to nought*, (καταργησῃ,) *to abolish the things that are*, putting a period to the covenant of peculiarity, under which the Jewish people formerly stood, and thought themselves, exclusive of all others the only favourites of heaven. But now all difference ceases, *that no flesh should glory in his presence*, on account of any imagined superiority in wisdom, wealth, nobility, or any external privileges; but *that, as it is written, he that glorieth should glory in the Lord*, ascribing the whole of their salvation to his sovereign, rich, and boundless grace, as revealed in the gospel of Jesus to the miserable and the desperate.

5. He reminds them of the inestimable blessings, to which, in

virtue of their interest in Christ, they are entitled. They had in themselves nothing to glory in, nothing but weakness and wickedness; *but of him are ye in Christ Jesus*, chosen from eternity, called in the fulness of time into the fellowship of the gospel, and incorporated into the mystical body of Christ, *who of God is made unto us*, according to the constitution of the covenant of grace, *wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.* (1.) *Wisdom;* we are naturally foolish, deceived, and ignorant; but all the treasures of wisdom reside in our exalted head; and as the prophet of his church, it is his office to lead us into all truth, for which end he hath given us his word, and promises his Spirit that we may be taught of God, and thereby be made wise unto salvation. (2.) *Righteousness;* by his obedience unto death he hath brought in an everlasting righteousness for our use, in which we can appear complete before God; and, sinful and corrupt as we are in ourselves, we are ever accepted in this beloved; and God justifies us, though ungodly, because found in him, who is the Lord our Righteousness. (3.) *Sanctification;* he is the head of vital influence, and, as a quickening spirit, works effectually in the hearts of his people, mortifying their corrupt and vile affections, and daily renewing them in the inner man, that their spirits and temper may be brought to a nearer conformity with his own. (4.) *Redemption;* his work is perfect; he hath obtained eternal redemption for his people; they can therefore never perish. The trials of time can never separate us from his love, we shall now be saved from the dominion of sin; at death, the very being of it shall be destroyed in us; and though our bodies return to the dust from whence they came, at the great resurrection-day we shall awake in the perfection of beauty, no more to see corruption, our bodies glorious and immortal as his own. Thus Christ is to us all in all, and to him alone must all the glory be ascribed.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

The apostle proceeds with his argument in this chapter, and, (1.) *Reminds the Corinthians of the plain manner wherein he delivered the gospel to them,* ver. 1—5. *But yet,* (2.) *Shows them that he had communicated to them a treasure of the truest and highest wisdom; such as exceeded all the attainments of learned men; such as could never have entered into the heart of man, if it had not been revealed; nor can be received and improved to salvation, but by the light and influence of that Spirit who revealed it,* ver. 6. ad finem.

a Ch. 1. 17. ver. 4, 13. 2 Cor. 10. 10. & 11. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 16.
b 2 Pet. 1. 16. 2 Thes. 1. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 8. Rev. 1. 2, 9. Is. 8. 20.
c Ch. 1. 6, 23. & 15. 3, 4. John 17. 3. Acts 26. 18. Gal. 6. 14. Phil. 3. 8—10.
d Acts 18. 3. & 20. 18, 19. 2 Cor. 10. 10. & 4. 7. & 11. 29, 30. & 12. 9. Gal. 4. 13. ch. 4. 10—13. 2 Cor. 7. 5. & 6. 4.
e Rom. 15. 19. 2 Pet. 1. 16. ch. 1. 17. ver. 13. ch. 4. 20. Col. 2. 4. 1 Thes. 1. 5.
* Or *persuasible.*
f Ch. 1. 17. & 3. 6. 2 Cor. 4. 7. & 6. 7. & 12. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Acts 16. 14. & 26. 18. † Gr. *be.*

1. AND I, brethren, when I came to you, [a] came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the [b] testimony of God. 2. For I determined [c] not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3. And I was with you [d] in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4. [e] And my speech and my preaching *was* not with * enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5. [f] That your faith should not † stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Verses 1—5. The apostle had before declared with what unadorned simplicity he had preached to them the doctrines of the gospel: they needed no varnish, and he trusted to their native weight and evidence to recommend them. *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God;* he used no rhetorical arts, nor affected curious speculations, but plainly declared the message which he had received of the Lord, the truth of which was attested by prophecies and miracles, and sealed to their hearts by the demonstration of the Spirit. *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified,* avoiding all show of Jewish or Grecian literature, and simply confining myself to that one distinguished point, in which all the lines of our salvation meet as in one centre, from which all the privileges of the gospel flow as from their source, and under the influence of which we can alone be engaged and inclined to all the service to which the Saviour calls us, constrained by his dying love. *And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling,* deeply sensible of his own insufficiency for the arduous work; in his outward circumstances and appearance, poor and despicable; exposed to innumerable difficulties from the enmity of the world without, and the envy of some within, who wanted to make a party against him, and above all, deeply exercised in his own soul, lest his message should be despised and rejected by them to their eternal ruin. *And my speech, and my preaching, was not with enticing words of man's wisdom;* these he studiously avoided, but he taught with much more effectual evidence, *in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;* not only by the miracles which he wrought in confirmation of his mission, but by the energy with which the Holy Ghost accompanied his preaching to the consciences: *that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men,* as supported by human evidence, or wrought by moral persuasion or argument, *but in the power of God,* arising from a divine conviction of the truth, resting on divine testimony, and produced by the operation of God. *Note,* (1.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of the gospel than the affectation of being admired as orators, instead of being useful preachers. (2.) Christ, in his person and offices, should be the great subject of all our discourses; nothing so effectually reaches the conscience as the doctrine of the cross. (3.) Faithful ministers have peculiar trials, both from without and within, trembling sometimes for themselves, conscious of their own infirmities: trembling for the people, lest that which should be to them a savour of life unto life, should by their unbelief and prejudices, become a savour of death unto death. (4.) The faith of God's elect is not the effect of human persuasion, but of divine operation.

6. Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them [g] that are perfect: yet [h] not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: 7. But we speak [i] the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8. [k] Which none of the princes of this world knew: for, [l] had they known *it*, they would not have crucified [m] the Lord of glory. 9. But, as it is written, [n] Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10. [o] But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11. [p] For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? [q] even so

g Phil. 3. 15. Heb. 5. 14. & 6. 1. Eph. 1. 13, 14. 1 John 2. 14. ch. 1. 5. & 14. 20.
h Ch. 5. 19, 20, 28. Jam. 3. 15. with Ps. 2. 1—4. ch. 15. 24.
i Eph. 3. 9, 10. Rom. 16. 25, 26. Col. 1. 26, 27. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. John 17. 3.
k Mat. 11. 25. John 7. 48. Acts 13. 27. ver. 6. ch. 1. 26—28.
l Luke 23. 34. John 8. 19. & 10. 3. Acts 3. 17. & 13. 27. 2 Cor. 5. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
m Acts 7. 2. Ps. 24. 7—10. & 110. 5.
n Is. 64. 4. ver. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 12. 1 Kin. 10. 7. Ps. 31. 19. Col. 3. 3.
o Mat. 13. 11. & 16. 17. John 14. 26. & 16. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 18. 1 John 2. 20, 27. with John 1. 18. & 14. 7, 9. Ps. 92. 5. Rom. 11. 33, 34.
p Jer. 17. 9. Prov. 20. 27. & 27. 19. q Ver. 10. Mat. 11. 27. & 16. 17. Rom. 11. 33. 1 John 2. 20, 27.

the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12. Now we have received, [r] not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; [s] that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13. [t] Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14. [u] But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 15. [x] But he that is spiritual [y] ‡ judgeth all things, yet he himself is ‖ judged of no man. 16. [z] For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he * may instruct him? [a] But we have the mind of Christ.

r Ver. 6. Rom. 8. 5, 6, 15, 16, 26.
s 1 John 2. 20, 27. Rom. 8. 32. 1 Cor. 3. 22.
t Ch. 1. 17. ver. 4. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Gen. 40. 8. & 41. 16. Dan. 5. 12.
u Acts 17. 18. & 26. 24, 25, 28. Rom. 8. 5–8. ch. 1. 18. 23. Gal. 1. 12. Mat. 16. 23. Jude 4. 2 Pet. 3. 16. Rev. 3. 17, 18. John 3. 3, 4, 6
x Ch. 3. 1. Gal. 6. 1. Phil. 1. 10. John 3. 6. Rom. 8. 1, 4. 2 Cor. 5. 17.
y Prov. 27. 19, & 28. 5. John 7. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 21. 1 John 4. 1. Heb. 5. 14.
‡ Or *discerneth*.
‖ Or *discerned*.
z Job. 15. 8. Jer. 23. 18.
* Gr. *shall*.
a Ps. 25. 14. John 15. 15. & 14. 26. & 16. 13–15.

Verses 6—16. The apostle had disclaimed all affectation of human wisdom. *Howbeit*, says he, *we speak wisdom among them that are perfect*, (τελειους) and grown up to greater maturity in knowledge, understanding, and grace; demonstrating the infinite wisdom, and suitableness of the divine contrivance, in the grand scheme of man's salvation, through faith in a crucified Jesus. *Yet not the wisdom of this world*, such systems as philosophers have invented or will approve; *nor the princes of this world*, such as the proud Rabbins and great men of the earth comprehend, or can conceive, who, with all their boasts of science, *come to nought*, and perish in their pride. *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory.* The divine contrivance for the salvation of lost sinners had been unknown to the Gentile world, and but dimly revealed to the Jews in mysterious types and figures; but now the fulness of time was come, foreordained in the eternal counsels, when the mystery of grace should be unfolded, and the elect of God effectually brought to his kingdom and glory. And this design of the divine wisdom *none of the princes of this world knew*, neither the Roman governor, nor the high priest and elders of the Jews; *for had they known it, they would not have crucified him*, who in essential deity is one with the Father, and justly claims the title of *the Lord of glory*. *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Low as their apprehensions were of the crucified Redeemer, yet hath he brought in a salvation for lost souls, unutterably glorious, by a contrivance far above human conception, and hath prepared for those who, sensible of his amazing grace, feel the constrainings of divine love in their hearts, such inestimable blessings as pass man's understanding. *But these* glorious things which are hidden from others, *God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit*, by a divine illumination in the preaching of the gospel; *for the Spirit*, who is the great agent in the conversion of the sinner's soul, illuminating his darkness, and quickening him from his state of death, *searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*, and who alone being perfectly acquainted with his counsels, is fully able to reveal them to us. *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?* None but our own spirit can discover what passes in our secret thoughts, *even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* The wisest and weakest are equally at a loss respecting God's eternal counsels and designs; and none but that eternal Spirit, who is essentially God, and one with the Father and the Son, (as a man's soul is one with him, and conscious of all that passes in his breast) can know or reveal these unto us. *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world*, that we should be guided by its wisdom, or follow its maxims, *but the Spirit which is of God*, whose office it is, in the economy of man's salvation, to enlighten the darkened mind, *that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*, even all those inestimable blessings and privileges, of which, by grace through faith, we are make partakers. *Which things also we speak*, declaring from happy experience, the truths which the Spirit hath revealed to us, *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth*, affecting to set them off with figures of oratory, *but which the Holy Ghost teacheth*, to add to which would be but to gild the brilliant, which shines infinitely brighter in its native lustre: *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, the types with the antitype, the prophecies with their fulfilment, the Old Testament with the New, which serve to cast mutual light and glory on each other, and supply us with expressions, which most forcibly and clearly convey the Spirit's meaning to the heart. *But the natural man*, who continues under the darkness of his fallen mind, whatever attainments in human wisdom and literature he may have made, *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him*, because he cannot reconcile them to his corrupted reason and defiled mind; *neither can he know them:* he is as much under a moral incapacity of ever attaining to the true understanding of spiritual things, as the blind man is under a natural incapacity of discovering the brightest objects, till the faculty of vision be given to him, *because they are spiritually discerned*, and therefore cannot be comprehended without divine illumination. *But he that is spiritual*, and effectually taught of God, *judgeth all things*, discovering the excellence, all-sufficiency, and suitableness of God's method of salvation, and distinguishing truth from error. *Yet he himself is judged of no man;* no natural man, however wise or learned, discerns the principles upon which he acts: or can apprehend the truths which the spiritual man experimentally knows: or can confute him by any reasonings when he sees that he hath the word of God for his guide, and the Spirit of God promised to lead him into all truth. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord?* what philosopher ever soared so high as to penetrate into the secrets of God's eternal mind, *that he may instruct him* who is spiritual, in these supernatural truths? Darkness and folly are evident in all the schemes and notions of the wisest sages; *but we have the mind of Christ*, are divinely led into the knowledge of his designs of grace, and therefore can never be moved away from the hope of the gospel, by any pretenders to science, or by the disputation of philosophers, with whatever sounding names or titles they may be dignified. Learn hence, (1.) That the wisest sage and the most illiterate peasants are on a level, respecting the knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation. (2.) If all the wisdom which ever existed in the whole fallen race was centred in one person, he would be as incapable of communicating one title of divine truth to us, as the glow-worm of enlightening the universe. (3.) It is the distinguished character of the redeemed, that they are all taught of God, not only by external revelation, but by the Spirit's internal illumination. (4.) The love of God, now shed abroad in our hearts, is the earnest of that inheritance which he hath prepared for us. (5.) We are not to wonder that those, who are most advanced in human literature, are usually most averse to the truths of God. The reason is evident, ver. 14. (6.) A spiritual understanding of the Scriptures is a better qualification for the ministry than all Roman or Grecian literature.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter, the apostle, (1.) *Blames the Corinthians for their carnality and divisions,* ver. 1—4. (2.) *He instructs them how what was amiss among them might be rectified, by remembering,*

1. *That their ministers were no more than ministers,* ver. 5. 2. *That they were unanimous, and carried on the same design,* ver. 5—10. 3. *That they built on one and the same foundation,* ver. 11—16. (3.) *He exhorts them to give due honour to their bodies by keeping them pure,* ver. 16, 17. *And to humility and self-diffidence,* ver. 18—22. 4. *And exhorts them from glorying in particular ministers, because of the equal interest they had in all,* ver. 22. ad finem.

1. AND I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto [a] spiritual, but as unto [b] carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. 2. [c] I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it,* neither yet now are ye able. 3. [d] For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and * divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk † as men? 4. [e] For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5. [f] Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6. [g] I have planted, Apollos watered; [h] but God gave the increase. 7. [i] So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

a Ch. 2. 6. 15 & 14. 20. Heb. 5. 14. & 6. 1.
b Rom. 7. 14. Eph. 4. 13, 14. Heb. 5. 11—13. 1 John 2. 12.
c John 16. 12. 1 Thes. 2. 7. Heb. 5. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 2. 2.
d Ch. 1. 11, 12. & 11. 18. 2 Cor 12. 20. Gal. 5. 19, 20. Jam. 3. 16. ch. 5. 11.
* Or *factions.*
† Gr. *according to man.*
e Ch. 1. 12. & 4. 6.
f Rom. 10. 15, 17. ch. 4. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 1. 24. & 4. 5, 7. & 3. 3. & 6. 4. & 10. 4, 5. & 12. 6. ver 7. Rom. 12. 3, 6. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11.
g Acts 18. 4, 8, 11, 26, 27. ver. 10. ch. 4. 15. & 9. 7, 11. & 15. 1, 2.
h Ps. 22. 13. & 65. 10. & 127. 1. Is. 55. 10, 11. & 61. 11. Acts 11. 21. & 16. 14. ch. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3.
i John 15. 5. Ps. 115. 1. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 12. 11. ch. 4. 7. & 1. 28, 30. & 15. 10.

Verses 1—7. The apostle proceeds here,

1. To rebuke the carnality and contentions which reigned among the members of the Corinthian church. *I, brethren,* (for as such I regard you, notwithstanding the many imperfections I perceive among you) *could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ;* for greatly as many are enriched in gifts, (see chap. i. 5.) yet in grace your attainments are very low, and your affections grovelling still on earth; and therefore as babes *I have fed you with milk,* with the simplest and plainest truths of the gospel, *and not with meat,* the more sublime points of revelation and the deep things of God; *for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able;* you would not have been edified by them, but have abused them, and made them minister to your pride and disputatious humour. *For ye are yet carnal,* and show too much of an unrenewed spirit; *for whereas,* or since *there is among you envying and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* Whilst under the powers of such evil tempers, wherein do ye differ from the world that lieth in wickedness? *For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal?* Doth not such a spirit of party prove the deep, unmortified remainders of carnality in your hearts? Assuredly. *Note,* (1.) Ministers must be faithful to the souls of the people, and never flatter. (2.) There may be great attainments in knowledge, and yet little grace in the heart; and this wisdom puffeth up. (3.) Among real Christians, there are great differences to be observed; some are weak as babes; others strong as men grown to maturity. Our wisdom, as ministers, is therefore to give to every man his portion in due season. (4.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of Christianity than angry disputes, and schismatical divisions.

2. The apostle ascribes to the rich grace of God all the success which the gospel had met with among them. It became effectual, not through human instruments, but by divine energy. *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?* The men were mere instruments; it was the Lord alone who made their ministry effectual. *I have planted,* by first preaching the gospel to you; *Apollos* watered, succeeding me in labouring among you: *but God gave the increase,* without whose special operation and mighty influence, however great the natural abilities of either may have been, I must have planted and Apollos watered in vain. *So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase,* to whom the whole glory must be ascribed, exclusive of all the instruments he may have been pleased to employ. And therefore they are not to be set up either as the authors of the gospel, or the cause of its efficacy. *Note,* (1.) If any man believes the gospel word, this must be by the gift of God; for we can neither give ourselves faith, nor can the most powerful preachers communicate it to us. (2.) Ministers should ever be careful to ascribe to God the glory of all the success they meet with; we are nothing: he is all in all.

8. [k] Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: [l] and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9. For we are [m] labourers together with God: ye are God's ‡ [n] husbandry, *ye are* God's ° building. 10. [p] According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as [q] a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11. [r] For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12. Now, if any man [s] build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13. [t] Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because ‖ it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14. [u] If any man's work abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15. [x] If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

k John 4. 36—38. ver. 9, 19. with ch. 4. 6. & 1. 11, 12.
l Ps. 62. 12. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 15. Gal. 6. 5. Mat. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. ch. 4. 4. & 9. 17. Rev. 2. 23. & 22. 12.
m 2 Cor. 6. 1. & 3. 5, 6. 3 John 8. Mark 16. 20. Mat. 28. 20.
‡ Or *tillage.*
n Ps. 80. 8, 9. Is. 5. 1. & 61. 3. & 58. 11. Mat. 20. 1—14. & 21. 33. Ps. 72. 16. John 15. 1—6.
o Eph. 2. 10, 20—22. Col. 2. 7. Heb. 3. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 15.
p Rom. 1. 5. ch. 15. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 11.
q Rom. 15. 20. Acts 18. 4, 8. ch. 1. 6. & 4. 15. & 9. 1, 2. & 15. 1—4. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. Gal. 2. 7, 9. Eph. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Rev. 21. 14. ver. 11. ch. 2. 2.
r Acts 4. 12. Is. 28. 16. Mat. 16. 18. Eph. 2. 20. ch. 1. 13. Gal. 1. 7—9.
s 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 13. & 13. 5.
t Ch. 4. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Is. 8. 20. Jer. 23. 29. Is. 27. 9 & 48. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 7. & 4. 12.
2 Thes. 1. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 7. ‖ Gr. *is revealed.* u Ch. 4. 5. Mat. 25. 21, 23. 1 Thes. 2. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Dan. 12. 3. Mat. 19. 28. x 2 John 8. Amos 4. 11. Zech. 3. 2. Jude 23. 1 Pet. 4. 18.

Verses 8—15. All faithful ministers are engaged in the same blessed cause, and have but one end in view, to glorify Christ and save immortal souls; and they shall not lose their reward. *Now he that planteth,* by first preaching the gospel word, *and he that watereth* the seed sown by coming after him, *are one* in affection and intention: and therefore those who are converted under their preaching should be united also, nor think of setting up one against another: *and every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour;* when the great Master comes, he will give to every man according as his work is; to secure his approbation must therefore be our great design, and not the empty honour which cometh from man only, which some of you affect. *For we are labourers together with God,* united in the

same service, and honoured abundantly by the very work committed to us; whilst *ye are God's husbandry*, your hearts the field wherein he sows the seed of eternal life; *ye are God's building*, the spiritual temple which he erects, and where he is well pleased to take up his abode; for ye are the habitation of God through the Spirit. Of this building we may observe,

1. The foundation is Jesus Christ. *According to the grace of God which is given unto me*, who hath appointed me to the office, and qualified me for the service, *as a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation* of your faith and hope in a crucified Jesus; *and another buildeth thereon*, succeeding ministers have carried on the blessed work begun in your hearts: *but*, it is a needful and important caution, *let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*, the rock of ages, the only hope of the miserable and desperate, and out of whom there is no salvation.

2. The superstructure must correspond with the foundation. *Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones*, inculcating the holy doctrines of the gospel, and exhorting men to a heavenly conversation which may adorn them, such labourer's work will bear the severest scrutiny, and shine gloriously before the eyes of men; but if they build *wood, hay, stubble*, urging their own conceits and fancies, and zealous about things insignificant and unessential, whilst the weightier matters are neglected, *every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day* of judgment *shall* shortly *declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire;* and, as the refiner tries the metal in the furnace, *the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is;* the exact scrutiny of that day shall prove whether every man's opinions and practices corresponded with the Scripture standard or not: and the consequences of the trial will be awful. (1.) *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon*, and it appears, before the great Judge, that he hath followed his plan, and corresponded with his designs, in building up men's souls in the doctrines of grace and holiness, *he shall receive a reward*, eminent and distinguished, according to his labours and fidelity. (2.) *If any man's work shall be burnt*, and his opinions and practices be found unscriptural and erroneous, however highly he may have valued himself upon his abilities, *he shall suffer loss*, and see his fine spun conceits all destroyed: *but*, if he hath himself been founded upon Christ, and, though weak or mistaken, yet was not allowedly wicked or licentious, *he himself shall be saved* from the wrath to come, *yet so as by fire*, with such difficulty as a man escapes naked from his house when in flames. *Note*, (1.) Before the great trying day comes, we should be often examining ourselves by that word of God whereby we must at last be justified or condemned. (2.) We may not be liberal of rash censures concerning the eternal states of men; but, whilst we condemn their opinions, must leave their hearts to the great Judge.

16. [y] Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17. [z] If any man * defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for [a] the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are. 18. [b] Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. 19. [c] For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. 20. And again, [d] The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. 21. Therefore let no man [e] glory in men: for [f] all things are yours; 22. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; 23. And [g] ye *are* Christ's; [h] and Christ *is* God's.

y Eph. 2. 20—22. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5. ch. 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Rom. 8. 9. John 14. 16, 17. 2 Tim. 1. 14. Ezek. 36. 27.

z Rom. 8. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 1—3. Is. 3. 11.

* Or *destroy.*

a Ps. 93. 5. Ezek. 43. 12. Heb. 3. 1. & 12. 14—16.

b Gal. 6. 3, 7. Prov. 3. 5, 7. Is. 5. 21. Mat. 16. 21. ch. 4. 10. & 1. 23, 24. Col. 2. 3.

c Job 5. 13. ch. 1. 19, 20. Ps. 7. 15, 16 & 9. 15, 16. & 35. 7, 8. & 141. 10. & 17. 13. Is. 29. 14, 16. Rom. 1. 21, 22. Is. 44. 25.

d Ps. 94. 11. & 2. 1. Job 11. 11, 12.

e Ch. 1. 12, 29. & 4. 6. ver. 5, 7.

f Rom. 8. 28. 2 Cor. 4. 5, 15. Gal. 2. 7. Rev. 21. 7. Phil. 2. 21.

g Ch. 6. 19, 20. Mat. 23. 8, 10. Rom. 14. 8.

h Eph. 1. 3, 17. 1 Pet. 1. 3. ch. 8. 6. & 11. 3. Heb. 1. 3. & 5. 8. Phil. 2. 8. John 17. 4. & 6. 38.

Mat. 26. 39. Eph. 1. 10. ch. 15. 28.

Verses 16—23. The apostle here,

1. Presses the argument of holiness upon them from the consideration suggested, ver. 9. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God*, designed in a more peculiar manner for his abode than that house which Solomon built: *and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*, in his gracious presence and mighty operations? *If any man defile the temple of God*, and seek, by broaching his corrupt opinions, to subvert the foundation, or by evil practices to seduce and draw men away from the truth of the gospel, *him shall God destroy* with more fearful judgment than was threatened against the defilers of the material temple: *for the temple of God is holy*, set apart for himself; *which temple ye are*, and therefore are bound to be holy in all manner of conversation.

2. He warns them against the danger of vain conceit on their gifts and attainments. *Let no man deceive himself* with high imaginations of his own superior excellence, and in consequence propagate as truth his own erroneous opinions. *If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world*, and values himself upon his attainments in philosophy and human literature, *let him become a fool, that he may be wise*, renouncing it all so far as it would beget perverse reasonings against the humbling truths of revelation, and content simply to embrace the doctrine of the cross, which the wise world counts foolishness: for thus only can any man become wise unto salvation: *for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*, all their systems of theology, and their learned disquisitions on religion, are mere folly, compared with his glorious scheme of salvation through a dying Redeemer: *for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness*, their fine spun reasonings are the nets wherein they entangle and ruin themselves; *and again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain;* all their projects and designs, however deep concealed, are open to his eye; and, compared with his thoughts, weakness, folly, and vanity, are stamped upon them. *Note*, (1.) No man can become truly wise till, sensible of his spiritual ignorance, like a little child he comes to God's word to learn the first elements of truth. (2.) How amazingly foolish will all the wisdom of this world shortly appear, when those who trusted on the powers of their fallen reason to lead them to happiness, will find it to have been, like the deceitful meteor, a light only to delude them into eternal darkness.

3. He warns them against exalting men, even the best and wisest, or following any minister implicitly, when their faith ought to stand not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. *Therefore let no man glory in men*, as being this or that man's disciples, despising others and undervaluing their ministry: *for all things are yours*, appointed and ordained for your blessing and advantage; *whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*, their gifts are bestowed on them for the edification of the body of Christ; *or the world*, the administration of it is in the hands of Jesus, and he will give his people such a portion of it as shall be most for their good; *or life*, he will preserve you so long, and in such circumstances, as shall be most for his glory and your eternal happiness; *or death*, he will disarm it of its sting, and, in whatever manner it may come upon you, will cause it to prove your greatest gain; *or things present*, you shall be cared for through all your pilgrimage by his gracious providence; *or things to come*, an eternity of glory is before you; *all are yours*,

secured to you in the everlasting covenant, and working together for your present and eternal benefit; *and ye are Christ's*, the objects of his love, the purchase of his blood, the members of his body; *and Christ is God's*, the appointed Mediator, the great Covenant-head, who hath all things in his hands, and ever lives to perfect the salvation of his people, and to bring them to reign with him in heaven, to the eternal praise of the glory of God's grace.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle, 1. *Directs them how to account of him and his fellow-ministers, and therein, tacitly at least, reproves them for their unworthy carriage towards him,* ver. 1—6. 2. *He cautions them against pride and self-elation, and hints at the many temptations they had to conceive too highly of themselves, and despise him, and other apostles, because of the great diversity in their circumstances and condition,* ver. 7—14. 3. *He challenges their regard to him as their father in Christ,* ver. 15—17. 4. *He tells them of his having sent Timothy to them, and of his own purpose to come to them shortly, however some among them had pleased themselves, and grown vain upon the quite contrary expectation,* ver. 18. ad finem.

1. LET a man so account of us as of [a] the ministers of Christ, and [b] stewards of the mysteries of God. 2. Moreover it is required in stewards, that [c] a man be found faithful. 3. But with me [d] it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's * judgment: [e] yea, I judge not mine own self; 4. For [f] I know nothing by myself; [g] yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. 5. [h] Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. 6. And [i] these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and *to* Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us [k] not to think *of men* above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

a See ch. 3. 5. 2 Cor. 4. 5. & 6. 4. Col. 1. 25. Tit. 1. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 10.
b Mat. 24. 45. & 18. 19. ch. 9. 7. Is. 22. 22.
c Luke 12. 42. 2 Tim. 2. 2.
d Mat. 25. 21. Luke 16. 1, 10. ch. 7. 25. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. Col. 1. 7. & 4. 7, 17. Acts 20. 20, 27. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Mark 10. 43. 2 Pet. 1. 16.
e 1 Sam. 16. 13. 2 Cor. 10. 10.
* Gr. *day.*
f 1 John 3. 20, 21.
g 1 John 3. 20, 21. ch. 15. 10. Rom. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 11. 23. Job 27. 6. Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12.
h Job 9. 2. & 40. 4. Ps. 130. 3. & 143. 2. & 19. 12. Rom. 3. 19, 20. & 4. 2. Prov. 21. 2.
i Mat. 7. 1. Rom. 2. 1, 16 & 14. 4, 10, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eccl. xii. 14. ch. 3. 13. Rev. 20. 12. Acts 17. 31. Dan. 7. 10. Job 22. 22. Mat. 25. 34. Rom. 2. 29.
k Ch. 1. 12. & 3. 4, 6—8, 22. 8. Jude 16. k Prov. 3. 7. Rom. 12. 3. ch. 5. 2, 6. 2 Cor. 12. 20. 2 Pet. 2.

Verses 1—6. The apostle here,

1. States the true character of gospel ministers, and the esteem in which they should be held. *Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ,* (ὑπηρέτας) servants, *under-rowers,* of the vessel where Christ is the pilot, and labouring with all their might to bring it to the haven of eternal rest; *and stewards of the mysteries of God,* dispensing to the household of faith the rich provision made in the gospel-word for their nourishment and growth in grace. *Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful,* true to the trust committed to them, and zealous for their Master's interest and honour.

2. Whatever they might think of him, he could appeal to God for his own simplicity and godly sincerity. *But,* though some among you in the spirit of party are crying up one minister, and censuring another, *with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment:* though I am desirous, for the honour of Christ and the success of my ministry, to vindicate my integrity before men, yet their censures are comparatively insignificant: the approbation of the Lord, in the great day, is my important concern. *Yea,* conscious of the corruption of my own heart, *I judge not mine own self; for* though *I know nothing by myself,* nor am at all conscious of allowed guile or unfaithfulness, *yet am I not hereby justified,* I would not on any consideration rest my justification before God on the footing of my own sincere obedience; he knows the deceitfulness of my heart better than I can, and may condemn me for what I have overlooked; *but,* living upon his grace, and enabled to appeal to him for my simplicity, I wait the great decisive day, knowing that *he that judgeth me is the Lord,* to whose blood and righteousness I have fled for acceptance, and by whose grace I am what I am. *Note,* (1.) It is a comfort to us, that men, even the best of men, are not our judges. (2.) Though we maintain a becoming care about our character before men, our great concern must be to approve ourselves to God; and where we are conscious that this is our desire and labour, then we may sit loose to every malevolent censure. (3.) The fidelity of a steward and the diligent labours of a servant characterize the real minister of the gospel.

3. He warns them against hasty judgment. *Therefore judge nothing before the time,* suspend every rash censure *until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts,* when every man's principles, as well as practices, will be laid naked and open; *and then shall every man,* who shall be found faithful, *have praise of God,* and be acknowledged and commended by the great Judge of all. *Note,* (1.) The prospect of a judgment-day should make us careful how we dare judge others. They shall then have judgment without mercy, who showed no mercy. (2.) However sin be now concealed, and false principles put on the most specious appearances, the cheat cannot be long undiscovered; the day is near when the secrets of all hearts shall be made known. (3.) They who can now approve themselves to their Lord, however reviled or maligned, shall shortly be owned by the eternal Judge.

4. To avoid every offence, he tells them, *These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes,* choosing to make use of his own name, and that of Apollos, rather than to apply the matter to any of those who headed parties among them, which might but exasperate. And I do this *that ye might learn in us,* who, though chief in labours among you, disclaim all authority over your consciences, *not to think of men above that which is written,* setting them up as the lords of your faith, and implicitly following their opinions; *and that no one of you be puffed up for one against another,* exalting the character of one minister upon the ruins of another; but giving God the glory of the various gifts he hath bestowed on different men, and thankful for the benefit of their ministry.

7. For † [l] who maketh thee to differ *from another?* and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive *it,* why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it?* 8. [m] Now ye are full, now ye are rich; ye have [n] reigned as kings without us; and [o] I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. 9. For I think that [p] God hath set forth us the apostles ‡ last, as it were appointed to death: for [p] we are made a ‡ spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. 10. [p] We

† Gr. *distinguisheth thee.*
l John 3. 27. Rom. 12. 6. & 9. 16, 18. Jam. 1. 17. 2 Pet. 4. 10. ch. 7. 7. & 12. 11. Tit. 3. 5.
m Rev. 3. 17. ch. 1. 5.
n Ps. 122. 6—9. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20. Rom. 12. 15.
o 1 Thes. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 18. & 4. 11. Heb. 10. 33. ch. 15. 30. Eph. 6. 12. Rom. 8. 36.
‡ Gr. *theatre.*
p Acts. 17. 18. & 26. 24. ch. 1. 18—20, 26—28. & 3. 18. & 2. 3. 2 Kin. 9. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 18. & 10. 10. & 13. 9.

are fools for Christ's sake, but ye *are* wise in Christ; we *are* weak, but ye *are* strong; ye *are* honourable, but we *are* despised. 11. [q] Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; 12. [r] And labour, working with our own hands: [*] [s] being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: 13. Being defamed, we entreat: [t] we are made as the filth of the world, *and are* the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

q 2 Cor. 4. 8—10. & 11. 23, 27. & 6. 4. & 7. 5. Acts 20. 23. 2 Tim. 3. 11.
r Acts 20. 34. & 18. 3. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8. ch. 9. 6.
* This, being written at Ephesus, shows us that the apostle took no maintenance from the Ephesians any more than he had done from the Corinthians.
s Mat. 5. 11, 44. Luke 23. 34. Acts 7. 60. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 2. 23. & 3. 9.
t Lam. 3. 45. Acts 22. 22.

Verses 7—13. As they were puffed up with a high conceit of themselves, and their unreasonable partiality for one minister above another arose from an opinion of their own superior taste and judgment, the apostle rebukes this unchristian spirit.

1. He reminds them that all they possessed was of God's mere grace. *For who hath made thee to differ from another*, admitting your attainments may be singular? *and what hast thou that thou didst not receive* from above as a matter of sovereign favour? *Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* and that it was not owing to his grace, but to your own desert, diligence, or ability? a claim how insolent, ungrateful, nay impious? *Note*, There is nothing we can properly call our own but sin: all good cometh from above, and God must have the glory of his own work: it is the worst of sacrilege to plume ourselves on the gifts or graces which he bestows.

2. He ironically reproves their vain imaginations of their own excellence. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich*, abounding in worldly wealth, high in spiritual gifts, and flattering yourselves with the apprehension of your exalted attainments in grace; *ye have reigned as kings without us*, priding yourselves as if you had attained the summit of prosperity, without any obligations to us, or any assistance of ours who first preached the gospel unto you; *and I would to God ye did reign;* far from envying you, I should be happy in your advancement, and wish for nothing more earnestly than that you really were as great and excellent as the glass of self-deceit represents you to be; *that we also might reign with you*, rejoicing in your attainments, and partaking of your glory as the instruments who contributed so greatly to your conversion and edification; whom you would then honour and respect, instead of adding to our troubles by your unbecoming conduct and ingratitude. *For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles*, who were *last* called to the ministry of the word, *as it were appointed unto death*, ordained to suffer peculiar afflictions, and every day exposed to danger and death: *for we are*, as public criminals, exposed to beasts in the theatres, and devoted to destruction, *made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men*, exposed to every ignominy, reproach, and suffering from the world which lieth in wickedness, whilst angels and good men admire our constancy and pity our sufferings, and devils and wicked men insult, revile, and persecute us. But whilst *we are* counted *fools for Christ's sake*, thus to expose ourselves for the sake of our crucified Master, and for our preaching the doctrines of the cross, which the world counts foolishness; *ye are wise in Christ*, and, varnishing over the offensive truths of the gospel, value yourselves on your wisdom and prudence in escaping that cross under which we groan; *we are weak*, oppressed with sorrows and sufferings, till our strength is ready to fail; *but ye are strong*, and know none of our tribulations to harass you: *ye are honourable*, and maintain a respectable character in the world, and with lukewarm professors of Christianity; *but we are despised* for our fidelity, which draws upon us the reproaches and persecutions under which we appear so contemptible. Whilst you enjoy ease and affluence, *even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place*, like our Master, without a settled abode to lay our head; *and labour working with our own hands*, for that maintenance which you should supply, but which, for the gospel's sake, we rather choose to earn with the sweat of our brow than demand: *being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it* patiently; *being defamed, we entreat*, return no opprobrious language, but mildly remonstrate, and humbly beg a hearing: *we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day*, treated as the vilest miscreants, and as wretches chosen from the dregs of the people, who, being regarded by the heathen as the authors of all their public calamities, are offered in sacrifice to appease the wrath of their supposed offended deities. *Note*, (1.) Many dangerously mistake, who judge of themselves by their gifts. It is not great knowledge, but great grace, which constitutes the eminent Christian. (2.) They who will be faithful in the ministry should count the cost, and go forth with a readiness to suffer, if need be, the loss of all things. (3.) Nothing can serve to show the character of the blessed Paul in a more distinguished light than the account he here gives of himself. May we learn to copy his disinterested zeal, and bear our sufferings with the like meekness and unshaken fidelity!

14. [u] I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn *you*. 15. For, though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: [x] for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 16. Wherefore, I beseech you, [y] be ye followers of me. 17. For this cause have I sent unto you [z] Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church. 18. Now some [a] are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. 19. [b] But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. 20. [c] For the kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power. 21. What will ye? shall I come unto you [d] with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?

u 2 Cor. 7. 3. & 2. 15. 1 Thes. 2. 11. ver. 15.
x Acts 18. 4, 11. Rom. 15. 20. ch. 3. 6. & 9. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. & 10. 14. Gal. 4. 19. Philem. 10. Jam. 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 23.
y Ch. 11. 1. Phil. 3. 17. 1 Thes. 1. 6. 2 Thes. 3. 9. Heb. 13. 7.
z Ch. 16. 20. Phil. 2. 19. 1 Thes. 3. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2.
a Ver. 6. ch. 5. 2.
b Acts 18. 21. & 19. 21. Rom. 15. 32. ch. 16. 5, 7. 2 Cor. 1. 15. Heb. 6. 3. Jam. 4. 15.
c Rom. 15. 19. ch. 2. 4. 1 Thes. 1. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Rom. 14. 17. Luke 17. 20, 21. Gal. 6. 15.
d 2 Cor. 10. 2. & 13. 10.
† Macknight supposes the apostle here terms the power of punishing obstinate offenders by miracle, *a rod*.

Verses 14—21. The apostle with singular address,

1. Insinuates the kind intentions he had in this discourse. *I write not these things to shame* or upbraid you, *but* as a father, tenderly concerned for *my beloved sons, I warn you* to beware of a conduct that is so unbecoming you, which must in the issue prove so much to your dishonour, and which it is highly incumbent on you to observe, lament, and amend. *For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ*, who help to build you up in the faith, *yet have ye not many fathers*, to whose ministry ye were indebted for being called to the knowledge of the truth: *for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the gospel*, he using my instrumentality, and sending me first among you to preach his great salvation: and the most of you, through his effectual grace, by my ministry, have been called to the knowledge of the truth, and faith in him; and therefore I have a peculiar title to your esteem and regard. *Wherefore, I beseech you,*

be ye followers of me as dear children, not led away by those who would pervert you from the simplicity of the gospel, and steal your affections from me that you might idolize them. Remember my example, and, as far as I appeared to imitate my Divine Master, copy after the pattern. *Note*, (1.) Those rebukes will be most effectual, where kindness gives weight to the admonition. (2.) The way to reclaim any man from the error of his ways is not by publicly exposing him to shame, but by secret and gentle remonstrances. (3.) They who have been our spiritual fathers have a title to our peculiar affection. (4.) Every minister by his example should adorn the doctrine he preaches, that he may with some humble confidence be able to say, "Be ye followers of me."

2. He tells them what were his kind intentions in sending the bearer of this epistle. *For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus*, to second this letter by his exhortations and ministry, *who is my beloved son*, begotten in the gospel, and dear to me as a child; *and faithful in the Lord*, proved to be so by long experience; *who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church*, preaching the same doctrine, and walking in the same steps. *Note*, (1.) The great doctrines of the gospel can admit of no change: like their Author, they are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. (2.) All faithful ministers of Christ bring the same message, walk after the same rule, and mind the same things. Novelty is the proof of error.

3. He assures them of his intention to visit them himself, notwithstanding the insinuations of some of their false teachers. *Now some are puffed up as though I would not come to you*, as if I was ashamed or afraid personally to meet them; and perhaps may make the sending of Timothy an argument to support their suggestions: *but I will come to you shortly*, it is my firm determination so to do, *if the Lord will*, in whose hands are all our ways; *and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power*, examining into their credentials, and not to be deluded with the glare of their eloquence or learning: but inquiring what power accompanies their ministrations, and what efficacy their discourses have on the hearts of their hearers. *For the kingdom of God is not in word:* the church of the Redeemer is neither erected nor supported by human wisdom, nor doth mere profession constitute the Christian character; *but* it stands *in* the *power* of God; not by man's eloquence, but through the preaching of the cross, made effectual through the Spirit's energy, is this kingdom set up and maintained in the hearts of the redeemed.

4. He concludes with an authoritative question, *What will ye?* how would you choose I should visit you? *shall I come unto you with a rod*, according to my apostolic power, severely to chastise those offenders and disturbers of your peace? this would be my grief as well as yours; or shall I come to you as I desire to do, *in love, and in the spirit of meekness?* rejoicing to find a thorough reformation of whatever hath been amiss, forgetting what is past, and affectionately embracing you as my dear children. *Note*, (1.) Obstinate offenders call for the rod; and though it be painful, parents, masters, ministers, must not spare. (2.) Love and meekness are the ornament of the Christian character, and in these the preachers of the gospel should excel.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle, 1. *Blames them for their indulgence in the case of the incestuous person, and orders him to be excommunicated and delivered to Satan,* ver. 1—7. 2. *He exhorts them to Christian purity, by purging out the old leaven,* ver. 7, 8. *And,* 3. *Directs them to shun even the common conversation of Christians who were guilty of any notorious and flagitious wickedness,* ver. 9. ad finem.

1. IT is reported commonly *that there* [a] *is* fornication among you, and [a] such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.* 2. [b] And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3. [c] For I verily, as absent in body but present in spirit, have †judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath [d] so done this deed. 4. [d] In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5. [e] To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 6. [f] Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that [g] a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7. [h] Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. [i] For even Christ our passover ‡ is sacrificed for us: 8. Therefore let us keep § the feast, [k] not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

[a] Eph. 5. 3. Lev. 18. 8. Deut. 22. 30. & 27. 20.

* Macknight supposes the woman to have been the guilty person's stepmother.

[b] Ch. 4. 8, 18. Lev. 20. 11. 2 Cor. 7. 10. & 12. 21. Gal. 5. 10, 12.

[c] Col. 2. 5. ver. 5. 2 Kin. 5. 26.

† Or *determined.*

[d] Mat. 16. 19. & 18. 18. & 28. 18. John 20. 23. 2 Cor. 2. 10.

[e] 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 2. 7. & 10. 6, 8. & 13. 9. ver. 7, 13.

[f] Ch. 3. 21. & 4. 18, 19. Jam. 4. 16.

[g] Gal. 5. 9. ch. 15. 33. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

[h] Ver. 5. 13. Eph. 4. 22. Col. 3. 5, 9, 10. Exod. 12. 15. & 13. 6, 7.

[i] Exod. 12. 5, 6. Deut. 16. 2. Is. 53. 7, 10. John 1. 29, 36. Acts 8. 32, 35. ch. 15. 3, 4. 1 Pet. 1. 19, 20. Rev. 5. 6, 9.

‡ Or *is slain.*

§ Or *holy day.*

[k] Exod. xii. Deut. xvi. Lev. 23. 6. Jam. 1. 21. 1 Pet. 2 1, 2.

Verses 1—8. The apostle, after reproving their party disputes, passes on to other gross offences which subsisted among them.

1. A most gross and scandalous crime had been committed by one of the members of the church; that he should have his father's wife, either after his father's death, or, as seems more likely, during his father's life; a species of fornication abominable even in the eyes of civilized heathens, and bringing the greatest reproach on their profession as Christians.

2. What had been one man's sin in the commission, had become the sin of the whole by their connivance. *Ye are puffed up.* Perhaps this was some factious leader, whom his party screened from censure, and gloried still in his gifts; or the opposite party triumphed maliciously in his fall; or their outward prosperity made them negligent of inward purity among the members of the church; and, therefore, without mourning over such a scandalous offender, and casting him out of the church, as they ought to have done, he still continued to assemble with them, and they countenanced him in his wickedness. *Note*, (1.) In the most flourishing churches corruptions will creep in. (2.) Party divisions fill the heart with malice, and cause men to ascribe to the whole the faults of individuals. (3.) A Christian's heart mourns over the offences of his brethren, and cannot but sensibly feel the wounds given thereby to the Redeemer's cause.

3. The apostle pronounces sentence upon this incestuous Corinthian, and enjoins them to put it in force against him by an immediate excommunication. *I verily, as absent in the body, but present in spirit,* having my heart ever solicitous for your welfare, and knowing by revelation the true state of this case, *have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him who hath so done this deed,* that he be without delay cast out from

among you. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together* to consult on this affair; *and my spirit* is among you, *with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who hath left this authority to his church for the maintenance of holy discipline among the professing members of it; I have determined that you are in duty bound *to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh*, expelling him from the society of the faithful, and delivering him back into the world that lieth under the dominion of the wicked one. And perhaps some signal mark of wrath was suffered to be inflicted upon his body, that, thus exposed to shame and suffering, he might yet perhaps be brought to repentance, and *that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Note*, It is as necessary for the backslider as it is for the glory of God, that he should smart for his unfaithfulness: such chastisement is for his salvation, not destruction.

4. He exhorts them to purge out the leaven of wickedness from among them. *Your glorying is not good*, it is peculiarly unseasonable and strange, when such offences are committed among you with impunity; *know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?* and that in like manner corrupt principles and practices, connived at in the least measure, may soon spread, and communicate universal infection to the church. *Purge out therefore the old leaven*, search out and remove all scandalous persons from among you, as carefully as the Jews examine their houses before the passover, *that ye may be* in reality *a new lump, as ye are* in profession *unleavened*, in simplicity and truth devoted to the Lord Jesus as his peculiar people, and departing from all iniquity as the evidence that you belong to him. *Note*, (1.) The beginnings of evil are to be watched against and checked, lest, like the spreading mortification, the whole body become infected. (2.) They who are Christ's are new creatures. If we say we abide in him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

5. He urges his exhortation by the strongest argument. *For even Christ our passover*, who was signified by the paschal lamb, *is sacrificed for us*, that he might cleanse us from all iniquity, this being one great end of his death. *Therefore let us keep the feast*, which he hath instituted instead of the paschal supper, *not with old leaven*, admitting profane and scandalous offenders to the table of the Lord: *neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness*, not harbouring allowed sin, or living under the power of corruption, defiled in body, or soured with pride and party disputes; *but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*, with real attachment of heart to the Saviour, and unfeigned love to the brethren. *Note*, (1.) The sacrifice of Christ, which we commemorate, should be a rich feast to our souls; since thereby every blessing in time and eternity is secured to us. (2.) They who approach the Lord's table should examine themselves, whether their old leaven be purged out, and their hearts in simplicity brought to the spirit and temper of the gospel.

9. I wrote unto you in an epistle [l] not to company with fornicators: 10. [m] Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world or with the covetous,* or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of this world. 11. But now I have written unto you [n] not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 12. For what have I to do to judge [o] them also that are without? do not ye judge [p] them that are within? 13. But them that are without [q] God judgeth. Therefore [r] put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

l Rom. 16. 17. Eph. 5. 7, 11. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. 2 Cor. 6. 14. ver. 2, 7, 13. Ps. 1. 1.

m Ch. 10. 27. & 12. 2. Eph. 2. 3. & 4. 17. 1 Pet. 4. 3. 1 John 5. 19. John 17. 15.

* The word signifies, one who is greedy of sensual pleasure, as well as of money.

n Ps. 101. 5. Mat. 18. 17. Rom. 16. 17. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. 2 John 10.

o Mark 4. 11. 1 Thes. 4. 11. 1 Tim. 3. 7. Col. 4. 5.

p Ch. 6. 2—4. Heb. 3. 1.

q Exod. 20. 7. Heb. 13. 4.

r Deut. 13. 7. & 17. 7. & 21. 21. & 22. 21—24. Num. 5. 2.

Verses 9—13. Some conceive that the apostle here refers to a former epistle which he had written to the Corinthians, others to one he was writing when he heard from them, and began a new letter in answer to them; though perhaps what he speaks may have only respect to what he had said before in this same epistle. *I wrote unto you an epistle, not to company with fornicators;* to be separate from all familiar intercourse with those who bring such reproach on the Christian name. *Yet* my intention is *not* that you should be altogether secluded from the world, and refuse all civil intercourse *with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters: for then must ye needs go out of the world*, so few would be left with whom to have any commerce or society in such an evil world as this is. *But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one, no not to eat;* not only should he be excluded from eating bread with you at the Lord's table, but even all intercourse and connection with him should be cut off, and he should be shunned and avoided by you more than even the heathen themselves; that, being put to shame, he may yet be brought to repentance, and restored to the bosom of the church. *For what have I to do to judge them also that are without?* as they make no profession of Christianity, they lie under no censures; and in civil affairs, as duty calls, may lawfully be conversed with: *but do not ye judge them that are within?* the professing members of the church come under your jurisdiction, and are, when under censure, to be treated with this peculiar distance. *But them that are without*, who are open offenders, and live carelessly after the fashion of the world, *God judgeth;* to whose judgment they must be left. *Therefore*, since your power extends over your own community, *put away from yourselves that wicked person.*

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle, 1. *Reproves them for going to law with one another about small matters, and bringing the cause before heathen judges,* ver. 1—8. 2. *He takes occasion hence to warn them against many gross sins to which they had been formerly addicted,* ver. 9—12. 3. *And having cautioned them against the abuse of their liberty, he vehemently dehorts them from fornication by various arguments,* ver. 12, ad finem.

1. DARE [a] any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?* 2. Do ye not know that [b] the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matter? 3. Know ye not that we shall [c] judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? 4. If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. 5. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among

a Neh. 5. 9. ver. 6.

* Locke thinks this to have been spoken in reproof of a faction, who, to screen the incestuous person from church censure, carried the matter into a heathen court of judicature.

b Ps. 49. 14. Dan. 7. 18. Mat. 19. 28. Luke 22. 30. Rev. 2. 26. & 5. 10. & 20. 4.

c 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6. Rev. 20. 10.

you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? 6. But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. 7. [d] Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to* be defrauded? 8. Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that *your* brethren.*

d Prov. 20. 22. Mat. 5. 39. Luke 6. 29. Rom. 12. 17, 19. 1 Thes. 4. 6. & 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9.

* Or *But ye injure and defraud; and that too your brethren.*

Verses 1—8. The apostle proceeds to censure another grievous abuse among them. A litigious spirit prevailed; and, to the shame of their holy profession, brother went to law against brother, *and that before the unbelievers*, the heathen magistrates.

1. He rebukes them for thus going to law among themselves, and that too, as appears, ver. 2, 7. on matters of small importance, which, without great detriment to themselves or families, they might have quietly passed by, and borne the loss rather than seek a litigious redress: and worst of all, they chose rather to carry their causes before the heathen tribunals, than refer them to the decision of their own members, the saints of God; foolishly exposing themselves thereby to the partiality which might be expected from unjust judges, and giving the enemy occasion to triumph in their quarrels.

2. He suggests as an aggravation of their fault, the honour and dignity to which the saints of God must shortly be exalted as assessors with the eternal Judge on his throne, whilst fallen angels and a guilty world stand at his bar, and receive from his lips their eternal doom. And if so, how strange must it be that they should not now be able to judge of the smallest matters, and determine concerning the trivial affairs of this life, when even those who are least esteemed in the church would be much fitter to decide than the heathen magistrates before whom they carried their disputes.

3. With a warm expostulation on their folly and perverseness, he points out to them a remedy for the evil. *I speak to your shame.* In what an unbecoming and unchristian manner do you act. *Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?* Where they boasted of such high attainments in wisdom, it would be very strange if they could not find a better umpire of their disputes among the whole body of their church than to have recourse to heathen tribunals. There was therefore, no doubt, a fault in this matter; and far better it was for them to suffer some wrong and loss, than to seek redress in such a way. But, instead of this meekness, patience, and forgiveness, *ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren*, to the great dishonour of your Christian profession. *Note*, All differences among Christians should be amicably determined by their brethren: at least, in lesser matters, it were better to quit our right than have recourse to the wrangling bar.

9. [e] Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.† 11. [f] And such were some of you: but ye [g] are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

e Ch. 5. 11. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 5. 3—5. Col. 3. 5, 6. 1 Thes. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10. Heb. 12. 14. & 13. 4. Rev. 21. 8. & 22. 15. Is. 3. 11. Mat. 23. 33.

† The repetition of the negative particles in this verse is very emphatical.

f Ch. 12. 2. Rom. 6. 19. & 7. 5. Eph. 2. 1—3, 11, 12. & 5. 8. Col. 3. 7.

g Ch. 1. 30. Heb. 10. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3. Tit. 3. 5—7. Acts 26. 17, 18. Is. 1. 18.

Verses 9—11. The apostle having warned them against some particular offences, passes on to enumerate a black catalogue, of which they had formerly been guilty, and under the power of which whosoever continued to walk, he never could inherit the kingdom of God.

1. The sins mentioned are fornication, idolatry, adultery, effeminacy, and lasciviousness, sodomy, theft, avarice, drunkenness, reviling, extortion, crimes which, if indulged, must necessarily exclude the soul from any part in the kingdom of grace, and for ever banish it from the presence of God in glory.

2. He warns them against all self-delusion in this matter. There was a lie in their right hand, if they flattered themselves with any vain imaginations that they had yet hope towards God, whilst walking in such abominations; which then, now, and for ever, if not forgiven and forsaken, must inevitably destroy both body and soul in hell.

3. He reminds them of the blessed change which had passed upon them, that they might not again return unto folly. *Such were some of you. But*, glory be to God's sovereign, rich, and boundless grace, *ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God:* ye are washed in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness; by the atoning blood and righteousness of the adored Redeemer your iniquities are pardoned, great and aggravated as they were, and your persons presented spotless before the throne of God; and you are not only accounted righteous, but made pure in heart by the mighty operation of the Divine Spirit, and in body, soul, and spirit, renewed, that you might be made meet for the inheritance among the saints in light. *Note*, (1.) The greatest crimes exclude none from salvation who fly to the atoning blood of Jesus. In him there is grace abounding for the chief of sinners. (2.) All who are justified by grace are sanctified by the Spirit. We deceive ourselves, if we think we have an interest in the one, if we do not experience the effectual operation of the other. (3.) Nothing is so strong an argument to a redeemed soul to fly from sin, as the remembrance of the mercy he hath tasted, and of the ransom which hath been paid.

12. [h] All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not ‡ expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 13. [i] Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. [k] Now the body *is* not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. 14. And [l] God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. 15. Know ye not that [m] your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16. What! know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for [n] two, saith he, shall be one flesh. 17. [o] But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18. [p] Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19. What! [q] know ye not that your body is the temple of the

h Ch. 10. 23. Col. 2. 21.

‡ Or *profitable*, or *proper*. Macknight understands the apostle here to mean, *All meats are lawful for me to eat.*

i Mat. 15. 17. Rom. 14. 17. Col. 2. 22, 23. Mat. 22. 30.

k Rom. 6. 13, 19. & 7. 4. ch. 3. 15, 16. & 6. 19, 20. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 23.

l Acts 2. 24. 1 Thes. 4. 3. Rom. 6. 5, 8. & 8. 11, 17. 2 Cor. 4. 14. Eph. 1. 19, 20. Phil. 3. 10, 11.

m Rom. 12. 5. ch. 11. 3. & 12. 27. Eph. 1. 22. & 4. 12, 15, 16. & 5. 23, 30. Gen. 39. 9. Mark 10. 8.

n Gen. 2. 24. Mat. 19. 5. Eph. 5. 31.

o John 3. 6. & 7. 21—23. Eph. 4. 4. & 5. 30, 32. Phil. 2. 5.

p Exod. 20. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Rom. 1. 24—28. 1 Thes. 4. 4. Heb. 13. 4.

q Rom. 14. 7, 8. ch. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eph. 2. 21. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

r Ch. 7. 23. Gal. 3. 13. Heb. 9. 12, 14. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. Tit. 2. 14.
s Mat. 5. 16. Rom. 6. 19. 1 Thes. 4. 3. 2 Cor. 7. 1. ch. 3. 16.

Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20. For [r] ye are bought with a price: therefore [s] glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Verses 12—20. As some of them at Corinth appeared to have too light thoughts of the sin of fornication, which the apostle ranked under the damning sins, and seem to have set it on a footing only with the meats forbidden to the Gentile converts, (Acts xv. 29.) the apostle strongly sets himself to show their dangerous error. With regard to meats forbidden by the Levitical law, or offered to idols, *All things are lawful unto me* which Christ hath not forbidden, and are not in their own nature sinful; *but all things are not expedient;* even in indifferent matters, for the sake of others, it is right to forego our Christian liberty. *All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any,* so as to have my affections enslaved by them, or to have my conscience subjected to any human arbitrary authority. *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats;* all wholesome food is designed for our use: *but* these are things of trivial consequence, since *God shall* shortly *destroy both it and them.* In the eternal world the ransomed will not need these bodily refreshments, for they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more: but respecting fornication, the matter is very different; though the belly is not at all defiled by meats, the body is by fornication.

He urges this matter by various arguments.

1. *Now the body is not for fornication;* it was not made to be prostituted to impurity; *but for the Lord,* to be employed for his glory, *and the Lord for the body,* who, as the bridegroom of his church and people, requires their bodies as well as souls to be under his holy government. *And,*

2. *God hath both raised up the Lord Jesus,* from the dead, that his quickened body might be the pledge and earnest of our resurrection; *and will also raise up us by his own power:* our bodies therefore, that shall be fashioned like to his glorious body, ought not now to be polluted by fornication and uncleanness.

3. *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?* through faith we are united to Christ as our living head, and compose a part of his body mystical; *shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot?* how horrid the very suggestion! and every Christian heart, with detestation of the thought, cannot but cry, *God forbid! What! know ye not, that he who is joined to a harlot, is one body?* such an unhallowed connexion is most contrary to the union of the heart with Jesus: *for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.* A fornicator becomes united to a harlot, and not to Christ; *but he that is joined to the Lord,* in real vital union of heart and person, *is one spirit,* actuated and influenced by the same Divine Spirit, which in all its fulness dwells in our exalted head. Therefore *flee fornication,* as the highest indignity we can offer to the Lord, of whose body we are members. *Note,* In temptation to lewdness, flight is often the only preservative.

4. *Every* other *sin that a man doth is without the body,* and terminates upon an object without himself, not immediately defiling the body, though it brings guilt upon his soul; *but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body;* not only offending against God and his neighbour, but immediately contaminating his own flesh by such an abomination.

5. *What* shall I farther urge? *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God? and,* since he hath been pleased to take up his abode in your hearts, *ye are not your own,* but bound to yield yourselves to his will and guidance, and to do nothing which should provoke the divine inhabitant to quit his temple with abhorrence.

6. *For,* to finish with one argument more, *ye are bought with a price,* even the amazing price of a Redeemer's blood, from the curse of the law, and the bondage of corruption, that you might be restored to the service and enjoyment of the blessed God. *Therefore,* since this was one great end of your redemption, *glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's,* nor dare to alienate your affections from him, or to dishonour your bodies by fornication, which should be employed in his blessed work, and wholly and unreservedly devoted to his glory.

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle answers some cases, proposed to him by the Corinthians about marriage. He, 1. *Shows them that marriage was appointed as a remedy against fornication, and therefore persons had better marry than burn,* ver. 1—10. 2. *He gives direction to those who were married to continue together, though they might have an unbelieving relative, unless the unbeliever would part, in which case a Christian would not be in bondage.* ver. 10—17. 3. *He shows them, that becoming Christians does not change their external state, and therefore advises every one to continue, in general, in that state in which he was called,* ver. 17—25. 4. *He advises them, by reason of the present distress, to keep themselves unmarried: hints the shortness of time, and how they should improve it, so as to grow dead and indifferent to the comforts of the world; and shows them how worldly cares hinder their devotions, and distract them in the service of God,* ver. 25—36. 5. *He directs them in the disposal of their virgins,* ver. 36—39. 6. *And closes the chapter with advice to widows how to dispose of themselves in that state,* ver 39, 40.

1. NOW concerning the things whereof [a] ye wrote unto me: [a] *It is* good for a man not to [b] touch a woman. 2. Nevertheless, [c] *to avoid* fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. 3. [d] Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto [e] the husband. 4. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath [f] not power of his own body, but the wife. 5. [e] Defraud ye not one the other, except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. 6. [f] But I speak this by permission, *and* not of commandment.* 7. [g] For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. 8. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, [h] It is good for them if they abide even as I. 9. But [i] if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

a Mat. 17. 10. ver. 8, 26, 28, 35.
b Gen. 20. 6. Ruth 2. 9. Prov. 6. 29.
c Ch. 6. 18. ver. 9. Prov. 5. 19.
d Exod. 21. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 7. ch. 8. 1.
e Exod. 19. 15. 1 Sam. 21. 4. Joel 2. 1, 16. Zech. 7. 3. 1 Thes. 3. 5. Mat. 19. 11.
f 2 Cor. 11. 17. & 8. 8. ver. 12, 25.
* This expression has occasioned much controversy. It seems to us that the apostle cannot be here understood, as disclaiming inspiration. We would understand him as our commentator has done—to mean, *I say this in the way of permission, not of commandment or positive injunction.* See a similar expression, 2 Cor. vii. 8.
g Ch. 9. 5. & 12. 11, 25, Mat. 19. 12. Acts 26. 29.
h Ver. 1, 26, 35, 40.
i Ver. 2, 36, 39. 1 Tim. 5. 14.

Verses 1—9. In answer to some case of conscience, which the Corinthians had sent to the apostle for his solution, he replies:

1. In the persecuted state of the church, and considering the incumbrances which a married state necessarily produced, he suggests, that it would be well for those who had the gift of continence to keep themselves single; and in order to avoid exciting any desire after women, that they should observe a cautious distance, and never touch them.

2. Yet he was far from enjoining celibacy as a duty. *To avoid fornication*, where the gift of continence was not possessed, and circumstances made it more eligible, it was advisable that, every man and woman should enter into the honourable estate of marriage, with all conjugal fidelity and love cleaving alone to those with whom they are thus united.

3. For those who are married, he lays down this rule: That neither of them afterwards have a right to withhold their bodies from each other, but mutually owe the duty of the marriage-bed. And though on some extraordinary occasions they may forego those lawful delights which they take in each other, it must be *by consent*, when peculiar seasons of humiliation call for prayer and fasting; and only for *a time*, not defrauding each other of that which is now a mutual duty, but coming together as before, *that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency*, and whilst you wrongly abstain from what is lawful, he should lead you to what is criminal, and ensnare your affections with other objects.

4. The apostle declares, *I speak this by permission*, as my advice, *and not of commandment*, as what is absolutely necessary for every individual; not as if it was every man's duty to marry, who was thereto inclined; there were cases and circumstances when persons could best judge for themselves. *For I would that all men were even as I myself*, and could as contentedly continue in a state of celibacy; *but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that*, according to their different dispositions and constitutions. *I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if*, in these perilous times, *they abide even as I*, and can with safety and satisfaction continue single. *But if they cannot contain*, and they find their animal appetites too strong to be kept under, *let them marry;* this then becomes a duty, and it would be sinful to neglect the ordination of God; *for it is better to marry than to burn*, and be harassed with tormenting desire.

* The commands of Christ and his apostles are in one view — and that the most important — *the same*. Luke 16. 18. 1 John 4. 6. 1. Thess. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 14. 37. Yet there is a distinction, in emphasis, as it were, between sayings delivered by Jesus himself personally, when he was upon earth, and sayings delivered in his name by his apostles. We may understand the apostle to say, "I command — yet not I only, though an inspired apostle, but the Lord himself gives commandment as to this.

k Mat. 5. 32. & 19. 6, 9. Mark 10. 11, 12. Luke 16. 18.

l As Ezra 9. 2. & 10. 2, 3, 11.

m Ezra 9. 2. Mal. 2. 15. Tit. 1. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 5. Eph. 2. 12. Rom. 11. 16.

n Rom. 12. 18. & 14. 19. ch. 14. 33. Heb. 12. 14.

o 1 Pet. 3. 1. Mat. 5. 16.

10. And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the Lord, *[k] Let not the wife depart from *her* husband: 11. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband: and let not the husband put away *his* wife. 12. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, [l] let him not put her away. 13. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 14. [m] For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. 15. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases:* but [n] God hath called us to peace. 16. [o] For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save *thy* husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save *thy* wife? 17. [p] But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk: and so ordain I in all churches.

p Ver. 7. Mat. 19. 12, 24.

Verses 10—17. As many who had been called in a conjugal state had partners of their bed, who still continued in heathenism, and divorces were common among the Jews, the apostle, by immediate authority from his Lord, declares what was their duty in such circumstances.

1. The wife may on no considerations (adultery excepted) depart from her husband. *But if she depart* voluntarily, or be dismissed through any quarrel, *let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband*, whose regard it is her duty by all lawful means to endeavour to regain. *And let not the husband put away his wife*, on any consideration but the defilement of the marriage-bed. *Note*, Those who are married should desire and delight to make that state a comfort to each other; every breach involves both in misery.

2. With regard to those who have partners that continue in unbelief, whilst they themselves are called to the knowledge of the truth, the following directions I give by the Spirit, the Lord having left no express command concerning the matter.

(1.) If any unbelieving wife or husband choose to cohabit with their partner, who is converted to the faith of Christ, the believing wife or husband must not separate themselves from the unbeliever on account of religion. And he suggests his reasons for what he enjoined: [1.] The state is sanctified by the faith of either of the parties. *The unbelieving husband is sanctified by*, or in, *the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by*, or in *the husband*, they being one by virtue of the marriage union, and all their lawful marriage enjoyments sanctified to the faithful person; *else were your children unclean*, and not entitled to the blessings and privileges that belong to the visible church; *but now are they holy*, capable of being received into the congregation of the faithful, and admitted to the seal of the covenant, as much as if they descended from parents who were both believers in profession. [2.] *God hath called us to peace;* and therefore, so far as we can maintain it with our unbelieving relatives, we are bound to do it, and not make our different sentiments in religious matters the ground of contention and angry dispute: and though we wish they were even as we, yet should we not quarrel with them because they refuse to be of the same mind with us, but bear with the perverseness and displeasure which they may testify against us on account of our profession. [3.] Whilst thus walking in love, peace, and chastity, *what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?* and be made the instrument of her conversion. *But*, whether this be the case or not, *as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one*, in whatsoever state or relation, *so let him walk*, as may most adorn his holy profession; *and so ordain I in all churches*, laying this down as a general rule, to be accommodated to particular cases.

But, (2.) The case however is quite different, *if the unbelieving depart*, and offended at their partner for embracing the gospel, for that cause refuse any longer to cohabit with them; and, all kind means being used, insist on a separation; *a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases*, nor obliged to detain them when they desire to depart. Nay some suppose, that such a malicious and obstinate desertion, where all proposals of reconciliation and return are rejected, amounts to the dissolution of the marriage covenant, with regard to the injured party, like death itself: but I should think otherwise, unless the desertion

is accompanied with adultery in the unbeliever; and even then, though in God's sight the marriage bond is broken, the civil contract can be dissolved only by proper authority.

18. [r] Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised: is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. 19. [s] Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. 20. [t] Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. 21. [u] Art thou called *being* a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use *it* rather. 22. [x] For he that is called in the Lord, *being* a servant, is the Lord's † free man: likewise also he that is called, *being* free, is Christ's servant. 23. [y] Ye are bought with a price; [z] be not ye the servants of men. 24. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein [a] abide with God.

r Acts 15. 1, 19. Gal. 5. 1, 2. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11.
s Rom. 2. 25. & 3. 30. ch. 8. 8. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11. John 15. 14.
t Eph. 4. 1. Phil. 1. 27. Col. 1. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 12. & 4. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 12.
u Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. ch. 12. 13.
x Ver. 18. Rom. 6. 18, 22. Gal. 5. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 16. John 8. 32, 36. Luke 1. 74, 75. ch. 9. 21. Eph. 6. 5, 6. Philem. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 16.
† Gr. *made free.*
y Lev. 25. 42. ch. 6. 20. Acts 20. 28. Mat. 20. 28. Rom. 4. 24. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 1. 4. & 3. 13. Rev. 5. 9. & 1. 5, 6. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 3. 18. Heb. 9. 12, 14.
z Gal. 2. 4. Col. 2. 20—22. Dan. 3. 18. Mat. 33. 8—10.
a Gen. 5. 24. & 6. 9. & 17. 1. 1 John 1. 3, 7.

Verses 18—24. The apostle passes on to other cases.

1. Respecting circumcision. *Is any man called being circumcised,* Jew or proselyte, *let him not become uncircumcised,* or regret that he submitted to this rite. *Is any one called in uncircumcision? let him not become circumcised,* all these marks of peculiarity being abolished under the gospel. Jew and Gentile have now but one way to glory: *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing,* of no avail at all to salvation; *but* the grand point is, *the keeping the commandments of God,* from the divine principle of faith which worketh by love.

2. With regard to men's stations in life. *Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called,* desiring no alteration in his circumstances, but satisfied with the dispensations of God's providence. *Art thou called being a servant? care not for it;* as if because a servant or slave, therefore the less acceptable to God. With him there is no respect of persons. *But if thou mayest be made free, use it rather;* if the Lord open a door for your liberty, thankfully accept it, mean time resigned to wait his will. *For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman,* brought from the bondage of corruption to the most desirable freedom, even into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. *Likewise also he that is called being free, is Christ's servant:* whatever our civil privileges may be, when we have taken the Lord for our Master, we are, as much as the meanest slave, bound to yield ourselves to him, obedient in all things, *Ye are bought with a price,* both one and the other with the same price, even the blood of Jesus: *be not ye* therefore *the servants of men;* but whenever their commands interfere with the will of your great Master, hesitate not a moment whom ye shall obey. Upon the whole, *brethren,* this is my injunction; *Let every man wherein he is called,* whatever his station in life may be, *therein abide with God,* resigned to his will, aiming at his glory, maintaining communion with him, and looking up for grace to serve him acceptably. *Note,* (1.) As our worldly circumstances are ordered by divine appointment, to repine is to rebel against God. (2.) No attainments in religion give us a right to any superiority in worldly things. Dominion is not founded in grace.

25. [b] Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord: ‡ yet I give my judgment, as one that hath [c] obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. 26. I suppose therefore that [d] this is good for the present distress, *I say,* that *it is* good for a man so to be. 27. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. 28. [e] But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh; but I spare you. 29. But this I say, brethren, [f] the time *is* short. It remaineth, that [g] both they that have wives be as though they had none; 30. And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; 31. And they that use this world, as not abusing *it:* for the fashion of this world passeth away. 32. But I would have you [h] without carefulness. [i] He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: 33. But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife. 34. There is difference *also* between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy [k] both in body and in spirit; but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please *her* husband. 35. And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but [l] for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

‡ This was a case in which—like that in ver. 12—there was no commandment of Christ on record. Paul goes on to say that he gives a judgment as one who has obtained mercy to be *faithful,* that is, to his apostolic commission, 'not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God.'

b Ver. 6, 12, 40. 2 Cor. 8. 8, 10. & 11. 17.
c 1 Tim. 1. 12, 13. ch. 4. 2. 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2.
d Ver. 1, 8, 35, 40. Job 15. 24. Ps. 119. 143. Jer. 9. 15. & 15. 4. & 16. 2—4. Mat. 24. 9, 19. 1 Pet. 4. 17. Zeph. 1. 15. Luke 21. 23, 28, 31. & 23. 29.
e Heb. 13. 4. ver. 38.
f Rom. 13. 11. ch. 10. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 8, 9. Ps. 102. 23.
g Ezek. 7. 12. Mat. 6. 19. Ps. 39. 6. Prov. 23. 5. Is. 24. 4. & 40. 6, 7. Jam. 1. 10. & 4. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 24. 1 John 2. 17.
h Ps. 55. 22. Mat. 6. 25—34. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
i 1 Tim. 5. 5, 6. Luke 10. 40—42.
k Ch. 6. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 23.
l Mat. 6. 31. ch. 14. 40. Luke 8. 14. & 10. 41. & 21. 34. & 2. 37. & 1. 75.

Verses 25—35. In answer to their question with regard to unmarried persons, though our Lord had given no particular directions, yet the apostle, under divine inspiration, delivers his judgment.

1. Considering the troublesome times, and the present distress they were under, he advises those who with chastity could, to continue single. If they were already married, they must be content in that state, nor seek to loose that indissoluble bond; but if unmarried, they would do well not hastily to change their condition.

2. If any person found it more advisable or necessary for them to marry, they would commit no sin in so doing, marriage being honourable in all; only they would encumber themselves more in the world, and in those days of persecution expose themselves to more dangerous trials. But he urges not the point, lest he should bring them into a snare, when he only meant to suggest the cautions which prudence dictated.

3. Whatever was their state, married or unmarried, he had

one important charge to give them. *This I say, brethren, the time is short,* eternity is advancing swiftly, and the days which here are allotted us draw to their end. Since therefore our great concern in this world is to prepare for a better, *it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none;* not setting their affections on a dying world, or retarded from the pursuit of heavenly things by any engagements or attachments here below: *and they that weep, as though they wept not;* restraining all inordinate grief for the loss of dearest relatives, or for any other afflictions, since all present sufferings must so quickly have an end: *and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not;* considering the transitory nature of all their worldly comforts, and therefore sitting loose to them: *and they that buy, as though they possessed not;* not trusting in uncertain riches, nor placing their happiness in these possessions, but looking for a more enduring substance; *and they that use this world, as not abusing it,* to flatter their pride, or gratify their luxury; *for the fashion of this world passeth away,* all things below are fleeting as the shadow, and will shortly vanish as the dream when one awaketh. *Note,* (1.) A deep sense of the vanity of time, and the importance of eternity, is needful to regulate both our joys and sorrows, and to keep our affections disengaged from the objects of sense which would otherwise enslave us. (2.) We are dying worms in a dying world: the longest life is but *a short time;* every moment we are in jeopardy; and what is all the world to a dying man?

4. He suggests the general reason on which he grounded the foregoing advice. *I would have you without carefulness,* not to lay a snare upon you by enforcing celibacy, but that those who have the gift, *may attend on the Lord without distraction.* The advantage of the unmarried state is this, that being less incumbered with worldly cares, the single brother or sister are more at leisure for the service of the Redeemer, and can more entirely devote their time and talents, and employ both body and spirit in his blessed work; whilst the married person must necessarily be more engaged in the care of a family, and the needful provision for them, and have the partner of their bosom to please in all lawful things, solicitous to promote their temporal and eternal happiness. *Note,* (1.) That is always best for a Christian, which is best for his soul. (2.) Our first desire should be to please the Lord, and, whether married or single, to be holy both in body and spirit.

m Heb. 13. 4. ver. 2, 9, 28, 36. with ver. 18, 26, 34.
n Rom. 7. 1—3. see ver. 10, 15.
o 2 Cor. 6. 14. ch. 10. 31. Ezra 9. 2. Deut. 7. 3, 4. Mat. 2. 11.
p Ver. 18, 26, 35.
q Ver. 25. 1 Thes. 4. 8. 2 Cor. 10. 10. & 12. 11. see Rom. 1. 1.

36. ¶ But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of *her* age, and need so require: let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry. 37. Nevertheless, he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. 38. [m] So then he that giveth *her* in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth *her* not in marriage doeth better. 39. [n] The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth: but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; [o] only in the Lord. 40. [p] But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that [q] I have the Spirit of God.*

* As if he had said: "Whatever some may say, or may insinuate, I think I have the Spirit of God: I think I surely gave you sufficient evidence of this—did I not? Have you any reason to refuse my authority? I tender to you these directions in love; and I think, from the signs wrought amongst you, I may also *enjoin* upon you that which is convenient." — *Wardlaw.*

Verses 36—40. The apostle proceeds with farther directions concerning marriage.

1. Concerning virgins. *If any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely towards his virgin,* by restraining his daughter or ward, who is disposed thereto, from marrying; *if she pass the flower of her age,* and is come to years of maturity, *and need so require,* on deliberating the matter, it seems most eligible she should change her condition, *let him do what he will, he sinneth not* in disposing of her; *let him marry her* to a proper partner. *Nevertheless, he that standeth stedfast in his heart,* resolved to keep his ward or daughter single, *having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart,* with her consent, that *he will keep his virgin* as she is, *doeth well,* and shows in such trying times a prudent care of her. *So then, he that giveth her in marriage,* when it becomes needful, *doeth well;* acts a lawful and commendable part: *but he that giveth her not in marriage, doeth better;* provides more for her comfort, and keeps her more at her liberty to serve the Lord.

Some suppose (την εαυτου παρθενον) signifies not his virgin, but the state of virginity, and give the sense, that if any man continued single beyond the usual time when it was thought reputable to marry, and afterwards should think that he had put an undue restraint upon himself, and see cause to change his condition, it would be lawful for him, even if advanced in years, to take a wife: for though it might be most commendable if he could keep his first purpose, yet, if he finds the state of wedlock needful, he is at liberty, and may marry.

2. Concerning widows. The wife is bound by the law to her husband for life, unless by obstinate desertion and adultery the marriage-bond is cancelled. *But if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord;* careful not to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever, and giving her hand to no man, who hath not, as far as she can judge, given his heart to Christ. *But,* in most cases, *she is happier if she so abides, after my judgment,* and live unmarried; *and,* in what I here advise, *I think also,* whatever false teachers may suggest, *that I have the Spirit of God,* and now speak under his immediate inspiration.

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

The apostle in this chapter answers another case proposed to him by some of the Corinthians, about eating those things that had been sacrificed to idols. (1.) *He hints at the occasion of this case, and gives a caution against too high esteem of their knowledge,* ver. 1—4. (2.) *He asserts the vanity of idols, and the unity of the Godhead, and the sole mediation of Christ between God and man,* ver. 4—7. (3.) *He tells them, that upon supposition that it were lawful in itself to eat of things offered to idols, for that they themselves are nothing; yet regard must be had to the weakness of Christian brethren, and nothing done that would lay a stumblingblock before them, and occasion their sin and destruction,* ver. 7. ad finem.

1. NOW, as [a] touching things offered unto idols, we know that [b] we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. 2. [c] And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. 3. But if any man love God, the same is [d] known of him. 4. As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that [e] an idol *is* nothing

a Acts 15. 20, 29. Rev. 2. 14. ver. 10. ch. 10. 19—21, 25, 27.
b Ver. 2, 4, 7. Rom. 14. 3, 10, 14, 22.
c Ch. 13. 8, 12. Gal. 6. 3. 1 Tim. 1. 7, 3, 4, 6.
d Exod. 33. 12. Num. 16. 5. Nah. 1. 7. Mat. 7. 23. Rom. 8. 29. & 11. 2. John 10. 14. Gal. 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 19.
e Is. 41. 24. & 44. 8, 9. Jer. 2. 5, 11. & 10. 14, 15. & 51. 17, 18. Ps. 115. 4—8.

in the world, and that [f] *there is* none other God but one. 5. For though there be that [g] are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth; (as there be gods many, and lords many;) 6. But to us *there is but* [h] one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we * in him; and [i] one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him.

f Deut. 4. 39. & 6. 4. & 32. 39. Is. 37. 16. & 44. 6. Mark 12. 29. Eph. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 2. 5. & 1. 17.
g Deut. 3. 24. & 10. 17. Jer. 2. 11, 28. & 11. 13. Dan. 11. 8. & 5. 4.
h Deut. 6. 4. & 32. 39. Mal. 2. 10. Eph. 4. 6. Acts 17. 28. Rom. 11. 36. Eph. 3. 15. John 17. 3.
* Or *for him.*
i Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. Rom. 14. 9. John 13. 13. ch. 12. 3. Eph. 4. 5. Phil. 2. 11. Acts 2. 36. Eph. 1. 4—6. 1 Pet. 1. 21. John 1. 3. Col. 1. 16, 17. Heb. 1. 2, 3.

Verses 1—6. The apostle proceeds to consider the case of eating the flesh of animals which had been offered in sacrifice to idols. Sometimes the idolaters feasted their friends thereon in the idol-temples, sometimes in their own houses; and what they did not make use of was sold in the shambles.

1. He warns them against leaning upon their own understanding, and proudly abusing their Christian liberty. *Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all* in general *have knowledge*, and are persuaded of the vanity of idols, as well as you. Nevertheless, *knowledge* without grace *puffeth up, but charity edifieth*, and will engage us not merely to consider what is lawful, but what is expedient, making us condescending to those whose attainments are less, and who do not see things as clearly as we may. *And if any man think that he knoweth any thing*, self-opinionated, and above attending to the sentiments or weakness of his brethren, *he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God*, and from that blessed principle is engaged to make a practical improvement of his knowledge for God's glory, and his neighbour's edification, *the same is known of him*, and will receive his approbation. *Note*, (1.) That is the truly valuable knowledge which enables us to be most useful. (2.) Self-conceit is a sure proof of ignorance. (3.) There may be much knowledge in the head, where there is little charity in the heart.

2. He admits, that an idol is nothing, a mere imaginary being; and that, abstractedly considered, the eating meat offered in sacrifice to them is no evil, since *there is no other God but one*, whose creatures are all good in themselves. *For though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many)* multitudes of celestial and terrestrial deities being worshipped by the deluded heathen; *but to us there is but one God*, in opposition to the pagan polytheism, one in essence and operation, who is represented in the gospel revelation *as the Father, of whom are all things*, the Creator, Governor, and Preserver of all, *and we in him*, living, moving, and having our being; *and one Lord Jesus Christ*, not another God, and, like the heathen deities of an inferior nature, but a partaker of the same undivided Godhead and glory, *by whom are all things, and we by him*; one in operation with the Father as Creator of all, and as Mediator, in his personal character appointed to govern the peculiar kingdom delegated to him, to be our advocate for all blessings, and the dispenser of them to his redeemed people.

7. [k] Howbeit, *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. 8. [l] But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, † are we the better; neither, if we eat not, ‡ are we the worse. 9. But [m] take heed lest by any means this ‖ liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. 10. For if any man see thee which hast [n] knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, [o] shall not the conscience of him which is weak be * emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; 11. And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? 12. [p] But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. 13. Wherefore, [q] if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

k Ch. 5. 11. & 10. 28. Rom. 14. 14, 23.
l Rom. 14. 17. Heb. 13. 9. ch. 6. 13. Col. 2. 20—23.
† Or *have we the more.*
‡ Or *have we the less.*
m Rom. 14. 13, 20. Gal. 5. 13. ver. 10. Mat. 18. 6, 17. ch. 10. 32.
‖ Or *power.*
n Amos 2. 8.
o Ver. 11. ch. 10. 29. Rom. 14. 15, 20. 2 Pet. 2. 1.
* Gr. *edified.*
p Rom. 14. 15. Acts 9. 4. Mat. 25. 45. The more literal rendering is, *by thus sinning.*
q Rom. 14. 21. ch. 6. 12. & 9. 12. & 10. 23. 2 Cor. 11. 29.

Verses 7—13. Admitting the vanity of idols, the apostle shows, that for the sake of a weak brother they ought, notwithstanding, to abridge themselves of that liberty they might otherwise take, and not offend them by eating what was offered in sacrifice to those abominable deities. For,

1. Some of the new converts, not having entirely lost their veneration for those idols which they used to worship, nor as yet wholly persuaded of their vanity, still when they eat their sacrifices, pay them some sort of honour and regard; and *their conscience being* thus *weak*, through their remaining ignorance, *is defiled with the guilt of idolatry.*

2. We should be cautious therefore for others' sake, though we ourselves have knowledge, lest we should become a stumblingblock to *them that are weak*, considering that meat of one kind or another, used or abstained from, is no recommendation to God's favour; *for neither if we eat* the food, without any respect to the idol, *are we the better; neither if we eat not*, prudently abstaining for others' sake, *are we the worse.* But though the eating of the idol sacrifices be never so innocent in itself, yet it may prove a great hurt to the consciences of the weak, who seeing you eating in an idol-temple, may be emboldened by your example, though not satisfied of the lawfulness of the action, to do the like; and thus what you, who know the vanity of idols, might otherwise do innocently, may be the means of leading a weaker brother to wound his conscience with guilt, *for whom Christ died:* and who, having made profession of his faith, is, in the judgment of charity, to be reckoned among his redeemed people. *But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ*, whose compassions towards the lambs of his flock are great, and he will resent every slight put upon them, and every offence given to them. *Wherefore if meat* offered to idols *make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth*, of any such sacrifice, however innocent the thing may be in itself, *lest I make my brother to offend. Note*, It is not enough that we avoid what is sinful ourselves; Christian charity will teach us even to abridge ourselves of liberty in lawful things for others' good.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle seems to answer some cavils against himself: (1.) *He asserts his apostolical mission and authority, and gives in his success amongst them as a testimony of it*, ver. 1—3. (2.) *He claims a right to subsist by his ministry, and defends it by several arguments from natural reason and the Mosaical law, and asserts it also to be a constitution of Christ*, ver. 3—15. (3.) *He shows that he had willingly waved this privilege and power for their benefit*, ver. 15—20. (4.) *He instances in several other things, in which he had denied himself for the sake of other men's spiritual interest and salvation*, ver. 20—24.

And, (5.) *Concludes this argument by showing what animated him to this course, even the prospect of an incorruptible crown,* ver. 24. ad finem.

1. AM [a] I not an apostle? [b] am I not free? [c] have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? [d] are not ye my work in the Lord? 2. If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. 3. Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, 4. [e] Have we not power to eat and to drink? 5. [f] Have we not power to lead about a sister, a * wife, as well as other apostles, and *as* the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?† 6. [g] Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? 7. [h] Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8. Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9. For it is written in the law of Moses, [i] Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10. [k] Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thrasheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11. [l] If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 12. If others be partakers of *this* power over you, *are* [m] not we rather? nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 13. [n] Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things ‡ live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14. Even so [o] hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

a See Rom. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 5. & 12. 11. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2, 3. & 22. 21. & 26. 17, 18. Gal. 2. 7.

b Gal. 5. 1, 13. ver. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 16.

c Ch. 15. 8. Acts 9. 3, 5, 17. & 22. 11, 17, 18. & 23. 11. & 26. 16.

d Ch. 3. 5, 6, 9, 10. & 4. 15. Acts 18. 9—11. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. & 12. 12.

e Ver. 14. Luke 10. 7. 1 Thes. 2. 6, 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. ch. 4. 12. ver. 18, 19.

f 1 Tim. 4. 3. Heb. 13. 4. Mat. 8. 14. & 12. 46. & 13. 55. John 2. 12. Acts 1. 14. Mark 6. 3. Luke 6. 15. Gal. 1. 19.

* Or *woman.*

† Or Peter, who is here called by his original name.

g 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. 1 Thes. 2. 6, 7. Acts 20. 34. ch. 4. 12.

h Deut. 20. 6. Prov. 27. 18. ch. 3. 6—8. 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. 1 Tim. 1. 18. & 6. 12 2 Tim. 2. 3. & 4. 7. John 21. 15—17. Acts 20. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 2.

i Deut. 25. 4. 1 Tim. 5. 18. Prov. 12. 10. Exod. 23. 14. Jon. 4. 11.

k Rom. 15. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 6.

l Rom. 15. 27. Mat. 10. 10. Gal. 6. 6. Mat. 2. 8, 9.

m Acts 20. 31, 33, 34. 2 Cor. 11. 9, 12. & 12. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 6—9. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9.

n Lev. 6. 16, 26. & 7. 6. Num. 18. 8, 20. Deut. 10. 9. & 18. 1. ch. 10. 18.

‡ Or *feed.*

o Mat. 10. 10. Luke 10. 7, 8. Gal. 6. 6. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. Jer. 31. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 8. Is. 23. 18.

Verses 1—14. It seems probable that the false teachers had raised some objection against Paul's authority as an apostle, because he had not asserted that right to a maintenance which was due to his office, and waving his privilege had refused to be burdensome to them.

1. He vindicates his authority: if he had not insisted on a maintenance, it was for their sakes he had waved this right. *Am not I an apostle,* because I have acted thus disinterestedly? *am not I free* to claim a subsistence, if I choose it? *have not I seen Jesus Christ our Lord?* and received my commission immediately from him. *Are not you my work in the Lord?* the converts of my ministry, and the fruit of my labours in the gospel. *If I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you,* who owe to me chiefly, as the instrument, all you know and are: *for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord;* the Lord attesting the truth of my mission, by the success with which he blessed my ministry to your souls. *Note,* (1.) The best of men and ministers may expect to meet with malignant revilers. (2.) They who have been blest under our ministry have in themselves the strongest proof that we are sent of God.

2. He asserts his right to all the privileges of an apostle. In answer to those who presumed to sit in judgment on his character, he replies, *Have we not power to eat and to drink?* have not Barnabas and I a claim upon you for a maintenance, though we have not exerted it? *have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife,* and to expect a provision for our families as we are travelling from place to place, *as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas,* who were particularly sent to the Gentiles, *have not we power to forbear working?* and must earn with our hands that maintenance which the other apostles are entitled to for their works sake? How absurd and unreasonable is such a supposition! *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?* the soldier hath his stipend and provisions; *who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* the vine-dresser is fed with the produce of his toil: *or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* If these are justly entitled to eat the labour of their hands, much more have the ministers of the gospel, who sustain all these characters, a right to a competent provision. *Say I these things as a man?* merely on the footing of equity; *or saith not the law the same also?* let even my Judaizing opposers and maligners judge. *For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn;* but whilst he works, he shall be permitted to eat. *Doth God take care for oxen?* was this precept given merely with a reference to them? *or saith he it altogether for our sakes,* who labour in the gospel? *for our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth,* breaking up the fallow-ground of the sinner's heart, *should plow in hope,* of a reasonable return, *and that he that thrasheth in hope,* separating the chaff of corruption from the good seed of grace in the heart, *should be partaker of his hope.* And as the ploughman and thrasher eat the fruit of their toils, so much more should the laborious minister in God's spiritual husbandry have a just recompense of reward. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing,* or unreasonable for us to expect, or for you to give, *that we should reap your carnal things,* and have a maintenance, when the value between the spiritual blessings we communicate, and the pittance we should receive is so disproportionate? *If others be partakers of this power over you,* and are supported at your expense, to whom ye never were nor can be so indebted as unto us; *are not we rather* entitled to a provision, if we choose to claim it? *Nevertheless, we have not used this power,* nor insisted on what we have a right to demand; *but suffer all things,* choosing to undergo any want and hardships, *lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ,* and raise a prejudice in your minds, that our views were mercenary. But *do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar,* and receive their maintenance from their share in the sacrifices and oblations? *Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.* So that it appears, (1.) In the very reason of the thing: (2.) From the law of Moses: (3.) From Christ's express institution, (Luke x. 7.) that the ministers of Christ have a right to be supported becomingly by those among whom they labour.

15. [p] But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these

p Acts 18. 3. & 20. 34. ch. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 9—11. & 12. 13—18.

things, that it should be so done unto me: for *it were* better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void. 16. For, though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for [q] necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel! 17. For if I do this thing willingly, [r] I have a reward; but if against my will, [s] a dispensation *of the gospel* is committed unto me. 18. What is my reward then? [t] *Verily* that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

q Jer. 20. 7. Amos 3. 8. & 7. 15. Acts 9. 6, 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 14, 15, 21. & 26. 16—18. Rom. 1. 14. Gal. 1. 1, 12.

r Ch. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 5. 4.

s Luke 10. 7. ch. 4. 1. Gal. 2. 7. Phil. 1. 17. Col. 1. 25. Eph. 3. 2, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. with Mat. 20. 10, 14.

t Ch. 4. 12. Acts 20. 34. & 18. 3. 2 Cor. 11. 9, 12. & 12. 13—18. 1 Thes. 2. 6—9. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. with ch. 7. 31. & 10. 33. 2 Cor. 4. 5. & 11. 7.

Verses 15—18. The apostle mentions his own disinterested conduct; for nothing is more opposite to the character of a Christian minister, than the very shadow of mercenary views. *I have used none of these things,* nor ever claimed my right among you! *neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me,* on any future occasion: *for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void:* I had rather wear out my body with labour to minister to my own wants, than not preach the gospel to you freely, and thereby cut off occasion from those, who, if I received any recompense, would thence take a handle to prejudice you against me. *For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me,* and I cannot but obey the Master's orders: *yea, wo is unto me if I preach not the gospel,* I must be exposed to the bitterest accusations of unfaithfulness, and justly sink under the heaviest vengeance. *For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward:* the consciousness of disinterested zeal is a satisfaction to my own soul, and the Lord will remember and reward my labours of love; *but if against my will* I labour, *a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me,* and I am bound to be faithful. *What is my reward then? verily that when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge;* showing the disinterested fidelity with which I act, and approving myself to God, and to my own conscience, *that I abuse not my power in the gospel,* nor exact even what I have authority to demand, demonstrating to the people, that I seek not theirs, but them. *Note,* For the sake of Christ it is prudent often to forego our rights and privileges, and to wave the claims to that reward, to which our office and labours may entitle us.

19. [u] For, though I be free from all *men,* yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20. And [x] unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21. [y] To them that are without law, as without law, (being [z] not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22. [a] To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men,* that I might by all means save some.* 23. And this I do [b] for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with *you.*

u Ver. 1, 20—23. Rom. 15. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 16. ch. 10. 33. Gal. 5. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 1. Rom. 11. 14.

x Acts 16. 3. & 18. 18. & 17. 2, 3. & 21. 20—26. Gal. 4. 21.

y Rom. 2. 12. Acts 15. 28. & 21. 25. Gal. 2. 3, 4, 11—14. 2 Cor. 3. 6.

z Ch. 7. 19, 22. & 10. 32. Ps. 116. 16. & 119. 32.

a Rom. 15. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 29. Gal. 6. 1, 2. ch. 8. 12. & 10. 33. & 7. 16. Rom. 11. 14. ver. 19—23.

* Some MSS. read, *that I might save all.*

b Ch. 25. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 10. & 1. 8.

Verses 19—23. In other instances of Christian liberty, as well as the foregoing, the apostle sets us a noble example of self-denial. *For though I be free from all men,* and under no obligations to be subservient to their will or humour; *yet have I made myself servant unto all,* willing in all indifferent matters to conform to them, and deny myself, *that* thus engaging their affections and attention, *I might gain the more,* and win them over to embrace the doctrines and ways of the gospel. *And* for this purpose, *unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews?* not refusing to observe those ceremonials in their worship, to which, though indifferent in themselves, they were still attached. *To them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;* submitting to many of its ordinances, to engage the affection of my Jewish brethren, who still maintain their veneration for the divinely-instituted service of the sanctuary. *To them that are without law, as without law:* not urging on them circumcision, or any of the ceremonial institutions, as at all necessary to salvation; but insisting on the necessity of faith in Christ alone, (*being, not without law, to God,* as if the moral law was abrogated, as well as the ceremonial; *but under the law to Christ,* walking in faith and holiness, according to the obligations which the gospel lays upon me,) *that I might gain them that are without law,* and lay no needless obstacles in the way of the Gentiles, but preaching the simple gospel, might engage their hearts to Jesus and his blessed service. *To the weak, became I as weak,* condescending to their infirmities, and abstaining even from things innocent and lawful, where their conscience was scrupulous, *that I might gain the weak,* and lead them on to farther attainments of knowledge and grace. In short, *I am made all things to all men,* studying to please every man for his good to edification, *that I might by all means save some,* and, through the blessing of the Redeemer, be made the instrument of their conversion. *And this I do for the gospel's sake,* if possible to remove all prejudice and objections, *that I might be partaker thereof with you,* and come to share with you in all its saving blessings and benefits. *Note,* It is highly our duty to avoid every unnecessary occasion of offence, and in all indifferent things to forego our own will and pleasure for the profit of our neighbour.

24. [c] Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? [d] So run, that ye may obtain. 25. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we [e] an incorruptible. 26. I therefore so run, not as [f] uncertainly so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27. But [g] I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be [h] a cast-away.

c Ver. 15, 26. Hos. 12. 10. ch. 3. 1. 2 John 3. 12. Gal. 3. 15.

d Mat. 10. 22. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Rev. 2. 10. Phil. 3. 14. & 2. 16. Gal. 5. 7. & 6. 9. Heb. 12. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. & 2. 4, 5. Eph. 6. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 12.

e 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Jam. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 4. & 5. 4. Rev. 2. 10. & 3. 11.

f 2 Tim. 2. 5. & 4. 8. & 1. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 1.

g Rom. 6. 4, 6, 18, 19. & 8. 13. Col. 3. 5. ch. 4. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 11. 23. Eph. 5. 3.

h Jer. 6. 30. 2 Cor. 13. 5, 6.

Verses 24—27. To quicken them to imitate his own example, and give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, he proposes to them the case of those who in the Isthmian games contended for victory. *Know ye not that they who run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize?* the prize itself was in value trivial, though such pains were used to obtain it; and only one could there possess the honour. Here the prize is no less than eternal life, and *all* who run are sure to win; *so run* then with faith, patience, and perseverance, *that ye may obtain* the inestimable reward. *And* again, *every man that striveth for the mastery,* and would overcome, as wrestlers or boxers in the games,

is temperate in all things, that by observing the most exact regimen, and bringing their bodies into the best order, they may be the better prepared for the conflict. *Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown*, of withering leaves or flowers; *but we* have *an incorruptible* crown of glory in view, compared with which theirs is poor and trivial; and therefore how much more are we bound to deny our appetites; with how much greater earnestness ought we to contend with victory, where we are sure, if we fight manfully, to conquer, and the reward will be so unutterably and eternally glorious. *I therefore*, in this view, *so run* with unwearied diligence my Christian course, *not as uncertainly*, observing the path of duty prescribed, not dubious concerning the issue, but sure through Christ to win the prize. *So fight I* against the world, the flesh, and the devil, *not as one that beateth the air*, not merely exercising my arms as the boxers, that they might be ready for the combat: *but I keep under my body*, (ὑποπιαζω) mortify its corrupt appetites, as the boxers who beat their antagonist black and blue; *and bring it into subjection*, (δουλαγωγω) as the wrestlers when their adversary was thrown under them; *lest that by any means when I have preached to others* the necessity of such mortification, diligence, and self-denial, *I myself*, through negligence or unfaithfulness, *should* be overcome by my corrupted nature and spiritual foes, and *be a cast-away* at last (ἀδοκιμος) rejected by the great Judge, and counted unfit for the promised reward. And this holy jealousy which I feel for myself, I inculcate upon you, that in the use of all appointed means you may secure the glorious prize, and be approved of the Lord in the great day of his appearing. *Note*, (1.) In our Christian race and warfare, what diligence, constancy, and courage do we not need? blessed be God there is help laid on one mighty to save, and looking to him we are sure to gain the prize. (2.) Our bodies are our great snare, and the mortification of sensual appetite is absolutely necessary in order to the salvation of the immortal soul. (3.) Holy jealousy over ourselves is the great preservative against apostasy. (4.) Though God's elect can never be finally cast away, and the apostle strove not *as uncertainly*; yet we must remember God hath ordained the means as well as the end, and that we but deceive ourselves, if we promise ourselves safety, when we grow negligent, and work not out our salvation with fear and trembling. (5.) Many have appeared with zeal in the cause of Christ, and have been the means of saving others, who have perished themselves. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle prosecutes the argument at the close of the last, and (1.) *Warns the Corinthians against security by the example of the Jews, whose history is left upon record for the admonition of Christians*, ver. 1—15. (2.) *He resumes his former argument*, chap. viii. *about eating things* offered to idols; *and shows that it is utterly inconsistent with true Christianity*, ver. 15—23. (3.) *He lets them yet know, that though they must not eat of things sacrificed to idols as such, and out of any regard to the idol, yet they might buy such flesh in the markets and eat it at the table of heathen acquaintance, without asking any questions: for that the brethren's abuse of them did not render the creatures of God unfit to be the food of his servants. Yet liberty of this kind must be used with a due regard to weak consciences, and no* offence given by it *to Jew or Gentile, or the* church of God, ver. 23. ad finem.

a Exod. 13. 21. & 14. 19—22. Num. 9. 18. & 33. 8. Deut. 1. 33. Neh. 9. 11, 12, 19. Josh. 4. 23. Ps. 66. 6. & 78. 13, 14. & 105. 39. & 136. 13, 14. Is. 63. 11—13. Heb. 11. 29.

1. MOREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, [a] how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2. And were all [b] baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3. And [c] did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4. And [d] did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5. But [e] with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6. Now these things were [f] our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as [g] they also lusted. 7. [h] Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8. [i] Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9. [k] Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10. [l] Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11. Now all these things happened unto them for † ensamples: and [m] they are written for our admonition, upon whom [n] the ends of the world are come. 12. Wherefore [o] let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13. There hath no [p] temptation taken you but ‡ such as is common to man: but [q] God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation [r] also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

b Exod. 14. 31.

c Exod. 16. 4, 14, 15, 35. Ps. 78. 24, 25. & 105. 40. Deut. 8. 3. Neh. 9. 15, 20. John 6. 32—56.
d Exod. 17. 6. Deut. 9. 21. Num. 20. 11. & 21. 16. Neh. 9. 15, 20. Ps. 78. 15, 20. & 105. 41. Is. 43. 20. & 48. 21. & 53. 5. John 4. 10, 14. & 7. 37. Rev. 22. 17.
e Num. 14. 23, 37. & 26. 64, 65. Ps. 106. 26. Heb. 3. 17—19. Jude 5. Deut. 1. 34, 35.
f Gr. *our figures.* Ver. 11. Jude 5—7. 2 Pet. 2. 4—6. Zeph. 3. 6, 7.
g Num. 11. 4, 33. Ps. 106. 14. & 78. 30—33, 17—20.
h Ver. 14. 1 John 5 21. ch. 5. 11. & 8. 7. with Exod. 32. 6. Gen. 26. 8. & 39. 14.
i Ch. 6. 18. & 5. 11. with Num. 25. 1—9. Ps. 106. 28. Rev. 2. 14. Col. 3. 5.
k Exod. 14. 12. & 17. 2, 7. & 23. 20, 21. Is. 63. 9, 10. Num. 21. 5, 6. Deut. 6. 16. Ps. 78. 15, 56. & 95. 9. & 106. 14. Heb. 10. 26, 29.
l Exod. 15. 22. & 16. 2. & 17. 2. Num. 11. 1. & 14. 2, 27, 29. & 16. 41, 46, 49. Ps. 106. 16, 25. Heb. 10. 28. Phil. 2. 14. Jude 16.
† Or *types.*
m Ver. 6. Rom. 15. 4. ch. 9. 10.
n Ch. 7. 29. Phil. 4. 5. Heb. 19. 25, 27. 1 Pet. 4. 7. 1 John 2. 18. Eph. 5. 15, 16.
o Luke 22. 32.
Rom. 11. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 4.
p Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. & 4. 12.
‡ Or *moderate.*
q Ch. 1. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 3. Gen. 19. 20, 21. Exod. 13. 17. Ps. 125. 3. & 103. 12, 13. Is. 57. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 24.
r 2 Cor. 12. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 9. Jer. 29. 11. John 16. 33. Is. 46. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 10. Heb. 12. 4.

Verses 1—13. The apostle returns to the subject of eating the sacrifices offered to idols.

1. He reminds the Corinthians of the distinguished privileges, and fatal overthrow of the Israelites in the wilderness. *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea*, led by divine protection, covered from the heat by day, and cheered by the light of fire by night; preserved amidst the watery walls, and safely traversing the ocean's bed; *and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud, and in the sea*, sprinkled with some drops from the cloud, or the spray of the dashing waves; and were all brought under the Mosaical law, as we by baptism are visibly admitted into the church of Christ, and devoted to his service. *And did all eat of the same spiritual meat*, the manna which fell around their tents, the figure of Christ, the true bread which came down from heaven, on whom his redeemed sacramentally feed to the end of time; *and did all drink of the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them; and that Rock was Christ.* Through all the desert the living streams gushed forth to slake their thirst; and that divine Redeemer, whom the rock prefigured, the fountain of living waters, and streams from Lebanon, he, by his gracious presence, was in the midst of them: as he is still in the hearts of all his people a well of water springing up into everlasting life. *But*, though all enjoyed these distinguished privileges,

with many of them God was not well-pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness; and, for their disobedience and rebellions, were not suffered to enter into the land of promise, the type of the heavenly Canaan, but their carcases fell in the desert. *Note*, It is not outward privileges enjoyed, but inward grace possessed, which alone can bring us to the eternal inheritance, and the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

2. From their examples, the apostle warns the Corinthians not to be secure, notwithstanding their distinguished privileges, lest, imitating their sins, they should be exposed to like punishment. (1.) He cautions them against the indulgence of their appetite. Dissatisfied with the manna, the Israelites lusted after flesh to eat. Against such luxury they must beware, and particularly avoid the idol-feasts or sacrifices, which could not but have the most fatal consequences. *Note*, To please the palate, how many have plunged both body and soul into hell! (2.) He warns them against idolatry, such as the Israelites committed, when, having offered their sacrifices to the calf, they sat down to feast upon them, and according to the heathen custom, rose up to dance around him, to do him honour; but they severely smarted for their folly, Exod. xxxii. 10, 28. (3.) He admonishes them against fornication, such as the Jews committed with the daughters of Moab, and to which they were led at their idol-feast; the dire consequence of which was, that in one day three and twenty thousand were cut off by the immediate judgment of God. With such an instance of divine vengeance before them, they had need tremble for themselves in a city so abandoned to lewdness as Corinth was, knowing that none of their privileges could protect them, if they sinned, but that whoremongers, and adulterers, God will judge. (4.) He warns them against all dishonourable distrust of the power and grace of Christ to carry them through their difficulties, remembering the vengeance inflicted upon those of old, who tempted and provoked God by their unbelief, Num. xxi. 14. and were destroyed by the fiery serpents. *Note*, When unbelief prevails, then the old serpent, the devil, resumes his dominion over the soul. (5.) He cautions them against all discontent under their sufferings or trials, and to beware of those who would instigate them to murmur against him, and the other ministers of Christ, for what they delivered from him. Thus murmured the Israelites against Moses and Aaron, and at the difficulties they apprehended, and were destroyed by the angel's hand. These things were all recorded for the admonition of the church; and what befell God's professing people of old, should be a warning to us at present, who live under the last dispensation which God will ever grant, that, having their fearful punishment, we might avoid the like provocation. *Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth*, secure and immoveable, *take heed, lest*, puffed up with high imaginations of his own sufficiency, *he fall*, as the Israelites did of old. *Note*, (1.) Others' falls should be our warnings. (2.) Distrust of ourselves, and dependence upon the power and grace of the Redeemer, are our great stability.

3. He encourages the faithful among them, under all their trials, to trust and not be afraid. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man*, such as you might expect from the world around; or such as is incident to the human nature; or at least, none so grievous but you may well bear up under it. *But* however severe your temptations may be, *God is faithful* to his promises, *who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it*, supporting you whilst it lasts, and in his good time giving you deliverance from it: so that you shall neither be drawn into sin, nor faint under your sufferings. *Note*, (1.) We must not think our trials, however severe, singular, and murmur; others have felt the same before us. (2.) God's faithfulness should be the anchor of our hope. (3.) Our Redeemer is mighty, we may safely trust him. (4.) God knows best what afflictions we need, and how long we should be exercised with them. To him let us always refer ourselves, casting our care upon him.

14. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, [s] flee from idolatry. 15. I speak as to [t] wise men; judge ye what I say. 16. [u] The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17. For [x] we, *being* many, are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that [y] one bread. 18. Behold Israel [z] after the flesh: [a] Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? 19. What say I then? [b] that the idol is any thing? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? 20. But *I say*, that [c] the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. 21. [d] Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. 22. [e] Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

[s] Ver. 7. ch. 8. 10. 2 Cor. 6. 17. 1 John 5. 21. Rev. 2. 14. Exod. 20. 3—6.
[t] Ch. 1. 5. & 8. 1. & 2. 15. & 11. 13. Mat. 13. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 21.
[u] Mat. 26. 26—28. Luke 22. 19, 20. ch. 11. 23—29. Acts 2. 42, 46. & 20. 7.
[x] Acts 2. 41, 42, 47. Rom. 12. 5. ch. 12. 10, 27. Gal. 3. 26—28.
[y] Ver. 3. John 6. 33—58.
[z] Rom. 9. 6, 8. & 4. 12. Gal. 6. 16.
[a] Lev. 3. 3. & 7. 15. 1 Sam. 1. 4, 5. ch. 9. 13.
[b] Rom. 14. 14. ch. 8. 4. Tit. 1. 15. Ps. 96. 5.
[c] Lev. 17. 7. Deut. 32. 17. Ps. 106. 37. Rev. 9. 20. Is. 65. 11. 2 Chr. 11. 15. Eph. 2. 2
[d] Deut. 32. 18, 37, 38. Judg. 2. 12. Jer. 2. 13. 2 Cor. 6. 15, 16. Mat. 6. 24.
[e] Deut. 32. 21. Job 9. 4, 19. & 37. 23. & 40. 2. Ezek. 22. 14

Verses 14—22. From the foregoing premises the apostle returns to urge the necessity of shunning idolatry, its most distant approaches, knowing the dreadful consequences of it on the one hand, and the divine assistance promised on the other. He therefore, as *dearly beloved*, with warm affection, warns them *to flee from idolatry*, and as to *wise men*, whether really possessed of spiritual wisdom, or vainly puffed up with their fancied high attainments, he appeals to them for the reasonableness of what he advanced.

1. He instances in the case of the Lord's supper. *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?* Do we not therein profess to hold communion with Christ in all his saving blessings? Do we not therein acknowledge our obligations to him, as bought with a price, to glorify him in our bodies and our spirits, which are his? *The bread*, or loaf, *which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* Doth it not represent to us his broken body? Doth not our feeding upon it signify our communion with him who is the living bread? And do we not hereby profess our solemn devotedness to him, and union to each other? *For we being many are one bread*, as the different corns of wheat are moulded into one loaf, and intimately united in *one body*, of which Christ is the living head: *for we are all partakers of that one bread*, feasting together upon the sacrifice of Christ, herein shadowed forth; partakers of all the benefits obtained by his one oblation once offered; and thereby united to him in love, and to one another.

2. The case is the same with regard to the Jewish sacrifices, *Behold Israel after the flesh*, in their observance of the ritual services; *are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?* When they feast upon the remainder of the peace-offer-

ings, they profess communion with, and subjection to that God, on whose altar they offered their sacrifice.

3. He applies what he had said to the point in hand. *What say I then? that the idol is any thing? or that which is sacrificed to idols is any thing?* No, I have declared the contrary, chap. viii. The idol is nothing, and the meat in its nature not altered, *But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God.* The demons whom they worship are wicked and fallen spirits, with whom, in these sacrifices, they maintain communion, and to whom they pay divine honours. *And I would not that we should have fellowship with devils,* as by parity of reason, considering the foregoing cases, you must, if you feast with the idolaters on their sacrifices. *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord,* the symbol of his blood, *and the cup of devils,* the libations consecrated to these demons; *ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils,* there is an utter inconsistency in such a conduct; Christ and Belial can have no communion. To feast, therefore, in idol temples, is to renounce Christianity, its sacraments, and privileges. *Do we provoke the Lord Jesus to jealousy,* by such idolatry, in direct opposition to his holy law? Exod. xx. 3—5. *Are we stronger than he?* and do we defy the wrath of the Almighty? Surely destruction must be the consequence. *Note,* When we have to do with a jealous God, how careful should we be that no idol in our hearts, as well as no outward object of idolatry, rob him of his peculiar honour.

23. [f] All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. 24. [g] Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth.** 25. [h] Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, *that* eat, asking no question for conscience' sake. 26. For [i] the earth *is* the Lord's and the fulness thereof. 27. If any of them [k] that believe not bid you *to a feast,* and ye be disposed to go; [l] whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake. 28. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, [m] eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience' sake: for [n] the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. 29. [o] Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another *man's* conscience? 30. [p] For if I by ‖ grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? 31. [q] Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. 32. [r] Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the † Gentiles, nor to the church of God: 33. [s] Even as I please all *men* in all *things,* not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

f Ch. 6. 12. & 8. 8. & 14. 26. ver. 24. Rom. 14. 7, 19—21.
g Mat. 16. 24. Rom. 9. 3. & 15. 1, 2 ch. 13. 5. & 9. 19—23. Phil. 2. 4, 26. ver. 33.
* That is, welfare, good, or advantage generally.
h 1 Tim. 4. 4. Tit. 1. 15. ch. 9. 3, 4.
i Exod. 19. 5. & 9. 29 Deut. 10. 14. Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 12. Job 41. 21. ver. 28. 1 Tim. 4. 4. & 6. 17.
k Ch. 7. 12—15. 2 Pet. 3. 1.
l Luke 10. 7. ch. 8. 7. ver. 25.
m Ch. 8. 10, 11. Rom. 14. 16.
n Deut. 10. 14. Exod. 9. 29. & 19. 5. Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 12. ver. 26.
o Rom. 14. 15, 16, 20, 21. ch. 8. 9—13. ver. 32.
p 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4. Rom. 14. 6.
‖ Or *thanksgiving.*
q Zech. 7. 6. 1 Chr. 17. 24. Rev. 11. 5. Song 7. 13. Col. 3. 17. Mat. 5. 16. John 15. 8. Rom. 11. 36. & 14. 8. Prov. 16. 4. Phil. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 12. & 4. 11.
r 2 Cor. 6. 3. ch. 8. 13. Rom. 14. 13. Phil. 1. 10. 1 John 2. 10.
† Or *Greeks.*
s Rom. 15. 2. ch. 9. 19—23 2 Cor. 11. 28, 29. & 12. 19. ver. 24.

Verses 23—33. The apostle here,

1. In general warns them against every abuse of their Christian liberty. *All things are lawful for me,* and these meats offered to idols are not thereby defiled, *but all things are not expedient.* There are circumstances in which it would be duty to abstain from what is, in its own nature, innocent and indifferent: *all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not;* and therefore, if eating these sacrifices gave offence to a weak brother, it would be then duty to abstain, however clear I might be in the lawfulness of the thing. And this is a rule applicable to many other cases; therefore, generally, let it be your practice, that *no man seek his own* will, humour, or benefit, *but every man another's wealth,* ready to deny himself, in order to promote their advantage and edification.

2. He shows in what particular instances the meat offered to idols might be safely eaten. (1.) If it was exposed in the public market to be sold, then they need not make any inquiries, *for conscience' sake,* whence it came, but buy and use it for common food. *For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof;* and all the creatures are good when used to his glory. (2.) If any heathen acquaintance bid you to a feast, and you have any inducement or obligation to go, whatever the table affords may be eaten without scruple; but if any person at the table suggests, *this is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that showed it, and for conscience' sake,* bearing your testimony thereby against all such impious honours offered to demons, and keeping your conscience void of offence. *For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,* and he hath provided sufficiency of other food, without dishonouring him by the least thing which might seem to countenance idolatrous worship. Abstain for *conscience'* sake, *I say, not thine own, but of the other,* who informed you, and might be grieved or stumbled by your example, though your own might receive no damage.

3. He answers an objection which might be raised. *For why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?* His conscience is not to be the rule of my conduct. *For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?* In answer, he replies that the following rules must be applied to all particular circumstances. Some understand the apostle, not as speaking in the person of an objector, but as declaring what he did in such a case; and intimating how imprudent it would be to give others occasion to pass a wrong judgment upon him; for however lawful it might be for him to eat the meat which had been offered to idols, yet he was, for the sake of his influence and usefulness, to take care that *his good* might *not be evil spoken of,* Rom. xiv. 16. and therefore he would abstain. Two general rules he prescribes,

1. *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God,* making that the ultimate end of all your actions.

2. *Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.* Do nothing which should grieve or stumble them; particularly, avoid the meat offered to idols, which the Jews abominated, and might prove a snare to the weaker Gentile converts. And what he recommended to them, he practised himself. *Even as I please all men in all things,* that I lawfully can, *not seeking my own profit,* humour, or inclination, *but the profit of many, that they may be saved;* solicitous by every means, to win souls to the adored Redeemer, and to lead them in the ways of everlasting life.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle blames, and endeavours to rectify, some great indecencies and manifest disorders in the church of Corinth. As (1.) *The misconduct of their women in the public assembly,* ver. 1—17. (2.) *He blames them for their discord, riot, and neglect and contempt of the poor at the Lord's supper,* ver. 17—23. (3.) *To rectify these scandalous disorders he sets before them the nature and intentions of this holy institution, directs the u*

how they should attend on it, and warns them of the danger of a conduct so indecent as theirs and of all unworthy receiving, ver. 23. to the end.

1. BE ye [a] followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ. 2. Now I praise you, brethren, that [b] ye remember me in all things, and keep the * ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you. 3. But I would have you know, that [c] the head of every man is Christ; and [d] the head of the woman *is* the man; and [e] the head of Christ *is* God. 4. Every man praying or [f] prophesying, † having *his* head covered, dishonoureth his head. 5. But [g] every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with *her* head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. 6. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: [h] but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. 7. For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as [i] he is the image and glory of God: but [k] the woman is the glory of the man. 8. For [l] the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. 9. [m] Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. 10. For this cause ought the woman to have [n] power on *her* head, because of the angels. 11. Nevertheless, [o] neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. 12. For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; but [p] all things of God. 13. [q] Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? 14. Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, [r] it is a shame unto him? 15. But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a ‡ covering. 16. But [s] if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

a Ch. 4. 16. Eph. 5. 1. Phil. 3. 17. 1 Thes. 1. 6. 2 Thes. 3. 9.
b Ch. 4. 17. & 15. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 15. & 3. 6.
* Or *traditions.*
c Eph. 1. 10, 22, 23. & 5. 23. Rom. 14. 9. Phil. 2. 10, 11. Acts 10. 36. Prov. 8. 15, 16.
d Gen. 3. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 1, 6. Eph. 5. 22, 24. Col. 3. 18.
e John 14. 28. ch. 15. 27, 28. & 3. 23. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. Phil. 2. 7—9. Is. 42. 1, 6. & 49. 3, 6. & 52. 13. & 55. 4. & 61. 1—3. John 4. 34.
f Ch. 12. 10. & 14. 1—39. ver. 14. 2 Sam. 15. 30. & 19. 4.
† That is, instructing and reproving by preaching and exhortation.
g Luke 2. 36. Acts 2. 17. & 21. 9.
h Num. 5. 18. Deut. 22. 5.
i Gen. 1. 26, 27. & 5. 1. & 9. 6. Jam. 3. 9. Ps. 8. 6.
k Gen. 3. 16. & 2. 23.
l Gen. 2. 21, 23. 1 Tim. 2. 13.
m Gen. 2. 18—23.
n That is, *a covering in token that she is under the power of her husband.* Gen. 24. 65. Eccl. 5. 6. with Mat. 18. 10. Heb. 1. 14. Eph. 3. 10.
o Gen. 2. 18—24. & 3. 16. ch. 12. 20—22.
p Prov. 16. 4. Rom. 11. 36. Heb. 1. 2, 3. Ps. 119. 91.
q Ch. 10. 15. John 7. 24. Luke 12. 57. 1 Thes. 5. 21.
r Ch. 14. 35.
‡ Or *veil.*
s 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4. ch. 14. 33.

Verses 1—16. The apostle had proposed to them, in the conclusion of the former chapter, his own example; and he here exhorts them, *Be ye followers of me as I also am of Christ.* He copied after his Divine Master, and therefore could speak freely, when his own practice was so eminently a comment on his discourses.

1. To introduce, with greater efficacy, the reproofs which he was constrained to give, he commends them for what was praiseworthy among them. *Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them unto you;* at least, the main body of the church loved, honoured, and respected him, and were observant of his instructions.

2. He lays a foundation for the rebuke which he was obliged to give, in reminding them of the superiority of the man over the woman. *I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ;* he is the Creator and Governor of all, and, in a peculiar manner, the head of his church: *and the head of the woman is the man,* who hath by creation and nature the superiority, and therefore the woman should be in subjection: *And the head of Christ is God,* considered as Mediator; and, in his human nature, he is inferior to the Father; though, in his Godhead, co-equal, and co-eternal.

3. The thing he blames is, that their men prayed and prophesied *covered,* the women *uncovered.* Veiling the head, in the Eastern countries, was regarded as a token of modesty and subjection in the woman; and having the head uncovered betokened the superiority of the man: when therefore any man prayed or prophesied, leading the devotions of the congregation, with a covering on his head, he dishonoured Christ his head, who had given him the superiority; on the contrary, if any woman, under an extraordinary inspiration, prays or prophesies in public, with her head uncovered, she dishonours the man who is her head, by such an affection of appearing like him; and, instead of modest subjection, pretends to an equality with him; and she might, with equal decency cut her hair short, and wear it in the form peculiar to men, and thus appear unveiled. But if such a sight would appear shocking and highly immodest, in a religious assembly, then *let her be covered. The man ought not to cover his head;* it would be to debase his dignity, *forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God,* invested with the supreme dominion: *but the woman is the glory of the man,* who hath the honour of being placed in the rank of creation above her, and hath a becoming dominion over her. *For the man is not of the woman,* created from her substance, *but the woman of the man,* from his rib. *Neither was the man created for the woman,* seeing he was in being before her, *but the woman for the man,* to be his helpmate, and therein was implied a reasonable subjection to him. *For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head,* and to be veiled in token of her subjection, *because of the angels,* or *messengers* of Christ, who should preside in the church, and it would be highly arrogant to affect equality with them. *Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man in the Lord,* both sexes partaking alike of that common salvation which is in Jesus Christ; so that though subjection be due, the woman is not to be tyrannized over as a slave, but to be cherished with warmest affection and becoming respect. *For as the woman is of the man,* taken from his side, *even so is the man also by the woman,* springing from her, *but all things of God,* who hath placed each in their respective stations: which, therefore, for conscience' sake, they should discharge. *Judge in yourselves; is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered,* affecting to be like the man, and inverting the established order of God? *Doth not nature itself teach you,* that a distinction should be observed in the dress of the different sexes? And as such is the custom of the country where you live, to cut the hair short, it is regarded as a token of great effeminacy to appear otherwise. *So that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him. But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her,* comely, and becoming her sex; *for her hair is given her for a covering,* and should be managed so as to avoid all confusion of dress between the sexes. *But if any man seem to be contentious,* and disposed to vindicate such a preposterous practice, *we have no such custom, neither the churches of God,* where every appearance of a contentious spirit is condemned, and all such indecent affectation discountenanced.

17. Now in this that I declare *unto you* [t] I praise *you* not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

t 2 Tim. 4. 2. Lev. 19. 17. Prov. 27. 5. Gal. 2. 11, 14. 1 Tim. 5. 20. Rev. 3. 19.

18. For, first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be [u] divisions among you; and I partly believe it. 19. For there must be also [x] heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. 20. When ye come together therefore into one place, ‡ *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. 21. [y] For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. ‖ 22. What! [z] have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God and shame § them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not.

u Or *schisms* Ch. 1. 10—12. & 3. 3. Heb. 10. 25.

x Or *sects*. Deut. 13. 3. Mat. 10. 34 & 18. 7. Luke 17. 1. & 2. 35. Acts 20. 30. Tit. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 John 2. 19.

‡ Or *ye cannot eat.*

y 2 Pet. 2. 16. Jude 12.

‖ The word here used does not necessarily import *is drunk*, but *is filled*, or *has enough.*

z Ver. 34. Lev. 19. 30. Ps. 89. 7. Jam. 2. 6.

§ Or *them that are poor.*

Verses 17—22. Shocking abuses early crept into the Corinthian church, some of which the apostle mentions, and sharply rebukes the offenders. Though he would praise them, (ver. 2.) in general, there were some among them who were a dishonour to their holy profession; who meet with them, *not for the better*, to receive edification, *but for the worse*, growing more corrupt, even in the very use of holy ordinances.

1. *When ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you*, one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, and the church thus torn with factions; *and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you;* such is the corruption of man's nature, and the craft of the wicked one, that tares will be sown amongst the wheat, and for wise purposes God permits it should be so, *that they which are approved may be made manifest among you*, their faith tried, and their sincerity evidenced. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is more fatal to the church of Christ than uncharitable divisions and discords between the members. (2.) God can overrule, even the wickedness of apostates to the furtherance of his people in faith and holiness.

2. Some of them committed the most scandalous irregularities at the Lord's table. *When ye come therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper*, the method in which you proceed being utterly subversive of the very intention of that holy ordinance; *for in eating every one taketh, before other, his own supper*, as if it was a mere common meal; and what is still worse, *one is hungry*, the poor man goes away without any refreshment, the bread and wine being devoured, by those who come first, *and another is drunken*, the rich indulging themselves to the full, if not to excess. *What* a scandalous abuse! *Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in*, when you want to nourish your bodies? *or despise ye the church of God*, and put contempt on the poor members of it, *and shame them that have not*, have no houses of their own, nor ability to provide the elements for themselves? *What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this*, thus to form parties even in the church, and devour the provision of which the poor should partake? No, assuredly; *I praise you not;* I blame you exceedingly.

23. For [a] I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, [b] That the Lord Jesus, the *same* night in which he was betrayed, took bread: 24. And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, [c] Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do * in remembrance of me. 25. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is [d] the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. 26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, † ye do shew the Lord's death [e] till he come. 27. Wherefore, [f] whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28. But [g] let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. 29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh [h] damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30. For this cause [i] many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 31. For [k] If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32. But when we are judged, we are [l] chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 33. Wherefore, my brethren, when we come together to eat, tarry one for another. 34. And if any man hunger, [m] let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto ‖ condemnation. [n] And the rest will I set in order when I come.

a Ch. 15. 3. & 4. 2 Tim. 2. 2. Ezek. 3. 17. Mat. 28. 20. Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32.

b Mat. 26. 26—28. Mark 14. 22—25. Luke 22. 19, 20. ch. 10. 16, 17. Acts 20. 7.

c John 6. 33—37. Prov. 9. 1—5. Ps. xxii, lxix. Is. liii. Dan. 9. 24.

* Or *for a remembrance.*

d Heb. 9. 15—18. Acts 10. 43. 2 Cor. 1. 20.

† Or *show ye.*

e Heb. 9. 28. John 14. 2, 3. Acts 1. 11. & 3. 19. 1 Thes. 4. 16. Rev. 20. 11, 12. & 22. 20.

f Num. 9. 10, 13. John 6. 51, 63, 64. & 13. 27. ch. 10. 21. Mat. 22. 11. 2 Chr. 30. 18. Heb. 10. 29.

g Lam. 3. 40. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Gal. 6. 4. Zech. 2. 1. Num. 9. 13.

h Or *judgment.* Ver. 30, 32, 34, 37. Rom. 13. 2. ch. 10 21. Mat. 22. 11. 2 Chr. 30. 18. Is. 27. 11.

i Amos 3. 2. Ps 78. 30, 31. & 89. 32. Heb. 12. 6. Rev. 3. 19.

k Ps. 32. 5. Prov. 18. 17. Jer. 6. 8. & 31. 18—20. & 3. 12, 13.

l Ver. 30. Deut. 8. 2, 3. Ps. 89. 32. Is. 27. 9. Jer. 24. 7. & 31. 18. Amos 3. 2. Heb. 12. 5—10. Rev. 3. 19. Ps. 94. 12—14. Job 5. 17, 18. with Hos. 4. 14, 17.

m Ver. 21, 22.

‖ Or *judgment.*

n Tit. 1. 5. ch. 7. 1. & 4. 19.

Verses 23—34. To rectify the gross abuses which he reprehended, the apostle sets before them,

1. The true nature of the sacred institution as he received it from the Lord, and had faithfully delivered it unto them. *The Lord Jesus*, the King of his church, *the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, Take, eat; this bread is* the symbol and representation of *my body which is broken for you*, and offered upon the cross in your stead; *this do in remembrance of me;* continue, in this ordinance, a constant memorial of my dying love, and of the benefits you receive thereby. *After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament, or covenant in my blood*, which is now ratified by the blood-shedding of the Mediator, and all the inestimable privileges contained in it secured to every believing soul. *This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me*, frequently meeting to celebrate this sacred feast, remembering therein my matchless grace, manifest in those precious and plenteous drops of blood shed for your redemption; *for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come*, declaring your dependence thereon, as the ground of all your hope towards God, and openly professing your faith in a crucified Redeemer, as all his people are called upon to do, until the day comes when they shall appear with him in glory.

2. He warns them of the danger of an irreverent use of this holy ordinance, *Wherefore, whosoever eateth and drinketh this cup of the Lord unworthily*, in such a scandalous, factious, and sensual manner, *shall be guilty of the body, and blood of the Lord*, incurring the heavy guilt of treating with contempt the blood of the covenant. *But let a man examine himself*, with regard to the truth

of his faith, love, and conversion to God; and his knowledge of the design of this sacred institution, *and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup,* to his soul's edification and comfort, *For he who eateth and drinketh unworthily* in the shocking manner before described, *eateth and drinketh damnation to himself,* provoking some temporal judgment of God upon him; *not discerning the Lord's body,* nor making a difference between the sacred symbol thereof, and common food. *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep,* God visiting in sickness, disease, and death your provocations. *For if we would judge ourselves,* and seriously examine into our conduct, that with real penitence we might return unto God, *we should not be judged* with such heavy providential afflictions. *But when we are* thus *judged we are chastened of the Lord* in mercy *that we should not be condemned with the world,* left to go on securely, and perish in our sins. *Note,* (1.) None should be discouraged from the Lord's table, who, on examining themselves, can say, that in simplicity they desire to approve themselves to him. (2.) God never casts away his people, though often for their good he visits their offences with a rod, and their sin with scourges.

3. He directs them how to celebrate this sacred ordinance. *Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another,* till all are assembled, and you can eat together; sitting down, as children of one family, at the table of the Lord. *And if any man hunger, let him eat at home,* this being not designed as an ordinary meal: *that ye come not together to condemnation,* provoking God by your irreverence, dissensions, or excess. *And the rest,* if there be any thing further amiss, respecting the proper discipline to be observed, *will I set in order when I come.*

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle, (1.) *Considers the case of spiritual gifts, which were very plentifully poured out on the Corinthian church. He considers their original, that they are from God; their variety and use, that they were all intended for one and the same general end, the advancement of Christianity, and the church's edification,* ver. 1—12. (2.) *He illustrates this by an allusion to a* human body, *in which all the members have a mutual relation and subserviency, and each its proper place and use,* ver. 12—27. (3.) *He tells us, that the church is the body of Christ, and the members are variously gifted, for the benefit of the whole body, and each particular member,* ver. 27—30. *And then,* (4.) *Closes with an exhortation to seek somewhat more beneficial than these gifts,* ver. 31.

1. NOW concerning [a] spiritual *gifts,* brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 2. Ye know that ye were [b] Gentiles, carried away unto these [c] dumb idols, even as ye were led. 3. Wherefore, I give you to understand, [d] that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus * accursed: and *that* [e] no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 4. Now [f] there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5. And there are [g] differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6. And there are [h] diversities of operations, but it is [i] the same God which worketh all in all. 7. But the [k] manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 8. For to one is given by the Spirit [l] the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9. To another [m] faith by the same Spirit; to another [n] the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10. To another [o] the working of miracles; to another [p] prophecy; to another [q] discerning of spirits; to another [r] *divers* kinds of tongues; to another [s] the interpretation of tongues: 11. [t] But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

a Ver. 4, 8—10, 28. ch. 14. 1. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. Jam. 1. 17.
b Ch. 6. 11. Eph. 2. 11, 12. & 4. 17—19. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3.
c Ps. 115. 5. Hab. 2. 18. Is. 44. 9—20. 1 Thes. 1. 9. Mat. 15. 14.
d Mark 9. 39.
* Or *anathema.*
e Mat. 16 17. John 13. 13. & 15. 26. ch. 8. 6. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 11. 4. 1 John 4. 2. Gal. 2. 16, 20.
f Rom. 12. 6, 8. ver. 8, 10, 28. 1 Pet. 4 10. Heb. 2. 4. Eph. 4. 4, 11. Jam. 1. 17.
g Rom. 12. 4—8. Eph. 4. 5, 11. ch. 8. 6. ver. 28.
h Ver. 9, 10.
i Deut. 6. 4. John 10. 25, 37. & 14. 20. ch. 8. 6. Eph. 1. 19, 23. ch. 3. 7.
k Ver. 8—10, 28, 30. Eph. 4. 11—13. Mat. 25, 14, 15. Luke 19. 13.
l Ch. 1. 5. & 2. 6. & 13. 2, 8. & 14. 6. 2 Cor. 8. 7. Is. 50. 4. Mat. 13. 11.
m Mat. 17. 20. ch. 13. 2. Acts 14. 9. Heb. 11. 33.
n Mark 16. 17, 18. Jam. 5. 14. Mark 6. 13. Acts 3. 6. & 19. 11, 12. & 28. 8.
o Acts 5. 5. & 13. 11. & 14. 10. & 20. 12. & 19. 12. John 14. 12.
p Ch. 14. 1, 3. Acts 11. 27, 28. & 21. 9, 11. Rom 12. 6. Joel 2. 18.
q 1 John 4. 1. Rev. 2. 2. Acts 5. 3. or ch. 14. 29.
r Ch. 13. 1. & 14. 5, 39. Acts 2. 4. & 19. 6.
s Ch. 14. 26—28. ver. 30.
t Ch. 7. 7. Rom. 12. 3. Eph. 4. 7. 2 Cor. 10. 13. Mat. 20. 13, 15. Heb. 2. 4. John 3. 8. Joel 2. 28, 29.

Verses 1—11. The church of Corinth was greatly enriched in spiritual gifts, and these had been sadly abused, and made an occasion of much pride and contention. The apostle therefore here leads them to consider the author, nature, design, and use of the extraordinary powers, which were given them.

1. He reminds them for their humiliation, of their former state. *Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led,* hurried or blindfold to worship these senseless stocks and stones. *Wherefore I give you to understand,* now that God hath brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light, *that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed,* it being a sure proof that both the Jewish exorcists and the heathen diviners who pretend to such inspiration, yet blaspheme him from whom the Spirit proceeds, are liars, and of their father the devil; *and,* on the other hand, *no man can say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Spirit of God;* to discover his all-sufficiency for the work of redemption, and his suitableness to every necessity of our souls, we need a divine illumination: and though we may confess him to be the Christ with our lips, yet we can never experimentally know him to be *our* anointed Saviour, till it please God to reveal his Son in us. And all the miracles which are wrought in confirmation of this truth, are by the power of the Holy Ghost, who intends thereby to glorify Christ. Let a man pretend to what he will, if he doth not know and love the Lord Jesus, he must be destitute of the Spirit; but if he doth, then however low his gifts may be, he hath an assured interest in the Saviour.

2. He directs them in the proper *use* of the spiritual gifts which they enjoyed. *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit,* who bestows them in all their variety on private Christians, or ministers; *and there are differences of administrations,* of offices and services, some superior to the others, *but the same Lord* appoints to each his employment, and they act under his authority. *And there are diversities of operations,* and miraculous powers, *but it is the same Lord which worketh all in all,* by whose mighty energy alone they are performed. *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal;* whatever gifts or powers he is endowed with, that manifest the presence and energy of the Holy Ghost, they are designed to promote the edification of the body of Christ, and to advance his glory. *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom,* a clear understanding of the great doctrines of the gospel, and ability to express them with judgment and eloquence; *to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit,* an insight into the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, and a readiness to explain and apply them. *To another faith by the same Spirit,* so in the midst of the most threatening dangers, he is enabled confidently and quietly to repose on God. *To another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit,* all manner of bodily diseases by a word or a

touch instantaneously. *To another the working of miracles,* in mercy or judgment, Acts ix. 40. v. 5, 10. *To another prophecy,* or the power of foretelling future events; *to another the discerning of spirits,* under what influence, divine or diabolical, men act, what is their real design and qualifications, and who are fit to be publicly employed in the church; *to another divers kinds of tongues,* so as to understand and speak fluently languages he had never learned; *to another the interpretation of tongues,* the ability of rendering with exactness and propriety a foreign tongue, which the congregation may not understand, into their own native language. *But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally,* and sovereignly, *as he will. Note,* (1.) The Holy Ghost is a Divine Person; he acts with sovereignty in the distribution of his own gifts, and in energy and operation is one with the Father and the Son. (2.) All our gifts are bestowed for service, not to advance our own honour and interest, but the glory of God, and the salvation of men's souls.

12 [u] For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ. 13. [x] For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or * Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14. For the body is not one member, but many.† 15. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17. If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling? 18. [y] But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19. And if they were all one member where *were* the body? 20. But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.‡ 21. [z] And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. 23. And those *members* of the body which we think to be [a] less honourable, upon these we § bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness. 24. For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked: 25. That there should be no [b] schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. 26. [c] And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

u Song 6. 9. Rom. 12. 4, 5. Eph. 4. 4, 16.

x John 3. 6, 26. Rom. 6. 5, 6. Eph. 5. 26. & 4. 5. & 2. 11, 13, 14, 16, 19—22. & 3. 6. Gal. 3. 26—28. Col. 2. 11, 12. & 3. 11. ch. 10. 2—4. Mat. 3. 11. John 6. 63. & 7. 37, 39. Joel 2. 28. Is. 44. 3—5.

* Gr. *Greeks.*

† Read and point thus. *Since the body, therefore, is not one member, but many; if the foot should say, &c.*

y Ver. 28. Rom. 12. 3—8. Eph. 4. 11. ver. 4—11.

‡ Rather, *Being now, therefore, many members, but one body: the eye cannot say, &c.*

z Num. 10. 31. Job 29. 15. 1 Sam. 25. 32.

a Ch. 1. 26—28. Jam. 2. 5. Ps. 68. 10.

§ Or *put on.* That is, by clothing them.

b Or *division.* Ch. 1. 10—12. & 3. 3. John 17. 21—23. 26. 2 Cor. 13. 11.

c Heb. 13. 3. Rom. 12. 15. Gal. 6. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 28, 29.

Verses 12—26. The apostle represents the union subsisting between the faithful who partake of the several gifts of the Spirit, under the similitude of a human body consisting of many members: it is but *one,* though composed of various parts, which have each their particular function for the good of the whole. *So also is* the mystical body of *Christ;* though consisting of different persons, with different gifts, and appointed to different stations, yet all who are vitally united to him compose but one spiritual body, into which all, whether Jews or Gentiles, who have been baptized with water, and the Holy Ghost, are by faith incorporated, and are nourished by that one Divine Spirit that resides in all his fulness in Christ, and is from him diffused through the several members, who thereby maintain communion with their exalted Head. Now in the natural body, (1.) Each member constitutes a part of the whole, and the meanest are needful: *the foot* and *the ear,* though less useful perhaps than the *hand* and *eye,* are yet equally parts of the body. The meanest Christian is dear to the Saviour, and regarded by him as truly a member of his body as the noblest. (2.) There is a beauty in the variety of the different members: if the body were all eye or all ear, it would be defective and monstrous. Thus the diversity of offices and gifts in the church display a beautiful symmetry. (3.) As in the body natural God gives, as he pleases, to every member its proper office: so in the body mystical, the Lord appoints to each his station, and furnishes him with gifts, which he is bound to receive with thankfulness, to use with diligence, and neither to murmur against the giver, nor envy the superiority of others. (4.) Every member of the body contributes to the good of the whole. The eye wants the hand, the head the feet, nay the feeblest members are necessary. Thus do those who are in the most exalted stations in the church need the inferior members, and must not despise them as insignificant or useless. (5.) In the body we show peculiar regard to our uncomely parts, covering them with proper clothing, which our comely parts do not need: and thus hath God ordered it, that we should give more abundant honour to the part which lacketh. In like manner ought the more eminent in gifts and abilities in the church to hide the infirmities of their weaker brethren; not to reproach or despise them, but treat them with kindness and regard, and desire to make them appear in the most respectable manner. (6.) In the body the suffering of one member gives pain to the whole, and all the members share in the honour conferred on any particular part; such a mutual sympathy prevents all schism in the body, and obliges the members to *have the same care one for another.* The like fellow-feeling should every Christian have for his brother: we should tenderly sympathize with the afflicted in body or soul; and their temporal or spiritual prosperity, far from being the occasion of our envy, should be a matter of our sincerest joy. All coldness and distance is as unnatural as a schism between the members, and should be shunned as the most dangerous evil.

27. [d] Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28. And [e] God hath set some in the church; first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, ‖ diversities of tongues. 29. [f] *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are*

d Ch. 3. 16. Rom. 12. 5. Eph. 1. 23. & 4. 12. & 5. 23, 30. Col. 1. 24. & 2. 19.

e Mat. 9. 38. Acts 13. 2, 3. & 20. 28. Rom. 12. 6—8. ver. 7—11, 18. ch. 14. 33. Eph. 2. 20. & 4. 11. & 3. 11. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Heb. 13. 17. 24.

‖ Or *kinds.*

f Ver. 4—11.

all * workers of miracles? 30. Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? 31. [g] But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

* Or *powers.*

g Ch. 8. 1. & 13. 1. & 14. 1, 39. Phil. 4. 8.

Verses 27—31. The apostle particularly applies the case in hand. *Now are ye the* mystical *body of Christ, and members in particular*, each being a part of the whole. *And God*, in infinite wisdom, and with admirable propriety, *hath set some in the church*, appointing one to a higher, another to a lower station. In the *first* rank stand the *apostles*, who received their commission immediately from Christ himself: *secondarily, prophets*, who are endued with the gift of foretelling future events: *thirdly, teachers*, who labour in the word and doctrine, and are the ordinary ministers of the gospel: *after that miracles*, which some are endued with the power of working: *then gifts of healing* the sick: *helps*, such as are assistant to the superior ministers: *governments*, those who preside over the affairs of the church: others are endued with *diversities of tongues*, the ability to speak or interpret them. *Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?* No. Each has his appointed station and peculiar gifts; wherein the highest are not to be envied, nor the lowest to be despised. *But covet earnestly the best gifts.* It may be regarded as his advice: or, it may be read as an assertion, *Ye do covet the best gifts*, and blameably desire to excel in these extraordinary endowments; or, as an interrogation, *Do you covet earnestly the best gifts? and* envy each other's superior attainments? *Yet show I unto you a more excellent way:* a spirit of love, which prompts to every good word and work for the glory of God and the profit of men's souls, is far better and more desirable than the most shining gifts. *Note*, (1.) Gifts when valued because of the esteem which they procure us, more than for their use to the souls of men, prove the most fatal snare to the soul. (2.) One spark of Godlike charity is infinitely preferable to all the glare of the most eminent titles or abilities.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle, 1. *Recommends charity by showing the necessity and importance of it,* ver. 1—3. 2. *By giving a description of its properties and fruits,* ver. 4—8. 3. *By showing how much it excels the best gifts and other graces, by its continuance when they shall be no longer in being, or of any use,* ver. 8. to the end.

a 1 Tim. 1. 5. Rom. xiv. & 13. 8—10. ch. 8. 1. ver. 2, 3.

b Ch. 12. 8—10, 28. Luke 17. 6. Mat. 17. 20. & 1. 22, 23. & 21. 21. ch. 14. 6—9. & 8. 1.

* To "remove mountains" was a proverbial expression amongst the Jews for overcoming great difficulties.

c Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 8, 20. & 5. 7. Mat. 6. 1, 2. John 15. 13. 1 John 3. 16.

1. THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not [a] charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2. [b] And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, * and have not charity, I am nothing. 3. [c] And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Verses 1—3. The more excellent way, which the apostle had been recommending, he here describes; and that is charity or love, which is the greatest of graces, shall endure for ever, when gifts are vanished away, and without it they are nothing worth.

1. *Though I speak with the tongues of men,* in all the various languages of the globe, *or* even *of angels, and have not charity,* or love, *I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal,* so inharmonious, and a mere empty noise. Little reason therefore had the Corinthians to value themselves upon the gifts of tongues, which only afforded occasion for pride and contention. *And,*

2. *Though I have the gift of prophecy,* can foretell future events, *and understand all mysteries,* through divine illumination discovering the meaning of the most abstruse prophecies and figures; *and have all knowledge,* such as never mortal man attained before; *and have not charity,* or *love,* it signifies nothing to my salvation. Such light would only be sufficient to lead me into eternal darkness.

3. *And though I have all faith,* to work the most stupendous miracles, *so that I could remove mountains, and have no love, I am nothing* in God's account, and utterly destitute of the spirit of vital Christianity.

4. *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,* it would be utterly unprofitable to myself, if divine love was not the principle from which my alms-giving proceeded. *Note,* Many give largely to the poor, who never did a *truly charitable act* in their lives.

5. *And though I give my body to be burned,* for my profession of the gospel, *and have not charity,* or *love,* to the Redeemer, and to men for his sake, *it profiteth me nothing.* The affectation of leaving a great name, or the conceit of the meritoriousness of such a sacrifice, may even lead a man to a stake. He may burn for Christ, and yet be disowned by him, if this genuine mark of discipleship be lacking.

4. [d] Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity * vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5. [e] Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, 6. [f] Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth † in the truth; 7. [g] Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

d Prov. 10. 12. Num. 12. 3. Ps. 35. 13, 14. Jam. 3. 14—18. Col. 3. 12—14. Phil. 2. 1—5. Eph. 4. 31, 32. 1 Pet. 4. 8. with ch. 1. 11. & 3. 3. & 4. 8. & 5. 2.

* Or *is not rash.*

e Ch. xi. & 14. 40. Phil. 2. 4. & 4. 8. Rom. 15. 1, 2. & 12. 19. ch. 10. 23, 24. Deut. 1. 36. & 9. 7, 19. & 29. 29. 2 Cor. 12. 15.

f Rom. 1. 32. & 12. 9. Ps. 10. 3. & 15. 4. Exod. 18. 9. Phil. 1. 18. 2 John 4. † Or *with the truth.*

g Prov. 10. 12. Rom. 15 1, 2. Gal. 6. 2. with Lev. 19. 17. Rev. 2. 2. ch. 5. 4, 5, 7, 13. ch. 9. 19—23. 1 Pet. 4. 8. 2 Tim. 2. 10, 24, 25.

Verses 4—7. We have here the true properties of that most excellent of graces, *charity*, or love.

1. It *suffereth long*, patiently enduring provocation, unruffled with affronts, passing by offences, and suppressing every motion of resentment that would rise within the soul.

2. It *is kind*, courteous, affable, benevolent, and opens the lips, the hand, and heart, to every good word and work.

3. *Charity envieth not* the superior gifts, graces, attainments, honours, or affluence, which others enjoy; but takes pleasure in them, as if they were her own.

4. *Charity vaunteth not itself*, is not ostentatious of any excellencies or superior advantages, doth not treat inferiors with contempt and insolence, nor rashly or perversely utter any thing to a brother's disadvantage.

5. It *is not puffed up*, doth not fill the head with vain conceit of a man's importance, nor suffer him to think more highly of himself than he ought to think.

6. It *doth not behave itself unseemly*, admits of no conduct unsuitable to the age, station, or circumstances of the person; suffers nothing mean, indecent, or dishonourable, to enter the mind, or be carried into act.

7. It *seeketh not her own*, is influenced by no mercenary mo-

tives, nor pursues any private ends, inordinately craving honour, gain, or applause; but is generous, noble, and disinterested, sacrificing her own advantage for the good of others.

8. It *is not easily provoked;* but, under the most exasperating insults, can preserve a holy serenity, and even be angry and sin not; displeased at the sin, yet pitying the sinner; always restraining just resentment within bounds, and ready to be reconciled.

9. It *thinketh no evil,* never seeking to pry into others' conduct to discover faults, but ever ready to put the best construction on their words and actions; entertains no undue suspicions; and is willing to forget as well as forgive every injury.

10. It *rejoiceth not in iniquity,* nor looks, but with grief and sorrow, on the sins, perverseness, and infirmities of others. *But,*

11. *Rejoiceth in the truth;* glad of the success of the gospel; pleased with beholding its influence, wherever it appears; and ever delighting to bear testimony to the truth, and speaking from the heart.

12. It *beareth all things:* covers men's faults with the mantle of love; pities their weakness, and suffers without the thought of retaliating their perverseness.

13. It *believeth all things;* willing to entertain the most favourable opinion of all, averse to every ungrounded suspicion, and candidly disposed to receive the excuse and explanation where aught may have been mistaken.

14. It *hopeth all things;* where matters appear dark, and cannot but raise doubts, still charity will not despair but that they can yet be cleared up satisfactorily, or where the evil is evident, that the fault will be repented of and amended.

15. It *endureth all things,* with unshaken fortitude bearing up under every affliction, temptation, and persecution, and for the sake of Christ and his people ready to undergo any suffering.

Such is this transcendent grace of charity. In the glass of which we should often look, compare our features with this perfect pattern, and daily seek that we may grow more like him whose nature and name is Love.

8. [h] Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9. For [i] we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10. But [k] when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part* shall be done away. 11. [l] When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I † thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12. [m] For now we see through a glass, ‡ darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13. And now [n] abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but [o] the greatest of these *is* charity.

h Ver. 10. with 2 Pet. 1. 19. ch. 7. 30, 31.
i Ps. 73. 22. Prov. 30. 2, 3. Phil. 3. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11.
k Jer. 31. 34. 2 Cor. 5. 7, 8. Is. 60. 17, 19, 20.
* We might render the Greek here, *that which is imperfect.*
l Is. 28. 11. ch. 3. 1, 2. & 14. 20.
† Or *reasoned.*
m 2 Cor. 3. 18. & 5. 7. Phil. 3. 12, 13. Exod. 33. 11. Num. 12. 8. Rom. 8. 18. 1 John 3. 2. Mat. 18. 10. Rev. 22. 4.
‡ Gr. *in a riddle.*
n 1 John 3. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 5.
o Ver. 4—8. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Rom. 13. 8—10. Mat. 22. 37, 38. Eph. 5. 2. ch. 16. 14.

Verses 8—13. The apostle proceeds in his commendation of charity, not only as superior to all gifts, but as the chief of all graces.

1. *Charity never faileth: but* will continue in the heart where it hath been once planted, enduring as the days of eternity. All gifts must quickly have an end; *whether they be prophecies,* the gift of foretelling future events, or interpreting the Scriptures, *they shall fail,* and be of no further use in the eternal world: *whether there be tongues, they shall cease,* when they have answered their present use of spreading the gospel through the world, and in heaven we shall have but one language; *whether there be knowledge,* the extraordinary insight into divine truth, *it shall vanish away;* in glory this knowledge will be no longer needed.

2. All gifts are suited only to a state of imperfection; when we arrive to maturity in glory we shall be above them. *For we know in part, and prophesy in part,* our greatest attainments are at present defective; *but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away,* and our nature being exalted to the highest pitch of which it is capable, all imperfection will be swallowed up in perfection of knowledge and holiness, absolute and everlasting. Our present and future state differ as much as manhood does from infancy. *When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child;* and such, he insinuates, were all their highest present attainments: no better than the poor conceptions and lispings of babes; *but when I became a man, I put away childish things;* in the heavenly state so low thoughts shall we entertain of all our present most esteemed acquisitions, despise what in the days of childish folly we valued, and see, with a distinctness of spiritual vision, as much above our present state, as the thoughts of manhood are superior to the fancies of infancy: *For now we see through a glass darkly,* the mirror reflecting the object indistinctly, and, like a riddle, the truth is enveloped with obscurity; *but then face to face,* clearly and fully, by intuition, without any darkening medium. *Now know I in part,* and with all my singular gifts know but in part; *but then shall I know even as also I am known,* comprehending heavenly objects with the most distinct knowledge, and in the same way that God, who is a spirit, and his angels, know me.

3. Charity is the most excellent of graces, as well as above all gifts. *And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three* cardinal graces, inseparable from the Christian character, and which till death must be in constant exercise; *but the greatest of these is charity,* the others being as means to this as the end. And when faith is swallowed up in sight, and hope in the fruition of the eternal blessedness, love, the bright image of the Deity, shall glow towards the eternal Three, and the celestial hosts, in every bosom of the redeemed, and continue to burn, with unextinguished ardour, throughout the countless ages of eternity.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle, 1. *Begins with advising them of all spiritual gifts to prefer prophesying,* ver. 1—6. 2. *He goes on to show them how unprofitable the speaking foreign languages was, and useless to the church; whereas gifts should be used for the good of the church,* ver. 6—15. 3. *He advises that worship should be celebrated so as the most ignorant might understand and join in prayer and praise, and presses the advice by his own example,* ver. 15—21. 4. *He informs them that tongues were a sign for unbelievers rather than those that believe; and represents the advantage of prophecy above speaking with tongues, from the different suggestions they would give to the mind of an unbeliever, coming into their assemblies,* ver. 21—25. 5. *Blames them for the disorder and confusion they had brought into the assembly by their vanity and ostentation of their gifts, and directs them in using their gifts both of tongues and prophecy,* ver. 26—34. 6. *Forbids women speaking in the church, and closes the subject by requiring them to perform every thing in the public worship with order and decency,* ver. 34. to the end.

1. [a] FOLLOW after charity, and [b] desire spiritual *gifts,* but rather that ye may

a Mat. 22. 37, 38. Rom. 13. 8—10. Eph. 5. 2.
b Ch. 12. 28, 31. Num. 11. 25, 29. Rom. 12. 6. ver. 3—8.

prophesy.* 2. [c] For he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man † understandeth *him;* howbeit [d] in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. 3. But [e] he that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort. 4. He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. 5. I would that ye all spake with tongues, [f] but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

* This word here seems not to mean uttering predictions, but preaching the word of God with effect, and in the vernacular language of the country.

c Gen. 11. 7. & 42. 27. Deut. 28. 49. Is. 36. 11. Acts 2. 4. & 10. 16. & 19. 6.

† Gr. *heareth.*

d Ps. 49. 3. 4. & 78. 2. Mat. 13. 11. Mark 4. 33. ver. 29.

e Acts 10. 44. & 16. 14. & 13. 15. Rom. 12. 8. & 15. 4.

Ver. 3, 4, 6. Num. 11. 25, 29.

Verses 1—5. Having recommended charity in the first place, he proceeds to show what spiritual gifts were most desirable.

1. *Follow after charity* (διωκετε) pursue it with the greatest eagerness, *and desire spiritual gifts* for the glory of God and the good of the church; *but rather,* or chiefly, *that ye may prophesy,* so as by divine illumination to be enabled most profitably to open and apply the Scriptures to the consciences of men for their comfort and edification.

2. He assigns this reason *for* his exhortation. *He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not to men,* who cannot understand him, *but unto God; for no man understandeth him, howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries,* and advances the most glorious and important truths: *but he that prophesieth,* explaining and opening the Scriptures to the understanding and capacity of the hearers, *speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort,* and his ministry and gifts are made useful to their souls. *He that speaketh in an unknown tongue, edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth, edifieth the church,* and communicates an extensive benefit to others as well as to his own heart. *I would that ye all spoke with tongues,* and were furnished with this great gift; *but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues,* he is a more useful and therefore a more excellent man, and to be more highly esteemed by the hearers; *except he interpret that the church may receive edifying. Note,* Our discourses should be adapted to the capacity of our hearers; high flights of eloquence, or affectation of learning, are absurd where the audience is illiterate. Our ambition must be to stoop; and we should ever be more solicitous to be understood than to be admired.

6. Now, brethren, [g] If I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak ‡ to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? 7. And even things without life giving sound, [h] whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the ‖ sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? 8. For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? 9. So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words § easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall [i] speak into the air. 10. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification. 11. Therefore, if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh *shall* be a barbarian unto me. 12. [k] Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous * of spiritual *gifts,* seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. 13. Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue pray that [l] he may interpret. 14. For [m] if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. †

g Ch. 11. 34. Eph. 1. 17. ver. 26.

‡ The word signifies, *to speak intelligibly.*

h Jer. 9. 17, 18. & 48. 36. Job 21. 11, 12. Mat. 9. 23. & 11. 17.

‖ Or *notes.* We may read, *unless they give a difference,* (that is, in the measured distance between sounds,) *in the notes.*

§ Or *significant.*

Ch. 9. 26.

k Ver. 7, 8. ch. 12. 7, 31.

* Or *of spirit.*

l Ch. 12. 10. ver. 26, 27. Or let him pray in such a language as he can interpret.

m Luke 24. 25. Rom. 14. 19. ch. 1. 10. 2 Thes. 2. 2.

† That is, not productive of any benefit to others.

Verses 6—14. The apostle goes on to show the absurdity of making an ostentatious show of gifts, and speaks in his own person to insinuate the reproof which they deserved for their vanity in this respect. *Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you,* interpreting what is made known unto me in an intelligible manner, *either by revelation,* if it be a new truth; *or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?* opening the Scriptures, and enforcing them on the conscience. He illustrates this,

1. By a *pipe or harp.* Unless these instruments give a distinction of sounds to direct the dancer's motion, or to excite the different passions which music raises, they will be useless and inharmonious, and just so must speaking in an unknown tongue be absurd to one who is a stranger to the language.

2. By a *trumpet,* which *if it give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?* And as the soldier in such a case must be utterly at a loss, so must the congregation be where the discourse is in an unknown tongue, or above their capacities; and such preaching is to them no better than the whistling of the wind.

3. A person speaking in such an unknown tongue appears as a barbarian to the hearers. Various as the languages are in the world, each serves to convey the ideas of the mind to those who are acquainted with it, but to no others: therefore if I know not the meaning of the language, it will appear mere gibberish, the speaker will appear a barbarian to me, and I to him.

Now this being evidently the case, the apostle exhorts them, since they so eagerly coveted spiritual gifts, to desire those that were of the most useful tendency; and if they spoke with tongues, to pray that they might be able to interpret them for the edifying of the church. *For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth,* and my own soul may be engaged in devotion; *but my understanding is unfruitful,* and my prayers of no use to the hearer.

15. What is it then? [n] I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.* 16. Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say [o] Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? 17. For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified. 18. I thank my God, [p] I speak with tongues more than ye all: 19. Yet in the church I

n Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16. Ps. 47. 7. ver. 19, 26. We may read here, *What then ought to be done?*

* That is, so as to be understood by others.

o Num. 6. 23. Deut. 27. 16. Neh. 5. 13. & 8. 6. 1 Chr. 48. 36. Ps. 106. 16. & 107. 1, 2.

p Rom. 15. 19.

had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue. 20. Brethren, be [q] not children in understanding: howbeit in malice [r] be ye children, but in understanding be [s] men.

q Ps. 119. 99. Rom. 16. 19. Eph. 4. 14. ch. 2. 6, 13. & 3. 1. Heb. 5. 12.

r Ps. 131. 1, 2 Mat. 11. 25. & 19. 14. & 18. 3, 1 Pet. 2. 2.

s Gr. *perfect*, or *of a ripe age*. Ch. 2. 6. Phil. 3. 15.

Verses 15—20. The apostle sums up what he had been saying.

What is it then that is proper to be done? *I will pray with the Spirit*, under a divine afflatus, and with any of the tongues which he hath given on proper occasions; *and I will*, in the congregation, *pray with my understanding also*, in such manner as that others may be edified: *I will sing with the Spirit*, when under a divine inspiration, in whatever language he is pleased to enable me to utter his praises; *and I will*, in public *sing with my understanding also*, that the church may join in my ascriptions of praise to God. *Else, when thou shalt bless with the Spirit*, though under his immediate inspiration, if it be in an unknown tongue, *how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest*, and therefore cannot join in the service. *For thou verily givest thanks well: but the other*, who knoweth not the meaning of the words, *is not edified. I thank my God* (and happy is it when we call him *mine*) *I speak with tongues more than ye all;* he did not depreciate this gift therefore, because he possessed it not, but because they made so evil a use of it: *yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue*, from which none of the hearers could receive the least benefit. Therefore, *brethren, be not children in understanding*, and foolishly boast yourselves on the showy gift of tongues: *howbeit in malice be ye children*, free from the malignant passions of envy, malice, and pride; *but in understanding be men*, and prove yourselves to be Christians grown to riper years, by knowing how to value things according to their intrinsic worth, and to prefer godlike charity to the most astonishing gifts. *Note*, (1.) That church must be erroneous, where ignorance is regarded as the mother of devotion, and the prayers are offered in an unknown tongue. (2) The least good done to the meanest soul, is an unspeakably greater acquisition than the highest applause gained to ourselves. (3.) A malicious, envious spirit is directly contrary to true Christianity. Among the first lessons of that school, we must learn to become as little children.

21. In the law it is written, [t] With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that they will not hear me, saith the Lord. 22. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not:* but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe. 23. If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are* unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? 24. [x] But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: 25. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on *his* face, he will worship God, and report that [y] God is in you of a truth.

t Is. 28. 11, 12. Deut. 28. 49. Jer. 5. 15.

* From this statement of the apostle it clearly follows that he means *intelligible* tongues; though it might be an unknown or foreign tongue to many present, yet that it should be recognised by some unbelieving strangers as their vernacular speech.

u Acts 2. 15. & 26. 24.

x Ch. 2. 15. Heb. 4. 12. John 16. 9—11. & 6. 63. Acts 2. 37. & 16. 14.

y Is. 45. 14. Zech. 8. 23.

Verses 21—25. The apostle further enforces what he had advanced by observing,

1. That it had been threatened to the Jews, as the punishment of their infidelity, that *with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that, will they not hear me, saith the Lord:* which was *primarily* fulfilled, when they were sent into captivity to Babylon, where they heard the strange language of their conquerors; and *secondarily*, when, on the day of Pentecost, they heard the apostles speak with tongues, yet rejected the evidence which the Holy Ghost bore thereby to the doctrine which they preached; deaf to the warnings of Providence and the calls of grace. The Corinthians should not therefore be so inordinately fond of what God had before used in a way of judgment upon Israel. *Wherefore,*

2. *Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not*, to carry the gospel into the lands of infidelity, and bear a testimony of the truth of it, which those who believe do not so much need; *but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not*, merely, *but* is also *for them that believe*, that they may be built up on the true foundation. So that to speak with tongues in a Christian assembly was useless and absurd, because none could be profited thereby.

3. The credit of their profession should restrain them from an ostentation of their gift of tongues. *If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues*, it will appear a second Babel; *and if there come in those that are unlearned*, either private Christians or other common people, *and unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad*, and, instead of being converted, ridicule you as a parcel of frantic enthusiasts? *But if all prophesy*, in their turn, preaching, praying, or praising, in an intelligible manner, *and there come in one that believeth not*, out of curiosity; or by accident, *or one unlearned*, or ignorant, *he is convinced of all, he is judged of all;* his conscience is pricked under the word, his sin is brought to his remembrance, and the just wrath of God due thereunto is set before him; *and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest*, as if the preacher had known his very soul, and described his case particularly; *and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God*, convinced by what he hears, that this is his work; *and report that God is in you of a truth*, since none could so discover the inmost soul, and speak with such power and energy, unless God's Spirit instructed them, and accompanied their administrations. *Note*, The word of truth, when rightly dispensed, is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and many, who have heard it, have felt by experience, that God's ministers often describe their case as particularly, as if they knew the secrets of their souls, and they wonder who hath told them.

26. How is it then, brethren?† when ye come together, [z] every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. [z] Let all things be done unto edifying. 37. If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; and let one interpret. 28. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. 29. [b] Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other‡ judge. 30. If *any thing* be revealed to another that

† That is, What then, brethren, is your practice?

z Ver. 6. ch. 12. 8—10.

a 2 Cor. 12. 19. & 13, 10. Eph. 4. 12, 16, 29. 1 Thes. 5. 11. Rom. 14. 19. ch. 10. 20. ver. 5, 12.

b Ch. 2. 15. & 12. 10.

‡ Rather *let the others.*

sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.* 31. [c] For ye may all prophesy one by one, † that all may learn, and all may be comforted. 32. [d] And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. 33. For God is not *the author* of confusion, [e] but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

* That is, be done with his address before the other commences.

c Rom. 12. 7. ver. 29, 30.

† Or, *successively.*

d Ver. 12, 29. 1 John 4. 1. ch. 12. 10. 1 Thes. 5. 20, 21.

e Ch. 12. 25. & 11. 16.

Verses 26—33. The apostle reproves their ill behaviour, and gives them rules for their conduct.

1. He blames their irregularities in the church. *How is it then, brethren,* that ye behave so unseemly in the house of God? for, *when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation;* and, whilst every one is forward to exercise his own gift, the whole is a scene of disorder and confusion. *Let all things be done to edifying,* and no such unseasonable and unprofitable exercise of these divinely communicated gifts be permitted.

2. He orders how they should proceed in the congregation. (1.) *If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three,* no more than these should at one meeting speak, *and that by course,* in their proper turn; *and let one interpret,* that the audience may receive instruction: *but if there be no interpreter, let him* that speaks in an unknown tongue, *keep silence in the church,* and not interrupt what is to the use of edifying; *and let him speak to himself and to God* in private prayer. (2.) *Let the prophets speak two or three,* at one assembly, and after each other, *and let the other judge* whether those who profess to be prophets really are so, and examine what they say by the word of truth. (3.) *If any thing* of peculiar importance *be revealed to another* prophet *who sitteth by, let the first* who was speaking, hasten to conclude his discourse, and *hold his peace, for ye may all prophesy one by one,* at proper opportunities, *that all may learn, and all may be comforted;* this being the great end for which the gift of prophecy is bestowed. *And the spirits of the prophets, are subject to the prophets;* these who are truly inspired are not like those under diabolical possession, but have the due government of themselves, and will not be hurried into any indecency or impropriety, as to the matter, time, or manner, of their speaking.

3. He enforces his discourse with this argument, *For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace;* such disorderly proceedings as these here remarked cannot arise from him: but *as in all* the other *churches of the saints,* so among you, it is his pleasure, and for his glory, that due order should be observed.

34. [f] Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; ‡ but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. 35. And if they will learn any thing, [g] let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

f 1 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Eph. 5. 22. Col. 3. 18 Tit. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 1. Gen. 3. 16.

‡ The verb here means, *to teach.*

g 1 Pet. 3. 7. see on ver. 34. with ch. 11. 14.

Verses 34, 35. We have here silence imposed on women in the church. *For it is not permitted unto them to speak* as public teachers; *but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law,* and to show it by such a modest silence. *And if they will learn any thing,* and desire that what they have heard, may be farther explained, *let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church,* and renounce that due subordination which God hath enjoined. *Note,* (1.) If it be the woman's duty to learn in subjection, it is the husband's duty equally to maintain his superiority by showing himself able to inform her. (2.) Modesty is a woman's greatest ornament; and in them all boldness is peculiarly shocking.

36. What! [h] came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? 37. [i] If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. 38. [k] But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. 39. Wherefore, brethren, [l] covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 40. [m] Let all things be done decently, and in order.

h Is. 2. 3. Acts xi—xviii.

i 2 Cor. 10. 7. 1 John 4. 6. ch. 7. 25. Luke 10. 16.

k Rev. 42. 11. Ps. 81. 12. Hos. 4. 17 Gen. 6. 3. Is. 6. 9, 10. & 44. 18.

l Ch. 12. 31. ver. 1.

m Ch. 11. 34. Col. 2. 5. ver. 26, 27, 33.

Verses 36—40. The apostle closes his discourse with warmth on this head. *What* mean you by your irregular behaviour? *Came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?* Are you the mother-church? ought you to set up yourselves as oracles? and are you to pay no respect to the usages of other churches, as if your own was infallible? how intolerably assuming is such behaviour? *If any man thinketh himself a prophet, or spiritual, let him* prove the truth of the inspiration which he challenges by subscribing to these truths, and *acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord,* since no man, truly under the influence of the Spirit, can possibly contradict what that Spirit, speaking in his apostles, dictates: *but if any man be ignorant,* and obstinately refuses to submit to these commands, *let him be ignorant,* treated with deserved contempt, and left to follow the wilful blindness and perverseness of his own heart. *Wherefore brethren,* on the whole, *covet to prophesy,* as the most excellent gift; *and forbid not to speak with tongues,* which are useful when managed according to the manner above prescribed. And for a general rule in all things pertaining to the public worship, *let all things be done decently, and in order,* and let every indecency and irregularity be banished from the house of God. *Note,* (1.) They who continue wilfully ignorant of, or obstinately reject the commandments of the Lord, evidently show by whose spirit they are led. (2.) When a man hates the light, he is justly abandoned to the darkness he hath chosen. (3.) In the public worship of God all the service should be rational, composed, orderly, edifying.

CHAP. XV.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle treats of the resurrection of the dead. 1. *He establishes the certainty of our Saviour's resurrection,* ver. 1—11. *He from this truth sets himself to refute those who said there is no resurrection of the dead,* ver. 12—20. 3. *From our Saviour's resurrection he establishes the resurrection of the dead, and confirms the Corinthians in the belief of it by some other considerations,* ver. 21—35. 4. *He answers an objection against this truth, and takes an occasion thence to show what a vast change will be made in the bodies of believers at the resurrection,* ver. 36—51. 5. *He informs us what a change will be made in them that shall be living at the sound of the last trumpet, and the complete conquest the just shall then obtain over death and the grave,* ver. 52—57. *And,* 6. *Sums up the argument with a very serious exhortation to Christians to be resolved and diligent in their Lord's service, because they know they shall be so gloriously rewarded by him,* ver. 58.

1. MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you [a] the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2. [b] By which also ye are saved, if ye [c] keep in memory

a Acts 18. 4. ch. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2, 15, 7. 1 Thes. 1. 5. 1 Pet. 5. 12 Rom. 5. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 24.

b Ch. 1. 21, 24, 30. Rom. 1. 16.

c Or *hold fast.* Heb. 4. 14. & 10. 23. Prov. 23. 26. Col. 1. 23. ch. 11. 12.

* what I preached unto you, [d] unless ye have believed in vain. 3. For [e] I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, [f] how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4. [g] And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5. [h] And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6. After that he was seen [i] of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7. After that he was seen of James; [k] then of all the apostles. 8. [l] And last of all he was seen of me also, as of † one born out of due time. 9. For I am [m] the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, [n] because I persecuted the church of God. 10. But [o] by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was not in vain; but [p] I laboured more abundantly than they all; [q] yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 11. Therefore, [r] whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

* Gr. *by what speech.*
d 2 Cor. 6. 1. Gal. 3. 4.
e Acts 9. 15. & 26. 16—18. ch. 11. 23. Mat. 28. 20. Ezek. 3. 17.
f Gen. 3. 15. Lev. i—vi, xvi. Exod. xii. Num. xv, xxviii, xxix. Ps. xxii, lxix. Is. liii. Dan. 9. 24—26. Zech. 13. 7. Luke 24. 25—27, 44. Acts 26. 22. Mat. xxvi—xxviii. Luke xxii—xxiv. John xviii—xxi. 1 Pet. 1. 11. & 2. 24. & 3. 18.
g Ps. 16. 10, 11. Is. 53. 9. Hos. 6. 2. Jon. 1. 17. Mat. 12. 14. Luke 24. 26. Acts 2. 25. & 13. 33, 36. & 26. 22. Rom. 1. 4. & 4. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 11.
h Luke 24. 34. Mark 16. 14. John 20. 19—28.
i Mat. 26. 32. & 28. 10.
k Mat. 28. 16. Luke 24. 50. Acts 1. 4, 12.
l Acts 6. 3—5, 17. & 18. 9. & 22. 14. & 23. 11. & 26. 16. ch. 9. 1. 2 Cor. 12. 1—6.
† Or *an abortive.*
m Eph. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 11. 5. ver. 10. see Rom. 1. 1.
n Acts 8. 4. & 9. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 13. Gal. 1. 13, 23. Acts 22. 4, 5. & 26. 9—11.
o Eph. 2. 7, 8. & 3. 7, 8. Rom 1. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16.
p Acts 20. 19, 20. Rom. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 11. 23. & 12. 11. 2 Tim. 4. 7.
q Ps. 115. 1. Mat. 10. 20. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 2. 13. & 4. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 12.
r Ver. 3, 4. ch. 2. 2.

Verses 1—11. The resurrection of the dead being a chief article of the Christian faith, the apostle here asserts and establishes the doctrine in opposition to some false teachers who had attempted to undermine and overturn this glorious truth, 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.

1. He reminds them of that gospel which he had formerly preached unto them, which they had received from his lips, and in the faith of which they had hitherto persevered. *By which also*, he adds, *ye are saved* with an everlasting salvation, *if ye keep in memory*, or hold fast, *what I preached unto you*, as ye certainly will, *unless ye have believed in vain*, taking up with mere notions, and resting in outward profession, without having ever really the root of the matter in you. *For I delivered unto you first of all*, or among the most capital points of the Christian faith, and as the foundation on which all our hopes in time and eternity are built, *that which I also received* by immediate revelation, *how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures*, which had foretold his substitution and sufferings in the sinner's stead; *and that he was buried:* having truly tasted of death, he was laid in the grave; *and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures*, being delivered for our offences, he was raised again for our justification; and in his resurrection we have the earnest of our own sin, which was the cause of death, being by him done away. *And* of the fact of his being risen we have the most authentic evidence, as I have told you *that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve*, which name they bore, though their original number, by the apostasy of Judas and the absence of Thomas was not complete. *After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep* in Jesus. *After that he was seen of James*, the brother or near kinsman of the Lord; *then of all the apostles;* all of whom were ready to seal their testimony with their blood; men, who could not be deceived themselves, nor could be under the least temptation of deceiving others, when they expected nothing but suffering and death in every tremendous shape for their fidelity. *And last of all he was seen of me also*, that I might be an eye-witness of his resurrection, when called in so miraculous a way to the office and honour of an apostle. Hereupon,

2. He makes a beautiful digression, with the deepest humility, acknowledging his own unworthiness, and Christ's rich grace in calling and qualifying him for the work of apostleship. He was seen of me *as of one born out of due time;* despicable as an abortive fœtus, and brought forth with violent pangs; *for I am the least of the apostles*, utterly unworthy of the high honour, and last called to it; *that am not meet to be called an apostle*, but deserved to have an eternal brand of infamy stamped upon me, *because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God*, his amazingly rich and boundless grace, a happy alteration is wrought in me, and, *I am what I am*, have obtained mercy, and been called not only to the faith of the gospel, but to the dignity of an apostle; *and his grace which was bestowed upon me, was not in vain, but* wrought most effectually, so that under the influence of it *I laboured more abundantly than they all*, undergoing greater hardships, exposed to greater dangers, and with the most unwearied diligence, spreading the gospel through the world. *Yet not I*, though constrained to vindicate my character, I impute nothing to myself, *but to the grace of God which was with me*, enabling me for his work, and crowning it with success. *Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed:* all of us bore the same testimony to a crucified and risen Redeemer, and you professed to make him your whole dependence for pardon, grace, life, and salvation. *Note*, (1.) A gracious soul remembers with deep humility those sad days when he lived in rebellion against God. (2.) Whatever we are or do, to the grace of God alone we are indebted for it, and he must have the glory. (3.) All true ministers of Jesus bring one message, determined to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified, glorified, for he is all, and in all.

12. Now, if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you [s] that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13. But [t] if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. 14. And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain. 15. Yea, and we are found [u] false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. 16. [x] For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: 17. And [y] if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19. [z] If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

s Acts 23. 8. & 17. 18, 32. 2 Tim. 2. 17.
t John 11. 25. & 14. 19. Rom. 4. 24, 25. & 8. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 14. 1 Thes. 4. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 3.
u Job 13. 7. Acts 1. 22. & 2. 24, 32. & 4. 10, 33. & 10. 39—42. & 13. 30—33. & 20. 21.
x See ver. 13, 14.
y Ver. 14. Acts 5. 31. & 13. 38, 39. Rom. 4. 24, 25. & 5. 10. & 8. 33, 34. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 21.
z 2 Thes. 4. 14. Rev. 14. 13. with 2 Tim. 3. 12.

Verses 12—19. Having proved the certainty of Christ's resurrection, he proceeds to show the certainty of ours; refuting the opinion of those heretical teachers, who suggested that it was impossible, or that Christ did not rise in a *public capacity*, as

the head and first-fruits of his redeemed people. *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?* which if it were true, then the following absurdities must be admitted.

1. *If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen*, notwithstanding all the prophecies, and the undoubted testimony of so many unexceptionable witnesses.

2. *If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain;* useless and unprofitable, the resurrection of Jesus being the grand truth on which the whole gospel depends; *and your faith is also vain;* the doctrine on which it is built would have no solid foundation, and the hopes you derive from thence must disappoint and deceive you. *Yea, and* on this supposition, *we are found false witnesses of God*, and must have made use of his sacred name to support a most impious falsehood; *because we have testified of God*, professing to act by his authority, and under his commission, *that he raised up Christ* to a glorious and immortal life, in token of his acceptance of his undertaking, as the reward of his sufferings, and as the head of his redeemed people, who should follow him into his kingdom: *whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not: for* it is evident, *if the dead rise not, then is not Christ*, who was once numbered among the dead, *raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain*, and all the hopes arising from him are delusive; *ye are yet in your sins*, under the guilt and condemnation of them; for as there is no atonement for sin, but that which he offered, and on his resurrection the acceptance of his sacrifice depended, if he had continued in the grave, and seen corruption, we must have sunk into despair, and concluded his oblation unsatisfactory: nor could we have expected, that he who remained himself the prisoner of death, should ever be able to deliver us from the power of it.

3. *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished*, this being the necessary consequence of the above horrid supposition: for if Christ be not risen, their hope in him is vain; and then, though they died martyrs for his cause, they have departed with a lie in their right hand, and are lost for ever, than which thought nothing can be more shocking or discouraging to surviving Christians.

4. *If* this were the case, that *in this life only we have hope in Christ*, and after death have nothing to look for, *we*, who are Christians by profession, and especially the ministers of Christ, who stand most exposed to persecution and all kinds of suffering for his sake, *are of all men the most miserable;* foregoing all the comforts and advantages of this life, and wading through a sea of difficulties and trials: and how absurd would this be, if after death, we had no respect to the recompense of reward, and expected not a joyful resurrection? and who would ever seek to be crucified unto the world, and the world unto him, if he looked no farther than the grave, and hoped for nothing in eternity?

20. [a] But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the first-fruits of them that slept. 21. [b] For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. 22. [c] For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23. But [d] every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24. Then *cometh* the end, when he shall [e] have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. 25. [f] For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26. [g] The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. 27. For he [h] hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28. [i] And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. 29. Else what shall they do which are [k] baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? 30. [l] And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? 31. I protest [m] by ‡ your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, [n] I die daily. 32. If ‖ after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? [o] let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die. 33. [p] Be not deceived: [q] evil communications corrupt good manners. 34. [r] Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: [s] I speak *this* to your shame.

a Ver. 3—8. Acts 26. 23. Rom. 8. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Col. 1. 14. Rev. 1. 5. John 14. 19. & 11. 25. ver. 23, 25, 26, 45, 49.
b Rom. 5. 12, 15—21. & 6. 23.
c Gen. 2. 17. & 3. 6, 19. Rom. 5. 12—21. & 6. 23. John 6. 39, 40, 54. & 11. 25.
d Acts 26. 23. Rev. 1. 5. Is. 26. 19. John 14. 19. & 11. 25. 1 Thes. 4. 15—17. ver. 45, 49.
e 2 Cor. 4. 14. Eph. 5. 27. John 17. 2. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. John 3. 35. & 13. 3. Heb. 2. 8. Ps. 2. 6. Dan. 7. 14. Is. 9. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 16.
f Ps. 110. 1. Eph. 1. 22. Acts 2. 34. Heb. 10. 13. & 1. 13.
g Hos. 13. 14. Is. 25. 8. Luke 20. 36. Rev. 20. 14. & 21. 4. Heb. 2. 14.
h Ps. 8. 6, 7. & 110 2. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. Eph. 1. 22. Phil. 2. 9—11. Heb. 1. 13. & 2. 8. & 10. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 22.
i Phil. 3. 21. Mat. 13. 41, 43. ch. 3. 23. & 11. 3. Eph. 1. 10. Is. 49. 3. John 14. 28.
k Ver. 32. Mat. 20. 22. Luke 12. 50. or Rom. 6. 3—5.
l Rom. 8. 36. 2 Cor 11. 26. Gal. 5. 11, 13.
m 1 Thes. 2. 19. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 2. 14.
‡ Some read *our.*
n Rom. 8. 36. Acts 20. 23. ch. 4. 9—13. 2 Cor. 4. 8—12. & 1. 8, 9. & 11. 23—27. Gal. 6. 17. Col. 1. 24. 1 Thes. 2. 2. Acts 19. 30, 31. 2 Tim. 3. 11.
‖ Or to speak *after the manner of men.*
o Is. 22. 13. & 56. 12. Eccl. 11. 9.
p Ch. 6. 9. Gal. 6. 7.
q Ps. 1. 1. Prov. 9. 6. & 13. 20. Gal. 5. 9. & 1. 6. ch. 5. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 17.
r Rom. 13. 11. Eph. 5. 14. Mat. 22. 29. Hos. 4. 6.
s Ch. 6. 5. Heb. 5. 11, 12.

Verses 20—34. The certainty of Christ's resurrection being proved, and the glaring absurdities demonstrated which must follow from a contrary supposition, the apostle passes on to the blessed effects of Christ's resurrection, as ensuring ours, which he proves,

1. Because *Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept*, and shall sleep in him. He is *first begotten from the dead*, and *the first-born of many brethren*, whom he shall bring unto glory; and his resurrection is the pledge and earnest that all his redeemed shall live with him for ever. God in raising him up hath given them assurance, that they shall be blessed and gathered in with him in their season: *For since*, or because, *by one man came death* which followed on the first sin, *by man came also the resurrection of the dead*, by the second man, the Lord from heaven. *For as in Adam*, our common parent and covenant-head, *all die*, involved in his guilt, and exposed to death, spiritual, temporal, and eternal; *so in Christ*, the other covenant-head of his redeemed, *shall all* those whose sins he bore in his own body on the tree, *be made alive;* by virtue of their union with him, raised to a life of grace here, and to a life of glory hereafter. *But every man in his own order*, (ἰδίῳ τάγματι) Christ and his members shall, each in their time, rank, and order, rise in glory. *Christ the first-fruits*, who consecrates the harvest, and is the pledge of our resurrection; *afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming*, his peculiar people, whose eternal redemption he hath completed.

2. The apostle proves we must rise, because death is among those enemies which the exalted Mediator shall destroy. *Then cometh the end* of the world, and of all the sorrows of the faithful, *when*, having gathered in all his redeemed, and not one of them being wanting, *he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father*, that mediatorial kingdom, the peculiar

administration of which hath been entrusted to him as the Son of man: *when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power;* abolishing every form of civil and ecclesiastical government, and subduing every enemy, human or diabolical, that tyrannized over his people; *for he must reign,* as Mediator, *till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death,* when the dead bodies of his people shall be raised to immortal life, no more to see corruption. *For he,* even God the Father, *hath put all things under his feet,* and appointed him to be head over all things to his church. *But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that* this refers only to all *created beings,* and that *he is excepted which did put all things under him;* for God himself can be subject to none. *And when all things shall be subdued unto him,* and the ends of his mediatorial kingdom answered in the complete salvation of his people, both in body and soul, *then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him;* he will then resign the peculiar administration committed to him, surrendering himself as the head of his church, and the members of his body mystical, into his Father's hands, to receive those eternal rewards which are due to him in virtue of his finished work; *that God may be all in all:* and henceforth the delegated power and authority of Jesus, as Mediator, shall cease, and the one glorious God, the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, shall be the immediate fountain of dominion and blessedness to the church triumphant for ever.

3. He argues the certainty of the resurrection from the very baptism of Christians. *Else what shall they do which are baptized?* if there be no resurrection, how absurd and strange would it be to take up the Christian profession, when, if they had nothing in prospect after death, and here stood exposed to every misery, and the danger of daily martyrdom, they would seem merely baptized *for the dead,* and to be of all men most miserable, *if the dead rise not at all. Why are they then baptized for the dead?* who, with such a prospect, would ever be prevailed on to embrace Christianity? *And why stand we in jeopardy every hour,* and ready to seal our testimony with our blood, if we had not the glorious hope of a better resurrection? *I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus,* by all the comforts of Christianity, and as surely as that Spirit lives who is the author of them, *I die daily,* living continually in the nearest views and expectations of martyrdom. *If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus,* encountering men brutish and savage in their tempers, and have exposed myself to conflicts as dangerous as those which the condemned criminals sustain, when obliged to encounter wild beasts in the public theatres; *what advantageth it me,* what benefit could I reap from such perilous adventures, or what could ever induce me thus to hazard my life, *if the dead rise not?* Surely if this was the case, that nothing was to be hoped for after the grave, it would be our wisdom rather to adopt the principles of Epicurus, than of Christianity, and to say, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die,* and rather enjoy present pleasure, than suffer needless pain, if there were no hereafter, and death put an end to us for ever. *Note,* (1.) Nothing but the prospects of eternity can possibly engage any to the practice of Christianity. Till we have realized views by faith of the things not seen, it is impossible we should truly take up the cross. (2.) One great support in suffering, is a respect to the recompense of the reward.

4. The apostle closes with a solemn caution. *Be not deceived* by those false teachers who endeavour to sap the foundation of your hopes: *Evil communications corrupt good manners:* the bad principles of these seducers could not but produce immoral practices; and to be connected and intimate with such men was dangerously infectious. *Note,* Bad company should be shunned as the plague. *Awake,* then *to righteousness;* be on your guard, and see that ye walk as becomes your holy profession; *for* I perceive by these dangerous doctrines which are broached among you, that *some* of you *have not the knowledge of God,* and of his mind and will, as revealed in his gospel. *I speak this to your shame,* that men of such bad principles and corrupt conversation should be among you, permitted as teachers, or suffered to communicate with the church as members. *Note,* We are blameable not only for the evils we commit ourselves, but for those which we connive at in others.

35. But some *man* will say, [t] How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? 36. [u] *Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. 37. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain,* it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain:* 38. [x] But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him; and to every seed his own body. 39. [y] All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds. 40. *There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another. 41. *There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for *one* star differeth from *another* star in glory. 42. [z] So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: 44. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45. And so it is written, [a] The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. 46. Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural: and afterward that which is spiritual. 47. [b] The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. 48. [c] As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly. 49. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

[t] John 3. 4. Ezek. 37. 3. Mat. 22. 29.
[u] Luke 24. 25. John 12. 24. The apostle gave the false teacher at Corinth the appellation of *fool,* in the same sense, and for the same reason, that our Lord himself called the Pharisees *fools,* (Mat. 22. 18.) namely, on account of their ignorance and wickedness.—*Macknight.*
* In the opinion of some, the example of the grain, which first dies and then revives, is mentioned to insinuate that in the human body there is a seminal principle which is not destroyed by death; and which, at the appointed season, will reproduce the body in a more excellent form than before, through the quickening influence of his power. But, is a seminal principle any thing different from that power? What occasion then have we to carry our thoughts in this matter beyond God's power? Besides, as there is no inextinguishable principle in plants, the analogy doth not hold.—*Macknight.*
[x] Ch. 3. 7. Ps. 104. 14.
[y] Gen. 1. 16—26.
[z] Dan. 12. 3. Mat. 13. 43. Col. 3. 3, 4. ver. 50—54. Phil. 3. 20, 21. Luke 20. 36.
[a] Gen. 3. 6. Rom. 5. 12—14. Acts 3. 15. 2 Cor. 3. 17. John 6. 33—57. & 10. 10, 28. & 14. 6. & 11. 25. Rom. 8. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 4. 10. Phil. 3. 10, 11.
[b] Gen. 2. 7. & 3. 19. with John 3. 13, 31. Eph. 4. 9.
[c] John 3. 6. ver. 21, 22. Gen. 5. 3. Rom. 5. 12—21. Phil. 3. 21. 1 John 3. 2. Mat. 13. 43. Rom. 8. 29. 2 Cor. 3. 18. & 4. 10, 11.

Verses 35—49. Two plausible objections against the resurrection are here suggested. (1.) *How are the dead raised up?* or what power is sufficient for such a work, to recover the scattered atoms? and, (2.) *With what body do they come?* with the same identical particles, or in some other shape and form? In answer to the objector, the apostle replies, *Thou fool.* Probably the persons who opposed the doctrine of the resurrection pretended

to high attainments in science, and to reason as philosophers; but they proved their ignorance, rather than their wisdom, and erred, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

1. *That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.* The same power therefore that every year raises from under the clod, where the seed was sown and corrupted, a plenteous harvest, can raise from the grave the body which hath returned to its dust again; and it would be as absurd to object against the *possibility* of the one as the other.

2. As to the *manner* of the resurrection, *and with what body* we shall come from the grave, to continue the similitude, I answer, *That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain,* without any of that rich clothing which afterward it produces, the blade, the ear, and then the full corn in the ear; *it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain,* that dies and revives again: *but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him and to every seed his own body;* so ordering it in infinite wisdom, that every seed produces its own species. In quality, indeed, the resurrection-body will differ from the present, though in identity of person the same. Nor is this strange, when we see out of the same materials, that bodies of very different qualities are formed. *All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes and another of birds;* the substance is originally the same, though by divine power wonderfully diversified in quality. *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but* though all formed of the first created matter, they greatly differ in excellence; *the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another:* such difference will there be between the present and the resurrection-body, as between a clod and a star. *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory,* is of greater magnitude, and shines with greater splendour; *so also is the resurrection of the dead:* we are raised by the same divine power as the corn vegetates; and that Almighty hand which modifies the same matter in the different bodies around us, can make the like glorious difference between our present and our resurrection-body, though the manner *how* may be to us inconceivable. *It is sown in corruption,* from the day of its generation till it is putrefied in the dust; *it is raised in incorruption,* incapable of putrefaction or dissolution. *It is sown in dishonour,* in life full of defilement, covered with shame, in death loathsome and most contemptible; *it is raised in glory,* like unto Christ's glorious body, shining as the stars for ever and ever. *It is sown in weakness,* is at present liable to a thousand infirmities, pain, weariness, sickness, accidents, and death, and in the grave must be a prey for worms; *it is raised in power,* vigorous and active, fit to join the immortal soul, and without weariness to serve God in his temple day and night without ceasing for ever. *It is sown a natural body,* that needs the constant support of meat, and drink, and sleep, like the beasts that perish: *it is raised a spiritual body,* requiring none of these animal refreshments, and will be like the angels. *There is a natural body,* such as we now possess; *and there is a spiritual body,* suited to the celestial world, which is the inheritance of the saints. *And so it is written, The first man Adam,* from whom we derive our present body, *was made a living soul,* was endued with animal life, and required all those supports which we do: *the last Adam,* the Lord Jesus, our second covenant-head and representative, *was made a quickening spirit,* possessing life in himself, and the fountain of it to his people; having since his resurrection a spiritual body, and by virtue of his power, and our union with him, he shall fashion our bodies like his own. *Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual:* Adam's animal body was first, Christ's spiritual body afterwards; and such is the order also established for us, first to bear the natural, then to receive the spiritual body. *The first man was of the earth,* formed from the clay, and by his sin he became *earthy,* returning to the dust from whence he came. *The second man,* our better representative, *is the Lord from heaven,* coming from thence to take our nature upon him, is now returned thither with this nature glorified, and we expect him to come from thence to make us like himself. *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy;* as Adam's body was, so must ours be, who sprung from him, mortal and corruptible; *and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly,* as many as are born from above, and made partakers of a divine nature shall be conformed in their bodies to the Lord, and shall shortly be glorified together. *And as we have borne the image of the earthy,* by nature the children of corruption, sprung from a fallen parent, and like him must return to dust, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly,* as many as are by faith united to Jesus, and renewed in the spirit of their minds, shall bear shortly his bright image in their bodies as well as souls for ever.

50. Now [d] this I say, brethren, that [e] flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51. Behold, I shew [f] you a mystery; [f] We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the [g] last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, [h] and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. 54. So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, [i] Death is swallowed up in victory. 55. O death, where *is* thy sting? O * grave, where *is* thy victory? 56. [k] The sting of death *is* sin; [l] and the strength of sin *is* the law. 57. [m] But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58. [n] Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord: forasmuch as ye know [o] that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

[d] Ch. 1. 12.

[e] Mat. 16. 17. John 1. 13. ch. 6. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 1. Gal. 1. 16. John 3. 5, 6.

[f] A doctrine of Christianity hitherto unknown. What God always purposed to do; but regarding which did not declare his purpose till then. 1 Thes. 4. 14—17. Rev. 14. 13.

[g] Mat. 24. 31. 1 Thes. 4 16. John 5. 29. Ps. 50. 4.

[h] See ver. 42—44, 50. 2 Cor. 5. 2, 4. Phil. 3. 21.

[i] Is. 25. 8. Hos. 13, 14. Heb. 2. 14. Rev. 20. 14.

* Or *hell.*

[k] Prov. 14. 32. John 8. 21. Ps. 9. 17. Is. 3. 11.

[l] Rom. 4. 15. & 5. 13, 20. & 7. 5, 9, 13. with 7. 4. & 6. 14. & 8. 2.

[m] Rom. 7. 25. Gal. 3. 13. & 4. 4. Tit. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 11. 1 John 5. 5, 11, 12.

[n] 2 Pet. 3. 11—14, 18. & 1. 4—9. 1 Pet. 1. 13. Tit. 2. 11—14. Luke 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Col. 1. 23.

[o] 2 Chr. 15. 7. Ps. 19. 11. Is. 3. 10. Gal. 6. 9. Heb. 6. 10. Rev. 22. 12, 14.

Verses 50—58. The apostle here,

1. Gives the reason of the change which he had described. *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood,* such as our bodies are at present, *cannot inherit the kingdom of God;* they are unable to bear the eternal weight of glory, and incapable of tasting the delights, or being employed in the services of that blessed world to which we go. *Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* The body must be refined from its corruptible dross, before it can enter upon or enjoy the incorruptible inheritance.

2. He informs them of a secret unknown to them. *Behold I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep* in the dust, *but we shall all be changed;* on as many of his people as shall be found alive at Christ's last appearing, a change will pass equivalent to death and resurrection, *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,* when the voice of Jesus shall awake the dead. *For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,* our bodies undergoing a happy alteration

in their qualities, though preserving their identity; *for this corruptible* body, which we carry about, *must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*, that we may be capable of enjoying that celestial happiness for which we are designed.

3. When this awful season comes, then shall death be for ever abolished. *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written*, Isa. xxv. 8. *Death is swallowed up in victory.* And that king of terrors shall be so utterly destroyed, that he shall never more be able to lift his arm against one of the redeemed; and, in the prospect of this glorious day, the faithful soul can even now antedate his eternal triumphs, and exulting, cry, *O death! where is thy sting?* I defy it. *O grave! where is thy victory?* I rise immortal, and tread thee beneath my feet for ever.

4. The ground of the believer's triumph is here declared. *The sting of death is sin;* this arms the monster with all his terrors; *and the strength of sin is the law*, binding over the transgressor to a future judgment, and not merely denouncing bodily death as the wages of sin, but passing sentence of eternal death, and consigning body and soul to hell. *But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* In his adored name we lift up our banners; in his righteousness we make our boast; since he hath died in our stead, he hath led our captivity captive; though we see corruption in the grave, death cannot hold dominion over us; we shall rise glorious and immortal; and, through our dear Redeemer's power and grace, come and reign with him in glory everlasting. *Note*, (1.) Death is no longer dreadful, when the sting of sin, through the atoning blood, is taken out of the conscience. We shall find in the grave the golden gates of life and immortality, which open into the paradise of God. (2.) That which will be the subject of our everlasting praises, should now be the matter of our songs; and since the victory is actually obtained, we should antedate the triumphs of eternity, and to our Redeemer's honour adore him in the full assurance of the conquest which he hath completed.

5. He closes the whole with a warm exhortation arising from the foregoing discourse. *Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast*, firm and unwavering in the faith and hope of the gospel, especially in the great doctrines of the atoning death, and resurrection of Jesus, with the blessed effects thence flowing of our immortal life and glory; *unmoveable* by any of the artifices of Satan, the craft of seducers, or the corruptions of your own hearts, founded on the rock which storms assail in vain; *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, zealously and abidingly engaged in his service, cheerful and willing to undergo any sufferings, in spite of every opposition, increasing with the increase of God; *knowing*, as the most assured truth, *that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, but that he, to whom you are by faith united as your living head of vital influence, will strengthen, uphold, and own you in life, in death; and after death, raise up your bodies to immortal life, and bestow the never-fading crown of righteousness and glory upon you, the reward, not indeed of debt, but of grace. *Note*, (1.) Our practice will bear pace always with the strength of our faith; the more sure and realizing our views of eternal things are, the more vigorously shall we press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. (2.) It is the strongest encouragement to labour for the Lord, because we are sure to succeed in his service. (3.) Whatever we do or suffer for Christ, we shall never regret it in a resurrection-day, and shall then only be ashamed that we have loved him no more, and served him no better.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter the apostle, (1.) *Gives directions about some charitable collection to be made*, ver. 1—5. (2.) *He talks of making them a visit*, ver. 6—10. (3.) *He recommends Timothy to them, and tells them Apollos intended to come to them*, ver. 11—13. (4.) *He presses them to watchfulness, constancy, charity, and to pay a due regard to all who helped him, and his fellow-labourers in their work*, ver. 14—19. (5.) *After salutations from others, and his own, he closes the epistle with a solemn admonition to them, and his good wishes for them*, ver. 20. to the end.

1. NOW [a] concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2. [b] Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, [c] that there be no gatherings when I come. 3. And [d] when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by *your* letters, them will I send to bring your * liberality [e] unto Jerusalem. 4. [e] [f] And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

[a] Acts 11. 28, 29. & 24. 17. Rom. 12. 13. & 15. 25, 26. ver. 3. 2 Cor. viii, ix. 1 John 3. 17. Gal. 2. 10. Acts 16. 6.
[b] Luke 24. 1. John 20. 19, 26. Acts 20. 7. Rev. 1. 10. Prov. 3. 27, 28. 1 John 3. 17.
[c] 2 Cor. 8. 11. & 9. 1—5.
[d] Ch. 4. 19. & 11. 34. with 2 Cor. 8. 16, 19. Gal. 2. 10.
* Gr. *gift.*
[e] Acts 11. 29. & 24. 17. Rom. 15. 25, 26.
[f] Acts 24. 17. Rom. 15. 25. Acts 20. 4.

Verses 1—4. The church at Jerusalem having undergone peculiar oppression and sufferings, and many of the saints being reduced to great poverty, the Gentile brethren, at the apostle's instigation, generously contributed for their relief.

Now concerning the collection for the saints in Judea, *as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.* Since in wealth the Corinthians exceeded the Galatians, and in spiritual gifts were so eminent, it would be a shame if they came behind in benevolence and charity. *Upon the first day of the week*, the day held sacred among Christians, and hallowed by their solemn assemblies, *let every one of you lay by him in store*, contributing to the collection for the poor, *as God hath prospered him*, each according to their ability; the rich more abundantly, and they who have little cheerfully giving a portion out of that little, *that there be no gatherings when I come. And*, being thus in readiness, *when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters*, and recommend as faithful men, *them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem*, concurring in your recommendation. *And if it be meet*, and judged necessary for this benevolent design, *that I go also, they shall go with me. Note*, (1.) Every Christian is bound, according to his abilities, to minister to the necessities of his brethren. (2.) All our success comes from God's gracious providence, and is gratefully to be acknowledged. (3.) The more we receive from God, the more are we called, as good stewards, to improve it for his glory, and the advantage of our brethren.

5. Now I will come unto you when [g] I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia: 6. And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may [h] bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. 7. For I will not see you now by the way; [i] but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. 8. But I will tarry at Ephesus until [k] Pentecost. 9. For [l] a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries.

[g] Acts 19. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 16.
[h] Acts 15. 3. & 20. 38. & 21. 5. Rom. 15. 24. 2 Cor. 1. 15, 23.
[i] Ch. 4. 19. & 11. 34. Jer. 10. 23. Acts 18. 21. Rom. 1. 10. Jam. 4. 15.
[k] Acts 2. 1. Lev. 23. 15—21. Num. 28. 26. Exod. 23. 16.
[l] 2 Cor. 2. 12. Col. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 7, 8. Acts 14. 27, & 19. 8—23. ch. 15. 32. 2 Cor. 1. 8.

Verses 5—9. The apostle, in his own mind, had planned a visit to Corinth, of which he informs them, though Providence prevented, at this time, the execution of his design.

Now I will come unto you, such is my present intention, if the

Lord please, *when I shall pass through Macedonia, for I do* purpose soon *to pass through Macedonia. And it may be that I will abide* a considerable time among you, *yea and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey, whithersoever I go*, returning to your former affection, and testifying your wonted respect for me, notwithstanding those prejudices which the false teachers have laboured to instil. *For I will not see you now on the way*, (εν παροδῳ,) to make a transient visit, which would not answer the end I propose of settling your affairs, establishing you in the truth, and enjoying your company; *but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit*, at whose disposal I am, and by whose providence I desire ever to be directed. *But I will tarry at Ephesus* (from whence he seems to have written this epistle) *until Pentecost*, either till the feast was past, or till its approach, when he intended to be at Jerusalem, a great concourse of Jews from all parts assembling there at that season. And the reason for his long stay at Ephesus he gives; *for a great door and effectual is opened unto me*, a signal blessing hath attended my labours, and great multitudes are by the Spirit converted to the faith of Christ, *and*, as might be expected, *there are many adversaries*, both Jews and Gentiles, who, instigated by Satan, oppose with all their might and craft the progress of the gospel, against whom he chose personally to stand up, and boldly to vindicate the glorious cause. *Note*, (1.) Wherever Christ is preached successfully, there the malice and cunning of earth and hell will be exerted, to stop the rising interest of truth and godliness. (2.) Success in our labours is a great argument and encouragement boldly to persevere. (3.) Faithful ministers, instead of being daunted by outward opposition, have their zeal but the more kindled. What weakens their hands and discourages their hearts, is the unfaithfulness of professors, and the insensibility of their hearts.

10. Now, [m] if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. 11. [n] Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.* 12. As touching [o] *our* brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: [p] but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

m Ch. 4. 17. Rom. 16. 21. Phil. 2. 19—23. 1 Thes. 3. 2.

n Tit. 2. 15. 1 Tim. 4. 12.

* Namely, Erastus, who had been sent with Timothy to Corinth, (Acts 19. 22.) and Titus, who carried this letter, and another, whose name is not mentioned. See 2 Cor. 12. 17, 18.

o Acts 18. 24. & 19. 1. ch. 1. 12. & 3. 5. Tit. 3. 13.

p Eccl. 3. 11. ch. 6. 12. & 10. 2. & 14. 26, 40.

Verses 10—12. The apostle here,

1. Recommends Timothy to them, who was *now* on his journey to Corinth. *If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear* of any insult from any of the factious leaders: regard him with affection, treat him with respect, and hear him with attention: *for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do*, zealous for the cause of the same Divine Master, and tried and found faithful. *Let no man therefore despise him* because of his youth, slight his reproofs, or think lightly of his ministry, *but conduct him forth in peace*; give him a proof of your affection and esteem, by providing him with necessaries for his journey, and bringing him on his way, *that he may come unto me; for I look for him with the brethren*, either I and the brethren here expect him, or I desire his return with the brethren who may accompany him thither. *Note*, Young ministers should be encouraged, not despised; and their ministrations, though without the sanction of grey hairs, yet, seconded with the weight of zeal and piety, deserve the most serious attention.

2. He informs them that Apollos declined a visit to them at present, though he had earnestly pressed him thereto. *As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren, but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.* Though a party at Corinth had affected to set up Apollos in preference to Paul, the apostle entertained no jealousy of his brother labourer, assured that he never would encourage but discountenance such a spirit of division. The faithful ministers of Christ will not harbour mean distrusts of each other; no, not though those who love to sow discord among brethren, endeavour to instil base suspicions. On the other hand, Apollos, probably out of respect to his honoured brother Paul, declined at that time the visit, lest, in the present ill disposition of the Corinthians, it might be abused by those who wanted to make him the head of a party. Though when the present feuds were subsided, he meant to go thither, and labour among them. Such a spirit of love should ministers cultivate, jealous for each other's reputation as their own, and frowning on every flatterer that would attempt to raise their credit at the expense of their brother.

13. [q] Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. 14. [r] Let all your things be done with charity. 15. I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that [s] it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and *that* they have addicted themselves to [t] the ministry of the saints,) 16. [u] That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with *us*, and laboureth. 17. I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus: [x] for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied. 18. For [y] they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore [z] acknowledge ye them that are such.

q Mat. 24. 42. & 25. 13. & 26. 41. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Rev. 16. 15. & 3. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 6. & 3. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 15. Acts 20. 31. ch. 1. 5. & 11. 2. & 15. 1 58. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Gal. 5. 1. Eph. 6. 10, 14. Phil. 1. 27. & 4. 1, 13. Col. 1. 10, 11. & 4. 2, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 1.

r Ch. 8. 1. & 12. 31. & 14. 1. & 13. 4—7, 13. Gal. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Rom. 13. 8—10. Mat. 22. 37—39.

s Ch. 1. 16. Rom. 16. 5. Rev. 14. 4.

t Acts 6. 3, 5 Rom. 15. 31. 2 Cor. 8. 4. & 9. 1. Heb. 6. 10.

u Phil. 2. 29. 1 Thes. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Heb. 13. 17. ch. 4. 8, 12. & 9. 7.

x 2 Cor. 11. 9. Phil. 2. 30. Col. 4. 18. Philem. 13. 13. 2 Cor. 7. 6, 13.

y Rom. 15. 32. 2 Tim. 1. 16. Prov. 25. z 1 Thes. 5. 12.

Verses 13—18. The apostle proceeds,

1. To some general exhortations. *Watch ye* against every enemy of your souls, especially those who would seduce you from the doctrines of truth; *stand fast in the faith* grounded and settled in the hope of the gospel, so as never to be moved from your holy profession; *quit you like men*, with wisdom, zeal, and fidelity, in the midst of the opposition of enemies, and the snares of deceivers; *be strong* in the grace which is in Jesus Christ, exercising yourselves unto godliness, and fighting manfully under the Lord's banners, against every enemy within and without. And whilst you thus show yourselves courageous for the truth, *let all your things be done in charity*, and let a spirit of meekness temper all your zeal. *Note*, (1.) A Christian is compassed with enemies; he need be ever on his guard. (2.) When we are firmly established in the principles of the gospel, no danger or sufferings will deter us from the path of duty. (3.) Charity is the great ornament of our profession; to bear with the perverseness of mistaken friends, and meekly to sustain the attacks of avowed enemies, is to be like our Master.

2. He commends to their particular regard the house of Stephanas. *I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia*, converted by my ministry, and whom I baptized myself, *and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*, laying themselves out in the Lord's immediate service, and zealously employed in assisting his people to their utmost, both in their temporal and spiritual concerns,) I beseech you, brethren, *that ye submit yourselves to such*, directed

by them, imitating their examples, and not led away by upstart teachers; and that ye in like manner reverence, regard, and attend *to, every one that helpeth with us and laboureth* to promote the interests of the same Divine Master, and the edification of your souls.

3. He testifies his satisfaction in the good account he had lately heard concerning them. *I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied;* giving the apostle a more clear statement of the matter than was conveyed in the letter they brought, and explaining things much to his satisfaction, which reports had greatly exaggerated. *Note*, It is a great joy to every minister and Christian's heart to hear unfavourable reports of their brethren contradicted by those who are best acquainted with their circumstances.

4. He enjoins them to respect those faithful men at their return. *For they have refreshed my spirit* by their conversation, *and* the accounts they have given; and this cannot but afford a like satisfaction to *yours; therefore acknowledge ye them that are such*, and show them that respect and regard which their kind, candid, and charitable construction of your conduct merits at your hands. *Note*, Good offices done us demand a grateful return.

19. [a] The churches of Asia salute you. [b] Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with [c] the church that is in their house. 20. [d] All the brethren greet you. [e] Greet ye one another with an holy kiss. 21. The salutation of *me* Paul [f] with mine own hand. 22. [g] If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha. 23. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. 24. [i] My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

a Rev. 1. 4, 11. with Acts 16. 6. & 19. 10.
b Acts 18. 2, 18, 26. Rom. 16. 3. 2 Tim. 4. 19.
c Rom. 16. 5, 23. Col. 4. 15. Phil. 2.
d Heb. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 17.
e Rom. 16. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 26. 1 Pet. 5. 14.
f Rom. 16. 22. Col. 4. 18. 2 Thes. 3. 17, 18. Gal. 6. 11.
g Gal. 1. 8, 9, & 6. 14. 1 John 4. 8—10, 19. Heb. 10. 26—29, 4—8.
h Rom. 16. 20, 24. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18. Eph. 6. 23, 24. Phil. 4. 23. Col. 4. 18. 1 Thes. 5, 28. 2 Thes. 3. 18. Heb. 13. 25. 1 Pet. 5. 14. Rev. 1. 4, 5. & 22. 21.
i Ch. 4. 15. 2 Cor. 12. 15. Phil. 1. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 8.

Verses 19—24. St Paul closes his epistle,

1. With affectionate salutations. *All the churches of Asia salute you*, cordially wishing you every blessing of the everlasting gospel. *Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house*, even all the members of that amicable family which compose a little church among themselves; and such a family is happy indeed. *All the brethren salute you*, with warm affection. *Greet ye one another with a holy kiss. The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.* And thus he signs what his amanuensis wrote from his lips, as genuine and authentic.

2. He subjoins a solemn warning. *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ*, be his eminence of station ever so great, his gifts ever so extraordinary, his profession ever so glaring, if his heart be unsound, his principles erroneous, and his practice dishonourable to the gospel, fomenting divisions, puffed up with pride, and at bottom an apostate, *let him be Anathema Maran-atha*, excommunicated from the body of the faithful, and consigned over to that fearful judgment, which the righteous Lord, in the day of his appearing and glory, will inflict on such impenitent offenders. *Note* (1.) It is not enough to be Christians in word and tongue; do we love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity? that is the question. (2.) None sink under heavier vengeance than those who have been false and faithless to their holy profession.

3. He concludes with his usual benediction and prayer. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, and therein is comprehended every blessing in time and in eternity. *My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.* Sharply as I have been constrained to rebuke you, in him I love you affectionately, and every thing I have said flows from the most unfeigned desire to promote your present and eternal happiness. *Amen!* May this be the happy issue. Believe my kind intentions and regard; join with me in my prayers, and then the issue shall be peace.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

Introduction.

IN his former epistle the apostle had signified his intention of *coming to Corinth as he passed through Macedonia*, chap. xvi. 6. but being providentially hindered for some time, he writeth this second epistle to them about a year after the former; and there seem to be these two great urgent occasions: 1. The case of the incestuous person that lay under censure, required that with all speed he should be restored and received again into communion. This therefore he giveth directions about, chap. ii. and

afterwards, chap. vii. he declareth the satisfaction he had upon the intelligence he received of their good behaviour in that affair. 2. There was a contribution now making for the poor saints at Jerusalem, which he exhorteth the Corinthians to join in chap. viii. and ix.

There are divers other things very observable in this epistle, *e. g.* (1.) The account the apostle giveth of his labours and success in preaching the gospel in several places, chap. ii. (2.) The comparison he maketh between the Old and New Testament dispensations, chap. iii. (3.) The manifold sufferings that he and his fellow-labourers met with, and the motives and encouragements for their diligence and patience, chap. iv, v. (4.) The caution he gives the Corinthians against mingling themselves with unbelievers, chap. vi. (5.) The way and manner in which he justifieth himself and his apostleship from the opprobrious insinuations and accusations of false teachers that endeavoured to ruin his reputation at Corinth, chap. x, xi, xii. and throughout the whole epistle.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

After the introduction, ver. 1, 2. *the apostle begins with the narrative of his troubles and God's goodness which he had met with in Asia by way of thanksgiving to God,* ver. 3—6. *and for the edification of the Corinthians,* ver. 7—11. *Then he attests his and his fellow-labourers' integrity,* ver. 12, 13, 14. *and afterwards vindicateth himself from the imputation of levity and inconstancy,* ver. 15—24.

1. [a] PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and [b] Timothy *our* brother, unto [c] the church of God which is at Corinth, with [d] all the saints which are in all Achaia: 2. [e] Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. 3. [f] Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [g] the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4. [h] Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 5. For [i] as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 6. [k] And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which * is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

a See 1 Cor. 1. 1. Rom. 1. 1, 5. Gal. 1. 1. 15. Phil. 1. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 2.
b Acts 16. 1—3. & 17. 14. & 18. 5. & 20. 4. Heb. 13. 23. 1 Cor. 16. 10, 11. & 2 Tim. 1, 2.
c Acts xviii. 1 Cor. i—xvi.
d 2 Cor. 1. 2. & 6. 11. Eph. 1. 1. Phil. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. Heb. 3. 1.
e Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2
f Eph. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 3. ch. 11. 31. Rom. 15. 6. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 3. John 20. 17. Ps. 40. 8.
g Exod. 34. 6. Ps. 86. 5, 15. Mic. 7. 18.
h Rom. 15. 5. 2 Thes. 2. 16. Is. 51. 3, 12.
i Acts 9. 4. Col. 1. 24. ch. 4. 9, 10. & 11. 3. Ps. 34. 19, 20. & 94. 18, 19.
k Ver. 4. ch. 4. 15, 17, 18. Rom. 8. 18, 28. 2 Tim. 2. 10—12. & 1. 8.

* Or *is wrought.*

Verses 1—6. The apostle opens the epistle,

1. With his usual address and salutation. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God,* eminently called to this high office, *and Timothy our brother,* who joins me in heartiest affection towards you; *unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia,* who in profession and practice appear to be separated from the world as the Lord's people: *Grace be to you and peace,* with all their happy fruits, *from God the Father,* the author of all our blessings, *and from the Lord Jesus Christ,* the meritorious cause of them.

2. He blesseth God for the signal mercies he had experienced. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* and who in and through him, as the divine Mediator, is now become to us *the father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,* multiplying his pardons, showering down his benefits, and giving us spiritual, temporal, and eternal consolation through this Son of his love, *who comforteth us in all our tribulations,* by his word and Spirit bringing home the great and precious promises with power to our souls, and shedding abroad his love in our hearts, *that* from experience of the riches of his goodness, *we may be able to comfort them that are in trouble,* whether of soul or body, *by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God,* tenderly sympathizing with them, and suggesting those encouraging words of Scripture, which, in distress, we have found reviving to our own souls. *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us,* to whom we are thus conformed, and who is still afflicted in all the affliction of his members, *so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ,* who fails not to minister supports and comforts proportionable to our sufferings. *And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation,* it is designed for your advantage, that by our examples of patience, fortitude, and perseverance, you may be encouraged to bear up under every trial, and boldly stand fast, till your salvation is completed; *which is effectual,* and greatly promoted by such exercises of faith and patience, *in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted,* by divine supports under our afflictions, or by seasonable deliverances from them, *it is* also ordered *for your consolation and salvation. Note,* (1.) All our mercies from God call for perpetual, grateful, acknowledgments. (2.) They who have been exercised with trials in their own souls and bodies, will be the most able comforters to others under the like troubles. We speak best when we speak from experience. (3.) Though our afflictions may be at present grievous, the time will come when we shall see peculiar reason to bless God for them, and know that they have been especially conducive to our eternal salvation. (4.) All our comforts flow from God in Christ, as reconciled to us in a covenant of everlasting love.

7. And our hope of you *is* stedfast, [l] knowing, that, as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation. 8. For we would not, [m] brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above † strength, insomuch that we despaired [n] even of life: 9. But we had the † sentence of death in ourselves, that [o] we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10. Who delivered us from so great a death, and

l Rom. 5. 3, 4. & 8. 17, 18. 2 Thes. 2. 13. & 3. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Heb. 6. 9, 10.
m Acts 19. 23, &c 1 Cor. 4. 9—11. & 15. 32. & 16. 9. ch. 4. 7—12, 16. & 11. 23—27. 2 Tim. 3. 11. Acts 14. 19.

† Or *answer.*

n Ch. 4. 7. Jer. 17. 5, 7. Rom. 4. 17—20.
o Job 5. 17—23. Ps. 34. 19, 20. Is. 41. 10—16. & 46. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 15. 31, 32. Ch. 11. 31. 1 Sam. 17 37. 2 Tim. 4. 17.

doth deliver: in whom we trust that he
p Rom. 15. 30. ch. 4. 15. Phil. 1. 19. Philem. 22. Is. 45. 11. Jam. 5. 16. Phil 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Acts 12. 5.
will yet deliver *us*; 11. [p] Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift *bestowed* upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

Verses 7—11. St Paul,

1. Expresses his confidence in them. *And our hope of you is stedfast*, that ye will never be discouraged by any tribulations which you see us endure, or are called to bear yourselves; *knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings* with us, *so shall ye be also of the consolation*, rejoicing with us here in the experience of God's love, and shortly to arrive where sorrow shall be for ever banished, and our joys will be perfected.

2. He informs them what a fight of afflictions they had undergone, *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia*, (see Acts xiv, xvi, xix.) *that we were pressed out of measure, above strength*, loaded with burdens more than our natural strength could sustain; *so that we despaired even of life*, not knowing which way to escape, and our case to all appearance desperate. *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves*, and concluded we must be destroyed; the Lord in his providence suffering us to be brought to these extremities, *that we should not trust in ourselves*, feeling by experience our own utter insufficiency to help ourselves, *but in God who raiseth the dead*, whose wisdom, power, and grace, alone could extricate us from our troubles, and save us from the jaws of death. *Note*, The Lord suffers his people often to be reduced, as it were, to the last gasp, that he may convince them more deeply of their own helplessness, and magnify his grace and power more signally in their deliverance.

3. He gratefully acknowledges the divine interposition. *Who delivered us from so great a death*, when to human view it appeared inevitable, *and doth deliver*, in jeopardy as we stand every hour: *in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us*, content to cast our care upon him, in the fullest confidence of his protection and support. *You also helping together by prayer for us*, and joining in affectionate supplications on our behalf, that we may be still preserved in the midst of danger; *that for the gift* of so signal a deliverance as we have experienced, *bestowed upon us by the means of many persons*, in answer to the prayers of those faithful souls, who, ceaseless at a throne of grace, besought the Lord for us, *thanks may be given by many on our behalf*, and God glorified and praised for the mercy he hath extended towards us. *Note*, (1.) Past experience of God's interposition should engage us still to hope in his mercy. (2.) None ever trusted God and were confounded. (3.) We owe much to the prayers of those who interest themselves for us in their approaches to God. (4.) The blessings received in answer to prayer call loud for a due return of praise.

q Ver. 10. 2 Kin. 20. 3. Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16. Gal. 6. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Heb. 13. 18. Ps. 32. 2. John 1. 47. 1 Cor. 2. 4, 13. & 4. 4. & 9. 15. ch. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 7. 14. & 11. 6.
12. [q] For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace* of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

* The Unitarian version absurdly renders this *favour*. The χαρις του Θεου as opposed to σοφια σαρκικη, evidently means an influencing principle on the mind.

13. For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; 14. As also ye have acknowledged us in part, [r] that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also *are* ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

r Ch. 5. 12. Phil. 2. 16. & 4. 1. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20.

Verses 12—14. The apostle here,

1. Vindicates himself in general from the insinuations of his traducers. *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity*, maintaining a single eye to God's glory; *not with fleshly wisdom*, purposing any mean ends, or selfish designs of our own; *but by the grace of God*, having this for our governing principle, taught by his word, and guided by his Spirit, *we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards*, who cannot but be conscious how holily and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you; and if I have now disappointed you of my intended visit, it was no double-mindedness, but the providence of God, which prevented me. *Note*, A good conscience affords always matter of real joy.

2. He appeals to themselves for the truth of what he said. *For we write none other things unto you than what ye read or acknowledge, and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end:* our future conversation shall, we trust, be as exemplary as the past. *As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus*, when we hope to appear with you before him as the seals of our ministry, our joy and crown.

15. [s] And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second ‡ benefit: 16. And to pass by you into Macedonia, and [t] to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judea. 17. [t] When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay? § 18. But [u] *as* God *is* true, our ‖ word toward you was not yea and nay. 19. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, [y] who was preached among you by us, *even* by me, [x] and Silvanus, and Timotheus, [y] was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. 20. For [z] all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. 21. Now he [a] which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; 22. [b] Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. 23. Moreover, [c] I call God for a record upon my soul, [d] that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. 24. [e] Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

s 2 Cor. 16. 5. & 4. 19. & 11. 34. Rom. 1. 11. & 15. 29.
‡ Gr. *grace*.
t 1 Cor. 4. 19. & 10. 33. & 11. 34. ch. 10. 2. with Acts 16. 6, 7. Gal. 2. 2.
§ That is, *yes*, or *no*, just as suited my own inclination or convenience.
u Ver. 23. Rom. 1. 5. & 9. 1. ch. 11. 31. Mat. 5. 37. Jam. 5. 12.
‖ Or *preaching*.
x Acts 15. 40. & 16. 17. & 18. 5.
y Exod. 3. 14. John 8. 58. Heb. 13. 8.
z John 14. 6. & 1. 14, 17. Gal. 3. 17. Luke 24. 27, 44. Heb. 9. 15—17.
a 1 John 2. 26, 27. ch. 5. 5.
b Rom. 8. 16. ch. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 13, 14. & 4. 30. 2 Tim. 2. 19 Rev. 2. 17.
c 1 Tim. 5. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. ch. 11. 31. Gal. 2. 20.
d 1 Cor. 4. 21. ch. 2. 3. & 12. 20. & 13. 2, 10. 1 Thes. 2. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 10.
e Mat. 23. 8—10. 1 Cor. 3. 5. ch. 4. 5. & 2. 1—3. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Rom. 11. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 12.

Verses 15—24. In answer to the insinuations of his enemies, who accused him of levity and inconstancy.

1. He avers the sincerity of his intentions at the time he gave them his promise. *In* the *confidence* of their affection and esteem, he was fully purposed to visit them, in hopes of affording them further spiritual assistance; and not merely to call on them in his way to Macedonia, but to return from thence, and make some considerable stay among them, and then to have been helped forward on his journey by them to Jerusalem. *When I*

therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? promising rashly, and altering my mind, without sufficient reason? *or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh?* was I influenced by any secular views? or did I want to flatter you, and tell you what I never intended to perform? *that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay,* talking backwards and forwards to serve a turn? No. Paul, as every faithful man doth, spoke the truth from his heart.

2. He vindicates his doctrine, which the seducers wanted to represent as equally erroneous as his promise was deceitful: and this he doth with a solemn appeal to God. *But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay,* our doctrine was not various and changeable, but uniformly the same; *for the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus, and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea;* the same crucified Jesus was the subject of our ministry, and we taught with perfect harmony all the glorious truths of gospel grace: *for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen,* infallibly certain, and invariably the same; not conditional, and depending upon any thing in our miserable selves, but everlastingly sure, flowing from the sovereign favour and love of God, purchased by the obedience to death, and ratified by the bloodshedding of the Redeemer, *unto the glory of God by us,* who, by our ministrations, is thus exalted in the highest.

3. He mentions some of the inestimable blessings which God in Christ Jesus had bestowed. (1.) *Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ is God,* we are built up in him, and, being together united to him as our living Head, nothing shall ever be able to separate us from him. (2.) He *hath anointed us* with the gifts and graces of his Spirit. (3.) He *hath also sealed us* unto the day of redemption, securing us for his own in a covenant of grace, and stamping his blessed image on our souls. (4.) He *hath given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts,* shedding abroad his love, as the pledge of that eternal felicity whereunto we are appointed.

4. He gives a weighty reason for not coming at present to Corinth, and solemnly calls God to witness thereto, that it was out of mere tenderness towards them, *to spare* them, that he might not be obliged to inflict on the offenders condign punishment. But, to prevent mistakes, he adds, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith,* we assume no tyrannical power, nor pretend to be lords over your conscience; *but are helpers of your joy,* desiring to promote your spiritual and eternal consolation: *for by faith ye stand,* grounded not on fallible human testimony, but on the word of God, and therefore shall never be moved away from the hope of the gospel. *Note,* They who have true faith shall never finally or fatally fall.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle proceedeth in the account of the reasons why he did not come to Corinth, ver. 1—4. *Then he writeth concerning the incestuous person that lay under censure; and giveth direction for the restoring him, together with the reasons for their so doing,* ver. 5—11. *And afterwards informeth them of his labours and success in preaching the gospel in several places,* ver. 12—17.

1. BUT I determined this with myself, [a] that I would not come again to you in heaviness. 2. For [b] if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is* made sorry by me? 3. And [c] I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is *the joy* of you all. 4. [d] For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

a Ch. 1. 23. & 1. 2, 20. & 13. 2, 10. 1 Cor. 4. 21.

b 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 9. 2. ch. 1. 14.

* *The same who are.* The singular is here used for the plural, as is not unusual in collectives.

c 1 Cor. v. ch. 12. 21. & 1. 14. & 8. 22. Gal. 5. 10.

d Ch. 7. 8. & 11. 28, 29. & 12. 14, 15. Phil. 3. 18. Lev. 19. 17. Prov. 27. 5. Ps. 141. 5.

Verses 1—4. The apostle suggests another reason why he would not come now to Corinth, lest he should be compelled to exercise such severity on offenders as would be bitter to them and painful to himself; and in such circumstances it must be a melancholy meeting, when he must make those sorrowful who should have made him glad; and, whilst this was the case, his tender sympathy with them must occasion heaviness to his own spirit. He wished therefore, rather that all offences might be first removed, for which end he had written the former letter, and that he might not be obliged to sorrow over those as impenitent, in whom he hoped to rejoice as faithful: and he would fain hope, from his confidence in their affection and regard, that *his joy* was *theirs,* and that they would be ready to remove every cause of uneasiness and delight to make him happy. With much anguish of heart, and many tears, he had dictated this epistle, not to grieve them, but to profit them, and that his own love towards them, and jealousy over them, might be more abundantly manifested. *Note,* (1.) Faithful rebuke is the surest mark of love. (2.) Correction is an unpleasing though necessary task. (3.) The design of every reproof should not be to grieve but to recover.

5. [e] But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. 6. Sufficient to such a man *is* this [f] punishment, which *was inflicted* of many. 7. [g] So that contrariwise ye *ought* rather to forgive *him,* and comfort *him,* lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. 8. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm *your* love toward him. 9. For to this end also did I write, [h] that I might know the proof of you, whether you be obedient in all things. 10. [i] To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgave any thing to whom I forgave *it,* for your sakes *forgave I it* † in the person of Christ; 11. [k] Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

e 1 Cor. 5. 2, 5. Gal. 4. 12. The apostle, with great delicacy, avoids mentioning the name of the incestuous person, and even his crime.

f Or *censure.* 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. ch. 13. 10.

g Ch. 12. 13. Gal 6. 1, 2. Eph. 4. 16, 32. Col. 2. 13. & 3. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 14. Heb. 12. 12, 13.

h Ch. 7. 12, 15. & 8. 24. & 10. 6. Phil. 2. 22. 2 Tim. 4. 5.

i Mat. 18. 18. John 20. 23. 1 Cor. 5. 4. ch. 5. 20.

† Or *in the sight.* Others render it, *by the authority of Christ.*

k Luke 22. 31. 1 Cor. 7. 5. ch. 11. 3. Eph. 6. 11, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

Verses 5—11. The apostle here directs them how to behave towards the incestuous person, who had been, according to his orders, excommunicated.

1. He had been grieved *in part* that he was compelled to punish; but since this man had testified his repentance, the cause of his sorrow was removed: and though he had found fault with many who were puffed up, and had not mourned on this occasion, he would not overcharge them with farther reproof, since they had, as a body, cleared themselves by their obedience to his letter.

2. The punishment which had been inflicted on the offender was sufficient; and, since he was humbled and restored, the sentence of excommunication should be removed. He exhorts

then, therefore, (1.) To *forgive* him; (2.) To *comfort* him under the deep wounds of shame and remorse which he must have felt, lest Satan should take advantage of his distress to overwhelm him with despair. (3.) To *confirm* their love towards him, and receive him into their church, and into their bosom, with all the cordiality of warm affection. *Note*, We ought to be peculiarly tender of broken spirits, not aggravating their offences, but sympathizing with their anguish.

3. This was the end the apostle proposed, both in his former and present epistle, that he might have a proof of their obedience. And, to engage them to a ready compliance with his present exhortation, he mentions his own willingness to concur with them in forgiving this penitent: and according to the divine authority delegated to him, in the name of Jesus Christ he pronounced his absolution; and this he did for their sakes, as a fresh mark of his love to them, and to promote their welfare, lest Satan should take advantage, from any severity shown to this offender, to discourage the hearts of backsliders from returning, through despair of pardon, or raise prejudices against the members of the church as of an unforgiving and inexorable spirit. *For we are not*, says he, *ignorant of his devices*, how by every method he strives to obstruct the success of the gospel, and disturb the peace of the church.

l Acts 16. 8. & 20. 6.
m Mark 16. 15. Luke 2. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 1. 23. & 2. 2. & 15. 3, 4.
n Acts 14. 27. 1 Cor. 16. 9. Col. 4. 3. Rev. 3. 7, 8.
o Ch. 7. 5, 6.
p Rom. 8. 37. ch. 4. 7—12. Phil. 4. 4. & 3. 3. Ps. 149. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 16. Is. 61. 10.
q Rom. 10. 17, 18. & 15. 19. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Song 1. 3. Col. 1. 6, 23.
r 1 Cor. 1. 18. ch. 4. 3.
s Luke 2. 34. Acts 13. 46. Mat. 13. 11. & 11. 20—24. John 3. 19, 36. & 9. 39. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. Rom. 1. 16. Is. 40. 5, 6.
t Ch. 3. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 15. 9. ch. 12. 11.
‡ *Or deal deceitfully with.*
u Is. 1. 22. ch. 1. 12. & 4. 2. & 11. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 3. 1 Tim. 6. 5. Tit. 1. 11.

12. Furthermore, when I came to Troas to [m] *preach* Christ's gospel, and [n] a door was opened unto me of the Lord, 13. [o] I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but, taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia. 14. [p] Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and [q] maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. 15. For we are unto God [r] a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: 16. [s] To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And [t] who *is* sufficient for these things? 17. For we are not as many, which ‡ [u] corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God; in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

Verses 12—17. The apostle,

1. Acquaints them with another thing which retarded his journey to Corinth. *Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel*, that constantly delightful theme on which I dwell; *and a door was opened unto me of the Lord*, he who hath the hearts of all men in his hand, having given me a pleasing prospect of success: yet so anxious was I to hear of you, that *I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother*, whom I expected to arrive there from you; *but, taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia*, where I met him, and heard with delight the account which he brought from you.

2. Having hinted his successful labours at Troas, he breaks forth into thanksgiving to God. *Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph*, in the midst of all our tribulations, raising us superior to our foes, and filling us with exultation and joy *in Christ* the rock of our confidence; *and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place*, diffusing his gospel as fragrance, and causing our labours to be acceptable to himself, and profitable to those among whom he sends us to minister, *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ*, his precious name in our lips, and his grace in our hearts, render us pleasing to God, *in them that are saved*, in whom God's rich mercy is magnified, being called by him to the faith and privileges of the gospel, *and* also *in them that perish*, in whom his justice is displayed in punishing their obstinate infidelity; and though they are not gathered, yet are we alike glorious in the eyes of the Lord, who regards not our success, but our fidelity. *To the one we are the savour of death unto death*, a despised and abused gospel aggravating their guilt, and increasing their condemnation; *and to the other the savour of life unto life*; like a sweet perfume, that recovers the fainting spirit, so doth the gospel, through the power of the Holy Ghost, quicken the souls of many from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness, and continues to refresh and revive them amidst all their trials and sufferings here, till they come to eternal life and glory hereafter. *And*, in the view of these eternal important events, and the awful and difficult charge lying upon us, who needs not to tremble for himself, and to cry out, *Who is sufficient for these things?* The greatest, the best of men, will be most conscious of their own weakness, and be looking up for more than human power, to enable them for the discharge of this arduous employment. *Note*, (1.) They who are truly found in Christ will always have cause to triumph in him over all their foes. (2.) The gospel word never returns void. Where it is not a savour of life, it will be a savour of death. (3.) The more we are sensible of our own insufficiency, the more shall we look up to him who giveth strength to the weak.

3. He vindicates himself, and glances at their false teachers. *For we are not as many, which corrupt* and adulterate *the word of God* to make advantage thereby; *but as of sincerity*, without guile or deceit; *but as of God*, speaking under his influence, guidance, and authority, *in the sight of God speak we in Christ*, approving ourselves to the great Searcher of hearts, with a single eye to the Redeemer's glory, and making him the grand subject of all our ministrations.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle makes an apology for his seeming to commend himself, and is careful not to assume too much to himself, but to ascribe all praise unto God, ver. 1—5. *He then runs a comparison between the* Old Testament *and the* New, *and showeth the excellency of the latter above the former*, ver. 6—11. *From whence he infers what is the duty of gospel ministers, and the advantage of those who live under the gospel, above those that lived under the law*, ver. 12. to the end.

1. [a] DO we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you? 2. [b] Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: 3. *Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be [c] the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. 4. And [d] such trust we have through Christ to God-ward: 5. [e] Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God:

a Ch. 1. 12. & 6. 12. & 10. 8, 12. & 2. 14, 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 5, 13. & 12. 11. with 1 Cor. 2. 6, 12. & 3. 10. & 4. 15. & 9. 1, 12, 19. & 10. 33.
b 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 9. 1, 2. & 3. 10. ch. 7. 3. & 11. 11. & 12. 15. Phil. 1. 7. Rom. 1. 8.
c Exod. 24. 12. & 34. 1. & 31. 18. & 32. 16. Ps. 40. 8. Jer. 31. 31. Heb. 8. 10. Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 26, 27.
d Ch. 2. 14. Phil. 1. 7. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 2.
e John 15. 5. 1 Cor. 3. 5—7. & 15. 10. ch. 2. 16. & 4. 7. Phil. 2. 13. & 5. 13.

Verses 1—5. To silence his traducers the apostle was compelled to protest his sincerity; and here,

1. He apologises for thus seeming to commend himself. *Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others,* the false apostles, *epistles of commendation to you* from other churches, *or letters of commendation from you,* in order to gain credit and influence? no: we need them not; our conduct speaks for us. And *ye* yourselves *are our epistle,* our best letter's testimonial, *written in our hearts,* in the deep affection we bear you: some read *your hearts,* where their conversion bore an honourable testimony to the instrument of it; *known and read of all men,* who observe the work of God's grace evident in you through our labours; *forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God,* the author of all the gifts and graces which you possess; *not on tables of stone* as the law of Moses, *but in the fleshly tables of the heart,* softened and renewed by grace, where the impression of the gospel-word is deep and lasting, *And such trust have we through Christ to Godward,* that our ministry hath been thus effectual to you, to God's glory, your benefit, and our own commendation.

2. He prevents any suggestion as if he herein arrogated ought to himself. *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves,* who cannot from ourselves naturally produce one good thought, and much less by the mere power of our reasoning effect your conversion: no; *but our sufficiency is of God,* who alone furnishes us with ability, and crowns our labours with success. To him therefore should the praise of all be for ever ascribed. *Note,* The best of men have always the lowliest thoughts of themselves.

6. Who also[f] hath made us able ministers of [g] the new testament; [h] not of the letter, but of the spirit: for [i] the letter killeth, but [k] the spirit * giveth life. 7. But if [l] the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away; 8. How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? 9. For if [m] the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. 10. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. 11. For if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious.

f 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11. ch. 5. 18—20. Rom. 1. 5.
g Jer. 31. 31. Heb. 8. 6—13. & 9. 15—17. & 10. 16. Mat. 26. 28.
h Rom. 2. 27—29. & 7. 6. Heb. 9. 10. Eph. 2. 15.
i Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10, 21. Rom. 3. 20. & 4. 15. & 7. 6, 9—13. ch. 2. 16.
k John 6. 63. Rom. 1. 16, 17. 1 Cor. 1. 24. ch. 2. 16. & 5. 18. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Heb. 8. 6, 8. Acts 16. 14. & 26. 17, 18. 1 John 1. 1.
* Or *quickeneth.*
l Rom. 7. 10. Deut. 10. 1. Exod. 24. 12. & 31. 18. & 32. 16. & 34. 1, 29, 30.
m Gal. 3. 5. Rom. 1. 16, 17. & 3. 21. Is. 46. 12, 13. & 49. 3. Luke 2. 14. Eph. 3. 10, 21. Ps. 21. 5. & 72. 17—19. Heb. 8. 6—13. & 10. 16—22. ch. 5. 18—21. Rom. 5. 15—21.

Verses 6—11. The apostle runs a parallel between the Mosaical and gospel dispensation, showing the superior excellency of the latter, and the honour of those who were the ministers of it.

Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, furnishing us with abilities and giving us success: *not of the letter,* not ministers of *the law,* which the Judaizing teachers so affect; *but of the spirit,* of the *gospel* which the Holy Ghost accompanies with his divine energy: *for the letter,* the *law, killeth,* commanding a perfection men cannot perform, and denouncing a curse on the least transgression; *but the spirit,* the *gospel,* attended with the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, *giveth life,* bringeth sinners into a state of favour with God, raising them to spiritual life here, as the pledge and beginning of eternal life hereafter.

But if the law, which was *the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious,* when the two tables were delivered with such solemn pomp on Sinai, *so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance,* so bright it shone, *which glory was to be done away* in a while; *how shall not the ministration of the Spirit,* in the gospel, *be rather glorious,* which is attended with such mighty energy and quickening influence? and how much do its ministers also exceed in glory? *for if the ministration of condemnation,* which could only denounce wrath on the disobedient, *be glory: how much more doth the ministration of righteousness,* even of the righteousness of God by faith, *exceed in glory.* And they who minister this glorious gospel must as much excel the ministers of the law, as righteousness and eternal life are preferable to condemnation and wrath: *for even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth,* as stars disappear before the rising sun. *For if that which is done away,* as is now the case with the Mosaical dispensation, *was glorious,* and introduced with such majesty and splendour; *much more that which remaineth,* the gospel dispensation, *is glorious:* its privileges and blessings are infinitely greater, and will endure to eternity.

12. Seeing then that we have such hope,[n] we use great †plainness of speech: 13. And not as Moses, [o] *which* put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look [p] to the end of that which is abolished: 14. But [q] their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *vail* is done away in Christ. 15. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. 16. Nevertheless when [r] it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. 17. Now [s] the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is,* there *is* liberty. 18. But [t] we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, [u] are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as ‡ by the Spirit of the Lord.

n Ch. 4. 2, 13. & 7. 4. Eph. 6. 19.
† Or *boldness.*
o Exod. 34. 33, 35.
p Rom. 10. 4. Gal. 3. 23, 24. Col. 2. 17. Heb. 10. 1.
q Ch. 4. 3, 4. Is. 6. 9, 10. Ezek. 12. 2. Mat. 13. 11—15. John 9. 39. & 12. 40. Acts 28. 26. Rom. 11. 8, 25. Ps. 69. 23.
r Rom. 11. 23, 26. Mat. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 10. Hos. 3. 5. & 6. 3. Is. 11. 9. & 48. 17. & 54. 13. Jer. 31. 34. Is. 25. 7. & 29. 18.
s John 4. 24. & 6. 63. 1 Cor. 2. 10. ch. 4. 18. Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 4. 6.
t 1 Cor. 13. 12. ch. 4. 4, 6. & 5. 7. Col. 1. 27. 2 Tim. 1. 10, 11. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 15.
u Rom. 8. 29. 1 Cor. 15. 49. Col. 3. 10. Eph. 1. 4, 5. & 2. 10. & 4. 24. ch. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. & 5. 6, 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 5—9. John 17. 17.
‡ Or *of the Lord the Spirit.*

Verses 12—18. These words are the inference from the foregoing comparison.

Seeing then that we have such hope, in the superior excellence of the gospel above the law, and trust on the divine power to make it effectual, *we use great plainness of speech,* freely delivering our message, *and* affecting no embellishments. *Not as Moses, who put a vail over his face,* to hide the splendour of his countenance, intimating thereby, *that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished;* they stuck at the letter and the shadows, and perceived not that all was intended to lead them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith; *but their minds were blinded,* stupified, (ἐπωρώθη) for not only then, but *until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament;* besides the natural vail of darkness on their minds, there was an obscurity in the revelation

itself as wrapped up in types and figures; and though they read the Scriptures, they understood not their true meaning and design; *which veil is done away in Christ*, in whom all the types and prophecies received their accomplishment, and who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, as they know into whose heart he shines with the light of his gospel; *but even unto this day, when Moses is read*, the carnal Jews are so hardened through pride, prejudice, and sensuality, that *the veil is* still *upon their heart*, and they continue ignorant of him to whom the law and the prophets bear witness. *Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord*, either the heart of any individual among them, or the people in general in the last days, *the veil shall be taken away*, and they shall see, know, and receive the true Messiah. *Now the Lord* Jesus Christ *is that* quickening *Spirit*, who alone can effect this mighty work: *and where the Spirit of the Lord is*, and the gospel is truly embraced, *there is liberty*, freedom from darkness, guilt, and bondage, and access with boldness to a reconciled God. *But we all, with open face*, who, through the illumination of the Spirit, have received the gospel in the light and love of it, *beholding* there, *as in a glass*, or mirror, which distinctly reflects the person, *the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image* of the adorable Jesus, *from glory to glory*, from the bright traces which his grace begins in time, till his likeness in us is perfected in eternity; and all this is effected *even as by the Spirit of the Lord*, or *by the Lord the Spirit*, the great and glorious Agent in this new creation, who is very God, and in the ministration of his gospel effectually brings the redeemed to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Lord, thou Spirit of all grace, thus transform my soul into the Saviour's perfect image!

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter we have an account, 1. *Of the constancy of the apostle and his fellow-labourers in their work. Their constancy is declared,* ver. 1. *Their sincerity is vouched,* ver. 2. *An objection is obviated,* ver. 3, 4. *And their integrity proved,* ver. 5, 6, 7. 2. *Of their courage and patience under their sufferings. Where see what their sufferings were, together with their allays,* ver. 8—12. *And what it was that kept them from sinking and fainting under them,* ver. 13. to the end.

1. [a] THEREFORE, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; 2. [b] But have renounced the hidden things of * dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3. But if our gospel be hid, [c] it is hid to them that are lost: 4. In whom [d] the god of this world hath [e] blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest [f] the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is [g] the image of God, should shine unto them. 5. For we preach [h] not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6. For God, [i] who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath [k] shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God [l] in the face of Jesus Christ. 7. But we have [m] this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

[a] 1 Cor. 7. 25. ch. 3. 6 & 5. 18. Eph. 3. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. ch. 2. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 1. Phil. 6. 13.
[b] Ch. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 5. 11. & 6. 4. & 11. 3, 6, 13. Eph. 4. 14. & 5. 3, 12. 1 Thes. 2. 3, 5.
* Or *shame.*
[c] Rom. 2. 16. Col. 1. 23. Eph. 3. 8.
[d] Mat. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 18. ch. 2. 15, 16. & 3. 14. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11. Is. 6. 9, 10.
[e] Mat. 4. 8, 9. John 8. 44. & 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. Eph. 2. 2. & 6. 12. Ps. 17. 14.
[f] 1 Kin. 22. 22. Is. 6. 10. Mat. 11. 25. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11.
[g] John 8. 12. & 12. 35. ch. 3. 8, 11, 18. Acts 26. 17, 18. Col. 1. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 8.
[h] Phil. 2. 6. Zech. 13. 7. John 1. 18. Col. 1. 15. John 14. 9, 10. & 10. 30. Heb. 1. 3.
[i] Mat. 16. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 13, 23. & 2. 2. & 3. 5, 21. & 9. 19—23. & 10. 33 Rom. 15. 1, 2. ch. 1. 24. with Jer. 23. 16, 26.
[k] Gen. 1. 3, 4, 15. Ps. 74. 16. & 136. 7—9. 1 Eph. 1. 17, 18. & 5. 1 Pet. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Acts 26. 17, 18. ch. 3. 18.
[l] Heb. 1. 3. Col. 1. 15. John 14. 9, 10. with ch. 3. 7, 13.
[m] Mat. 13. 44, 52. 1 Cor. 1. 26. & 2. 5. ch. 3. 5, 6. & 5. 1, 6. & 6. 7 & 12. 9. Eph. 3. 8. Col. 2. 2, 3. 1 Thes. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 7. with Judg. 7. 13, 16. Col. 1. 27.

Verses 1—7. The apostle having shown the excellence of the gospel above the law, passes on to give an account of the diligence and sincerity with which he and his companions discharged their ministry.

1. They laboured with perseverance and fidelity. *Therefore seeing we have this ministry* from the Lord, *as we have received mercy*, and support under all our infirmities, *we faint not*, amidst our greatest trials cheerfully holding on unwearied in our glorious course, *but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty*, abhorring every thing scandalous or reproachful: using no cover or concealment, *not walking in craftiness*, to beguile unstable souls by any mean arts: *nor handling the word of God deceitfully*, corrupting the pure truth by any base alloy of our own, or attempting to accommodate it to the taste of our hearers; *but, by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God*, in all plainness of speech applying the gospel to men's hearts, under a deep sense of the solemn account we must shortly give of our ministry. *Note*, (1.) The business of ministers is not to adapt their word's to men's humours, but to strike at their hearts. (2.) They who lay their hands to the gospel plough must never faint or look back, whatever trials they may meet in the discharge of their office.

2. He obviates an objection, How, if he spoke so plainly, the truth was yet received by so few. *But if our gospel*, after all the pains we take, *be hid, it is hid to them that are lost*, who wilfully persist in their impenitence and unbelief, and reject the counsel of God against their own souls; *in whom the god of this world*, the devil, *hath blinded the minds of them who believe not*, increasing and confirming, by his malignant influence, the native hardness and darkness of their hearts, by his allurement or discouragements keeping them safe under his dominion, *lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God*, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, *should shine unto them*, enlighten their darkness, and convince and convert their souls. *Note*, (1.) They must be lost from whom the gospel is hid, since it is the only means of salvation. (2.) The devil hath the general sway in this world: and is, though men perceive it not, the real object of their worship. (3.) The way in which Satan's kingdom is maintained in the world is by ignorance, and the prejudices he raises against the glorious gospel of Christ.

3. He declares their integrity. *For we preach not ourselves*, not our own inventions, nor seek to promote our own honour or interests, *but Christ Jesus the Lord*, making him the grand subject of all our discourses, his person, offices, grace, righteousness; *and* owning *ourselves* to be no more than *your servants for Jesus' sake*, whose glory we seek to advance in the salvation of your souls. *For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*, by his almighty word at the beginning, *hath*, by the like divine energy, *shined in our hearts*, dispelling the thick clouds of spiritual darkness, *to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*, as it appears in that glorious gospel of which he is the sum and substance, and wherein all the divine perfections are exalted to the highest. *But we have this treasure* of the gospel *in earthen vessels*, committed to frail, poor, and perishing worms, such as we are, *that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* When such weak instruments are enabled to bear up under all persecutions, and are made so amazingly successful in their labours.

it must with the strongest demonstration be evident, that the work is more than human, even of divine operation. *Note*, (1.) None can illuminate the darkness of a fallen soul but he that at first said, *Let there be light, and there was light.* (2.) The weaker the instruments are, the more is the power and grace of God magnified, who worketh by them, and makes their ministry effectual to the salvation of lost sinners.

o Ch. 1. 8. & 7. 5. Rom. 8. 35, 36. 1 Cor. 10. 13. ch. 1. 10. Is. 46. 4.

† Or *not altogether without help*, or *means*.

p Ps. 37. 24. Is. 43. 2. Job 5. 17—19. ch. 1. 10. & 12. 9. Heb. 13. 5. Is. 41. 10, 14.

q Gal. 6. 17. Rom. 8. 17, 19. 1 Cor. 15. 31. ch. 1. 5, 9. Phil. 3. 10, 11. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 13. & 5. 10.

r Ps. 44. 23. Mat. 5 11. Rom. 8. 36. 1 Cor. 4. 9. & 15. 31, 49. ch. 6. 9. Col. 3. 3, 4. John 14. 19.

s Ch. 13. 9. 1 Cor. 4. 10.

t Acts 15. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 17.

u Ps. 116. 10. ch. 3. 12, 17.

x Rom. 8. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 14. Acts 2. 24. John 11. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 20—23, 45, 49—57.

y Rom. 8. 28. 1 Cor. 3. 21. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 10. ch. 1. 6, 11. Eph. 3. 10, 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11.

z Ver. 1. Ps. 27. 13. & 119. 81. Is. 40. 29—31. & 41. 10—16. & 46. 3, 4.

a Rom. 7. 22. Eph. 3. 16. Col. 3. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 4. Is. 40. 31.

b Rom. 8. 18, 37. Ps. 30. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 4, 7. & 5. 10. Mat. 5. 12 2 Thes. 1. 5. 1 John 3. 2. Ps. 31. 19. Is. 45. 17. & 6. 19, 20.

c Rom. 8. 24. Heb. 11. 1, 26. & 10. 35.

8. ° *We are* troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but † not in despair; 9. ᵖ Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; 10. ᵠ Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 11. ʳ For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. 12. So then ˢ death worketh in us, but life in you. 13. We having ᵗ the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, ᵘ I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; 14. ˣ Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you. 15. ʸ For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God. 16. ᶻ For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet ᵃ the inward *man* is renewed day by day. 17. ᵇ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; 18. While ᶜ we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal: but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

Verses 8—18. Many were the dangers to which, for the gospel's sake, the ministers of Christ were exposed; yet none of these things moved them.

1. Their trials were great. *We are troubled on every side*, with manifold afflictions in every place, *yet not distressed* with anxiety, or discomposed as if we had no way to escape; *we are perplexed*, and in doubt what step to take, *but not in despair* of the Lord's help and interposition; *persecuted* by wicked men with unrelenting malice, *but not forsaken* of God, so as to be given up for a prey to their teeth; *cast down* through the infirmity of our flesh, and the prevalence of fear and unbelief, *but not destroyed* as the wicked, but rising again by grace, and finally triumphant over all the power of evil; *always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus*, carrying the marks of our sufferings, that show that we belong to our crucified Master, who sympathizes with us and counts our griefs his own, *that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body*, He, as the living principle within, sustaining us under all our conflicts. *For we who live* spiritually by his grace, and amidst our continual persecutions are still preserved, *are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake*, each day in jeopardy, and ready to be cut off for the testimony which we bear, *that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh*, it being evidently seen, by the protection he vouchsafes to us, that he is risen and at the right hand of God, and that his Spirit hath quickened us to newness of life, whilst with unshaken courage, patience, and perseverance, in the midst of our sufferings, we desire to finish our course after his example. *So then death worketh in us*, and we, who are Christ's ministering servants, are exposed to the most fatal dangers; *but life in you*, who enjoy its comforts in peace: and even our sufferings, as they are a confirmation of the gospel which we preach, are the means of advancing your spiritual and eternal life.

2. If their trials were great, their supports were greater. (1.) They stood by faith. *We having the same spirit of faith* with the saints of old, which animated the divine Redeemer, and is wrought by the Holy Ghost in us and you; *according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak*, fully persuaded of the heavenly doctrines which we preach, and confident that the Lord will support us in our testimony to his gospel, and fulfil all his promises unto us both in time and eternity. *Note*, They who have true faith will never fail. (2.) They were upheld by the hope of a joyful resurrection. *Knowing* with fullest assurance, *that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus*, in virtue of our union with him, *and shall present us with you* faultless before the throne of his glory; and the expectation of this raises us above the fears of death. (3.) The consciousness that God would be glorified, and men's souls profited, supported and quickened them. *For all things are for your sakes*, all our labours and sufferings ultimately tend to promote your present and eternal happiness; *that the abundant grace*, held forth in our ministrations, *might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God*, who, embracing the gospel, and made partakers of its inestimable blessings, cannot but with ceaseless praises adore and magnify that gracious God, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory. *For which cause we faint not*, but for your sakes, and God's glory, patiently and cheerfully persevere. (4.) Their own souls were profited by their afflictions, which was another reason why they should bear up under them. *But though our outward man perish* through our hardships, labours, and sufferings, *yet the inward man is renewed day by day*, with fresh supplies of grace, strength, and consolation, growing more meet for the eternal world to which we are going: and we may well be content with every outward cross that tends to bring us thus nearer to our crown. (5.) The near and assured prospect of glory was their grand support and comfort. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment*, so faith teaches us to judge; our afflictions are *light*, compared with the weight of glory which we expect; and *momentary*, however long continued through life, if viewed against the eternity which succeeds; and what is more, *it worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* The words are amazingly emphatical, (Καθ' ὑπερβολὴν, εις ὑπερβολὴν, αιωνιον, βαρος δοξης,) and such as no translation can fully render. Steadily therefore we persevere, *while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen*, the glorious objects above, which faith realizes to the soul; *for the things which are seen are temporal*, transitory, and momentary; *but the things which are not seen are eternal*, glorious beyond conception, and to be enjoyed without measure and without end.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle proceedeth in showing the reasons why they did not faint under their afflictions, viz. *their expectation, desire, and assurance of happiness after death*, ver. 1—5. *and maketh an*

inference for the comfort of believers in their present state, ver. 6, 7, 8, *and another to quicken them in their duty,* ver. 9, 10, 11. *Then he maketh an apology for seeming to commend himself, and giveth a good reason for his zeal and diligence,* ver. 12—15. *And mentions two things that are necessary in order to our living to Christ,* viz. *regeneration and reconciliation,* ver. 16. ad finem.

1. FOR we know, that, if [b] our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have [c] a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2. For [d] in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3. [e] If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4. [f] For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 5. Now he that hath [g] wrought us for the self-same thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 6. Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst [h] we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7. [i] (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) 8. We are [k] confident, *I say,* and [l] willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. 9. Wherefore [m] we * labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 10. [n] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; [o] that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. 11. [p] Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but [q] we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

a Ch. 4. 1, 2, 13,16.
b Job 4. 19. 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. ch. 4. 7.
c Heb. 11. 10, 11, 16. ver. 8. Phil. 3. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 17.
d Rom. 8. 23. Phil. 1. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 47. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. John 17. 24.
e Mat. 22. 11. Rom. 13. 14. Gal. 3. 27. Rev. 3. 18. & 12. 1. & 16. 15. & 19. 8, 14. Is. 61. 10.
f Rom. 8. 23. & 7. 24. 1 Cor. 15. 51—55. Is. 25. 8.
g Is. 29. 23. & 43. 20, 21. Rom. 8. 16, 23. Col. 1. 12. ch. 1. 21, 22. ver. 15. Eph. 2. 10. & 4. 30. & 1. 13, 14. 2 Tim. 1. 14. 1 John 3. 24.
h 1 Chr. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. & 119. 19. Phil. 1. 23. Heb. 11. 13. 1. Pet. 2. 11.
i Heb. 11. 1. Gal. 2. 20. Hab. 2. 4. Rom. 8. 24, 25. 1 Cor. 13. 12. ch 3. 18. & 4. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 8. 1 John 3. 2. ver. 6. Deut. 12. 9.
k Heb. 11. 1, 13. ver. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 12. & 4. 7, 8.
l Ver. 2, 4. Phil. 1. 23.
m Rom. 15. 20. 1 Thes. 4. 1, 11. Mat. 25. 21, 23. Luke 19. 17.
* Or *endeavour.*
n Rom. 14. 10—12. Eccl. 12. 14. Acts 10. 42 & 17. 31. Rev. 20. 11, 12. John 5. 22, 27.
o Job 34. 11. Ps. 62. 13. Eccl. 12. 14. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Mat. 16. 27. & 25. 32. Rom. 2. 6—10. 1 Cor. 3. 8. & 4. 5. Gal. 6. 5, 7. Eph. 6. 8. Rev. 2. 20. & 22. 12. & 20. 12, 13.
p Job 31, 23. Heb. 10. 31. Jude 23. Is. 33. 14. Nah. 1. 6. with Col. 1. 28, 29. 2 Tim. 4. 25. Acts 20. 18—27, 31. ch. 12. 5.
q Ch. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 6. 1 Thes. 2. 3—11.

Verses 1—11. No marvel, with such a scene full in his view, the apostle fainted not. He enlarges here on the delightful theme, which cannot but minister something of the like courage and consolation to every gracious soul. We have,

1. The apostle's expectation and desire, which every faithful servant of Jesus can, in a measure, adopt as his own. *For we know,* by the evidence of God's word, the testimony of our conscience, and the witness of the Spirit, *that if our house of this tabernacle,* the frail body in which we as pilgrims at present sojourn for a day, *be dissolved,* and returned to the dust from whence it came, *we have a building of God,* infinitely more magnificent, *a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,* a celestial palace prepared for our everlasting residence, and suited to the excellence of the glorified soul. *For in this* tabernacle of clay *we groan,* loaded with many afflictions, and burdened with many corruptions, *earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven,* and to arrive at the celestial city, where sin nor sorrow shall never enter more. *If so be that,* or *since being* thus *clothed* with robes of light and purity, *we shall not be found naked,* exposed any longer to the storms of this wretched world, but be in eternal joy and felicity. *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened* longing for our perfect state of holiness and happiness, when we shall be for ever released from the burdens of outward afflictions, and indwelling sin; *not for that we would be unclothed,* and wish to part with our bodies, *but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life,* translated as Enoch, or changed in a moment, as their bodies shall be who are alive at the coming of the Lord. *Note,* (1.) Our present abode is a wretched tabernacle that must quickly be taken down; have we an eternal mansion ready to receive the immortal soul? (2.) To a soul that hath ever tasted of the bitterness of sin, and groaned under the trials and temptations of this mortal state, the exchange of worlds is a consummation devoutly to be wished for.

2. The apostle mentions the ground of his expectation and hope. *Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God,* whose mighty energy hath spiritualized our souls, and led them up to seek those high and heavenly things; *who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit,* in his graces, consolations, and abiding residence in our hearts, which seal to us the purchased possession. *Therefore we are always confident* in the assurance of the fulfilment of the divine promises, and of support under all our trials till they shall happily end; *knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord,* and, like pilgrims, distant from our true home and rest. *For we walk by faith, not by sight,* looking above all present objects to the eternal world; and having our hearts influenced, and our conduct regulated accordingly; *we are confident I say,* in the experience of God's present love, and the assurance of his eternal favour, *and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord,* well pleased, if God so ordained, to bid an eternal adieu to all our infirmities and afflictions, and enter immediately into the beatific vision of our Lord. *Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.* This is our holy ambition, so to be found in him, sprinkled with his blood, clothed with his righteousness, and walking under the influence of his grace, that now, and in the day of his appearing and glory, both our persons and services may meet with his approbation. *Note,* (1.) None enter the heavenly world, but those who have the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts, and are made meet for the inheritance among the saints in light. (2.) Faith in God's promises inspires confidence of the fulfilment; we know we have not followed cunningly devised fables. (3.) They who have seen the glories of a better world, and are assured of their portion there, cannot but with pleasure look forward to the happy change. (4.) The more sure our hope of heaven is, the more enlightened will be our diligence in the way that leads thither.

3. He reminds them of the awful day which approached, as a spur to himself, and a warning to them. *For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,* where without disguise every man's real character will appear, *that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;* admitting graciously to the reward of eternal blessedness, or sinking under righteous vengeance into the abyss of endless misery. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord,* and the fearful end of the hypocrite and ungodly, *we persuade men* by every alarming and alluring motive, to fly from the wrath to come, and embrace the gospel which we proclaim. *But* whether they will hear or forbear, *we are made manifest to God,* who knows our simplicity in all our ministrations, *and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences;* for our labours and sufferings bear witness to the unfeigned concern we have shown for your souls. *Note,* (1.) The sense of an approaching judgment

should awaken a holy solicitude to be ready for it. (2.) The terrors of the Lord his ministers must use, to rouse the lethargic sinner, and urge him to fly from his impending ruin.

r Ch. 1. 14. & 3. 1. & 10. 8. & 11. 2—15.
† Or *in the face.*
s Ch. 11. 1, 16, 17. & 12. 6, 11. with 1 Cor. 10. 31. & 4. 3, 4. & 9. 17—23. 2 Tim. 2. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 3—11.
t Luke 7. 47. 1 John 4. 10, 19. Psa. 110. 3. Song 1. 4. Rom. 5. 1. 1 Tim. 2. 6. John 11. 51, 52. 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2.
u Rom. v, vi. & 14. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 5. 10. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 1. 4. & 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Eph. 5. 2—17. Luke 1. 74.

12. For [r] we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory [†] in appearance, and not in heart. 13. For whether we be [s] beside ourselves, *it is* to God; or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause. 14. For [t] the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15. [u] And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not hence-forth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Verses 12—15. The apostle,

1. Prevents an insinuation which might have been suggested by his enemies, as if he meant to commend himself. *For we commend not ourselves again unto you*, nor speak this with a view to ingratiate ourselves into your good opinion, *but to give you occasion to glory in our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them who glory in appearance, and not in heart*, furnishing you with arguments to silence the vain boastings of those Judaizing teachers, who would malign and traduce us. *For whether we be beside ourselves*, and in our zeal for the gospel talk as men distracted, as they would insinuate, *it is to God*, and for his glory, that we thus speak; *or if we be sober*, and, as the wiser part among you justly think, say nothing but the words of truth and soberness, *it is for your cause*, whose salvation we seek to promote.

2. He declares the noble principle which influenced his preaching and practice. *For the love of God constraineth us, because we thus judge*, and have determined, on maturest deliberation, *that if one died for all*, for sinners of all degrees, whether Jews or Gentiles, without distinction, *then were all dead*, alike in need of his redemption, by nature the children of wrath, and under the curse of a broken law, or all those for whom he died, became mystically dead in him, delivered from the curse and condemnation of the law, by his suffering the penalty in their stead; *and that he died for all, that they which live* redeemed by his blood, and quickened by his Spirit, *should not henceforth live unto themselves*, for their own ease, interests, or honour, *but unto him who died for them, and rose again*, devoting themselves to his blessed service, who purchased them at so dear a rate. *Note*, (1.) A sense of Christ's love upon the heart is the only genuine principle of true obedience. (2.) We then truly live, when the Redeemer's glory is made the grand aim of all our conversation.

x Mat. 12. 50. John 15. 14. Gal. 5. 4 & 6. 15. Phil. 3. 8—14. Col. 3. 11. with 1 Cor. 10. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 12. Jam. 2. 1. John 20. 17. & 6. 63. & 7. 5.
y 1 Cor. 1. 30. Eph. 2. 10 & 1. 3. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. John 3. 3, 5, 6. Ezek. 36. 26. Eph. 4. 23, 24. Col. 3. 10. Is. 65. 17. Rom. 6. 4—6. & 8. 9. 10. ch. 4. 16. Is. 43. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 24. Mat. 16. 24. Rev. 21. 5. ‡ Or *let him be.*
z Rom. 11. 36. John 3. 16. Jam. 1. 17. Rom. 5. 10. Eph. 2. 16. Col. 1. 20. 1 John. 2. 2. & 4. 9, 10. Rom. 5. 21—26.

16. [x] Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more. 17. Therefore, [y] if any man *be* in Christ, ‡ *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18. [z] And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19. To wit, that [b] God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath [c] committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20. Now then we are [d] ambassadors for Christ, as though [e] God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21. [f] For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who [g] knew no sin; [h] that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

a Mark 16. 15, 16. Mat. 28. 19. Rom. 1. 5. & 15. 19.
b Rom. 3. 24—26. Ps. 32. 1, 2. Is. 43. 25. & 44. 22.
c Or *put in us*, ver. 8.
d Mat. 2. 7. Job 33. 23. ch. 3. 6. Eph. 6. 20.
e 2 Kin. 17. 13. 2 Chr. 36. 15. Neh. 9. 29. Jer. 44. 4. Mat. 28. 19, 20. Mark 1. 5. Mat. 10. 40.
f Is. 53. 4—6, 10—12. Dan. 9. 24. Zech. 13. 7. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. Mat. 20. 28. John 1. 29. Rom. 3. 24, 25. & 4. 25. & 5. 6, 8. & 8. 3. Gal. 3. 13. Eph. 5. 2. 1 John 2. 2. & 4. 9, 10. Ps. xxii, lxix.
g Is. 53. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 22. & 1. 19. Heb. 7. 25. Luke 1. 35. 1 John 3. 5. John 14. 30. & 8. 46, 49. Mat. 3. 15.
h Is. 42. 21. & 45. 24, 25. & 53. 4, 5, 11. & 56. 17. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Dan. 9. 24. Rom. 1. 17. & 3. 21—26. & 8. 1—4. & 5. 15—21. & 4. 24, 25. & 10. 4. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Phil. 3. 9. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 9. & 7. 14. & 19. 8, 14.

Verses 16—21. From the foregoing premises,

1. The apostle determines, without respect of persons, to preach the gospel alike to Jews and Gentiles, who are both redeemed by the same Lord. *Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh*, paying no regard to any external privileges of descent from Abraham, or circumcision; *yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh*, and formerly thought during his abode on earth, that he was come to erect a temporal kingdom, and exalt the Jewish nation to the pinnacle of human glory, *yet now henceforth know we him no more;* these foolish prejudices are removed: we have got an acquaintance with the spiritual nature of his salvation, and know that the great design for which he became incarnate was to advance the divine glory in the recovery of lost souls, whether Jews or Gentiles, without distinction, even of as many as should believe in his name.

2. He urges, as the main point of Christianity, a real change of heart. *Therefore if any man be in Christ*, vitally united to him, *he is a new creature*, though the same person, yet morally so renewed in the spirit of his mind, and in understanding, will, and affections so spiritualized, that he is quite different from his former self: *old things are passed away;* his naturally corrupt principles and practices are laid aside, and *behold*, with wonder the amazing alteration! *all things are become new;* he hath new light in his mind; a new bias given to his will and affections; his whole course of life is altered; his principles, prospects, ways, thoughts, pursuits, company, are as directly opposite to what they were before, as if he were really another man. Reader, hast thou experienced this change?

3. This new creation is God's work, and wrought by means of his gospel. *And all things are of God, who* planned and executed the wondrous scheme of our salvation, and *hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ*, through his atoning blood and justifying righteousness, *and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ*, according to his eternal counsels, *reconciling the world*, Gentiles as well as Jews, *unto himself*, by that amazing expedient of the substitution of his own Son in the sinner's stead, *not imputing their trespasses unto them*, but laying upon him the iniquities of us all! *and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation*, that we should publish this gospel of peace to every creature. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ*, sent in his name, to heal the dangerous breach between the holy God and the sinful soul, *as though God did beseech you by us*, under whose commission we act with authority, and speak in his name; *we pray you*, by every endearing argument, as you value your immortal souls, and urge you *in Christ's stead*, whose person we represent, and whose gospel we minister, *be ye reconciled to God;* submit to his righteousness, accept his proffered pardon and grace; bow humbly at

his feet; without reserve yield up yourselves to him, that the reconciliation may be mutual, and the friendship perpetual. *For he hath made him to be sin*, a sin-offering, *for us, who knew no sin* of his own, but willingly took our iniquities upon himself, and suffered for them, making a full atonement and satisfaction to the justice of God, *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, by virtue of our union with him, interested in his everlasting righteousness, accepted and regarded of God for ever as complete and perfect, and entitled thereby to eternal life and glory. My soul with wonder and delight hear and embrace these glad tidings; be thy sins all laid at Jesus' feet, and in his righteousness arrayed thou mayest boldly appear in the presence of God!

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle, (1.) *Giveth an account of his general errand to all that he preached unto; with the several arguments and methods he used,* ver. 1—10. (2.) *He addresses himself particularly to the Corinthians, giving them good cautions, with much affection and strong arguments,* ver. 11—16.

a 1 Cor. 3. 9. ch. 5. 18—20.
b Heb. 12. 15. ch. 11. 2. Tit. 2. 11. Acts 14. 3. ch. 5. 18, 19.
c Is. 49. 8. & 61. 2. Luke 4. 19. & 19. 5, 9, 42, 44. Rom. 13. 11. Heb. 3. 7, 13. & 4. 7.
d Rom. 14. 13. 1 Cor. 8. 9, 13. & 9. 12, 22. & 10. 23, 32. Acts 24. 16. ch. 1. 12.
e 1 Thes. 2. 3—11. Mat. 18. 6, 7. 2 Tim. 2. 15. & 4. 2, 5. Col. 4. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 1—4. Rev. 3 10. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2, 9—13. ch. 1. 4, 12. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 5. 11. & 11. 6. & 12. 10. 2 Tim. 2 10. & 3. 10—12. Rom. 2. 29. & 8. 35.
* Or *commending.*
f Ch. 11. 23—27. 1 Cor. 4. 9—12. 2 Tim. 3. 10—12. Acts 13. 50. & 14. 5, 19. & 16. 22, 24. & 17. 5. & 18. 12. & 19. 23. & 22. 22—24. 1 Cor. 15. 10, 58. Phil. 4. 12. Col. 1. 29. 1 Thes. 2. 9. & 3. 5. 1 Tim. 4. 10—16.
† Or *in tossings to and fro.*
g 1 Cor. 4. 12. & 7. 7. & 9. 22. Acts 20. 26, 27. ch. 4. 2. & 11 2, 28. & 12. 14, 15. 1 Tim. 5. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 2—11.
h 1 Cor. 2. 4. ch. 10. 4, 5. & 4. 2. & 1. 12. & 12. 12. Eph. 6. 11, 13. 2 Tim. 4. 7. i 1 Cor. 4. 7—12. Mat. 10. 25. & 27. 63. John. 7. 12. Acts 17. 33.
k Ch. 4. 2. & 5. 11. Ps. 118. 18. Is. 26. 19. Rom. 8. 36. 1 Cor. 4. 9. & 15. 31, 32. ch. 1. 8 & 4. 10, 11. & 11. 6. Gal. 6. 17. l Mat. 5. 12. Acts 5. 41. & 16. 25. Heb. 10. 34. Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 2. & 2. 5. m Prov. 13. 7. & 17. 1. Mat. 6. 32, 33. Luke 18. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 1. 5. & 16. 17. & 3. 21, 22. ch. 8. 9. & 11. 8, 9. & 2. 20. Phil. 4. 11, 18. Mark 10. 28—30. 1 Tim. 4. 8.

1. WE then, *as* [a] workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that [b] ye receive not the grace of God in vain. 2. [c] (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.) 3. [d] Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: 4. But [e] in all *things* * approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, 5. [f] In stripes, † in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; 6. [g] By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, 7. [h] By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, 8. [i] By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and *yet* true; 9. [k] As unknown, and *yet* well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; 10. [l] As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; [m] as having nothing, and *yet* possessing all things.

Verses 1—10. We have here an account,

1. Of the general exhortation which, as ambassadors for Christ, Paul and his fellow-labourers addressed to all their hearers. *We then as workers together with him*, as the instruments he employs in calling lost sinners to a state of reconciliation with God, *beseech you also*, among others to whom we are sent, *that ye receive not the grace of God in vain*, nor slight his gospel, remaining empty professors, instead of actually possessing the power and life of godliness. *For he saith*, addressing his Son, the Messiah, Isa. xlix. 8. *I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee:* answering his prayers, as most acceptable before him, and supplying him with the needful strength to finish his arduous undertaking for the complete redemption of his people: *behold, now is the accepted time*, when the sinners of every nation are invited to partake of the blessings he hath purchased, and are sure of acceptance with God through his dear Son; *behold, now is the day of salvation;* seize therefore the present moment, and fly for refuge to Jesus the hope set before you, and then you will be saved with an everlasting salvation. *Note*, (1.) To-day God invites, to-day we should hear and obey; no moment is to be trifled with: every breath we draw is precarious; to-morrow may not belong to time, but to eternity. What an awakening consideration! How are we called to improve the present *NOW!* (2.) Ministers must with importunity and eagerness urge upon dying men the necessity of attending instantly to the things of their everlasting peace, before they be hid from their eyes.

2. Of their carefulness to avoid every occasion of offence, *giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:* behaving so discreetly, both among Jews and Gentiles, as to give neither any ground of prejudice against that gospel which we preach, *but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God*, becoming the character we bear: *in much patience*, meekly resigned, and steadily persevering; *in afflictions*, of various kinds, which we suffer for our workS' sake; *in necessities*, wanting even food and raiment; *in distresses*, from which we see no way to extricate ourselves; *in stripes*, beaten both in the synagogues and before the heathen tribunals; *in imprisonments*, cast into dungeons; *in tumults*, from outrageous mobs; *in labours*, unceasing; *in watchings, in fastings*, having our rest broken, and our provision scanty, and sometimes voluntarily denying ourselves food and sleep on a religious account. And in these sufferings we are supported *by pureness*, acting with the greatest simplicity of intention, and integrity of conduct; *by knowledge*, fully acquainted with the truths which we deliver; *by long-suffering*, bearing with the perverseness and provocations of opposers; *by kindness*, in temper and manners gentle and courteous; *by the Holy Ghost*, of whose gifts, graces, and consolations we abundantly partake; *by love unfeigned* to God and man; *by the word of truth*, which unadulterated we deliver; *by the power of God*, whose everlasting arms are under us, and who, in the miracles he enables us to work, bears testimony to our doctrine; *by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left*, furnished out of the armoury of God with every thing necessary for our spiritual warfare; *by honour and dishonour*, not elated with the high esteem of some, nor discouraged by the insolent contempt of others; *by evil report and good report*, mentioned with great commendation by our friends, and branded with the most infamous slanders by our enemies; *as deceivers*, so treated by many, *and yet true*, proved and found faithful to Christ, and the souls of men; *as unknown*, represented as men of no figure and despicable, *yet well known*, those who are best acquainted with us, are sensible of our real characters, of our importance and usefulness; *as dying*, and every hour in jeopardy, *and behold we live*, amidst all our dangers; *as chastened* from the Lord, and by the hands of men, *and not killed*, immortal till God's time comes; *as sorrowful*, under manifold temptations, *yet always rejoicing* in a sense of the divine love and favour; *as poor* in this world, *yet making many rich*, in spiritual and eternal treasures; *as having nothing*, that here we can call our own, dependent on Providence for daily bread, *and yet possessing all things*, having a present fulness in the contentment we enjoy, blessed with all the internal riches of grace, and holding firm a sure title to the eternal riches of glory.

11. O *ye* Corinthians, [n] our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. 12. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. 13. Now, for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto [o] *my* children,) be ye also enlarged. 14. Be ye not [p] unequally yoked together with unbelievers: [q] for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15. And [r] what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16. And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for [s] ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, [t] I will dwell in them, and walk in *them;* and [u] I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17. [x] Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing;* and I will receive you, 18. [y] And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

n Ch. 2. 2, 3. & 7. 3. & 12. 14, 15. 1 Thes. 2. 1—11.
o 1 Cor. 4. 14, 15. & 3. 10. Gal. 4. 12—19. Is. 8. 18.
p Lev. 19. 19. Deut. 7. 2. 5. & 22. 9. Ps. 106. 35. 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11. & 7. 39.
q Ps. 5. 1—7. 1 Kin. 18. 21. Prov. 29. 27. 1 Cor. 10. 14. Eph. 5. 7, 11. Deut. 22. 10.
r 1 Sam. 5. 3, 7. Deut. 14. 27. & 18. 1. Josh. 22. 25. 1 Kin. 18. 21. Acts 8. 21. 1 Cor. 10. 7.
s 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. Eph. 2. 21. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5.
t Lev. 26. 12. Ezek. 36. 28. & 37. 26, 27. Rev. 22. 3.
u Gen. 17. 7. Jer. 31. 33. & 30. 22. & 24. 7. & 32. 38. Ezek. 11. 20. & 36. 28, 37. Zech. 8. 8. & 13. 9.
x Is. 52. 11. Jer. 51. 6. Zech. 2. 6. Acts 2. 40. Rev. 18. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 20. ch. 7. 1. with Lev. 11. 24, 29. & 21. 11.
y Jer. 31. 1, 9, 33. Rev. 21. 7. 2 Sam. 7. 14.

Verses 11—18. The apostle's heart glowed with warm affection, and he cannot but unbosom himself. *O ye Corinthians, our mouth is opened unto you, our heart is enlarged:* we speak with the greatest freedom, and long for your salvation. *Ye are not straitened in us;* we love you ardently: we would keep back nothing from you that could promote your spiritual and eternal interests; *but ye are straitened in your own bowels,* and fail to make the suitable returns of gratitude, nor are open to receive the blessings we communicate. *Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto my children,* from whom I may justly expect the strongest filial regard,) *be ye also enlarged,* in mutual love towards us your faithful ministers, and in your cordial reception of that blessed gospel, with all its precious doctrines and inestimable privileges, which we declare unto you. As a father then I admonish you, for the credit of your profession, and for the good of your own souls, *Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,* intermarrying with the unconverted heathen; or otherwise entering into near and close connections with them, particularly not joining in any of their religious services; *for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?* What holy friendship can subsist between a renewed and an unsanctified soul? *And what communion* in society and converse *hath* the enlightened Christian with the unawakened sinner, any more than *light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?* What harmony can subsist between the members of Christ and the children of the wicked one? *Or what part* or lot *hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* How can the worshippers of the true Jehovah, and who are themselves his living temple, join with heathens in their idolatrous worship? How absurd is it, and incongruous? *for ye are the temple of the living God,* where his Divine Spirit is pleased to take up his abode! *as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them,* in a nobler sense than he ever was in his temple of old, blessing them with his presence and abiding communion; *and I will be their God* in an everlasting covenant, in which all my perfections are engaged to make them happy, *and they shall be my people,* effectually engaged to give themselves up to my service, and, by my power and grace, made such as I would have them be. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate* from all unnecessary intercourse and familiarity with the surrounding heathen, *saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;* keep at the greatest possible distance from idolatry, and every abomination, *and I will receive you* as my peculiar people, *and I will be a Father unto you,* showing you the most endeared affection, *and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty,* admitted to that high dignity and most inestimable privilege. *Note,* (1.) A child of God must separate himself from the ways and manners of a world that lieth in wickedness. (2.) God cannot bear a rival in our hearts; no idols must be harboured there. (3.) The covenant of grace saith, *I will* and *you shall;* for it is entirely God's work, that we are conformed to his will.

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

This chapter begins with an exhortation to progressive holiness, and a due regard to the ministers of the gospel, ver. 1—4. *Then the apostle returns from a long digression to speak further of the affair concerning the incestuous person, and tells them what comfort he received in his distress about that matter upon his meeting with Titus,* ver. 5, 6, 7. *and how he rejoiced in their repentance, with the evidences thereof,* ver. 8—11. *And, lastly, he concludes with endeavouring to comfort the Corinthians, upon whom his admonitions had had so good an effect,* ver. 12—16.

1. [a] HAVING therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2. [b] Receive us: [c] we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man. 3. [d] I speak not *this* to condemn *you:* for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with *you.* 4. [e] Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, great *is* my glorying of you: [f] I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. 5. [g] For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears. 6. Nevertheless [h] God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus: 7. And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us [i] your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more. 8. [k] For, though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though *it were* but for a season. 9. [l] Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but

a Ch. 6. 16—18. Rom. 5. 20, 21. & 6. 1—23. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. & 3. 11—14. Luke 1. 74, 75. 1 John 3. 1—3. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 20. Tit. 2. 11—14. Phil. 2. 12, 13. & 3. 8—14. Mat. 5. 8. 1 Tim. 4. 8.
b Mat. 10. 14, 40. 2 John 10. 3 John 10.
c Acts 20. 33. ch. 4. 2. 1 Thes. 2. 5. Rom. 16. 18. 1 Cor. 6. 12, 18. & 10. 33. ch. 1. 12. & 2. 17. & 6. 3—12. & 11. 7, 13. & 12. 13, 17. Gal. 4. 17. 2 Thes. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 4—11. 2 Tim. 3. 2—6. Tit. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 14. Jude 11, 16.
d 1 Cor. 4. 14. ch. 3. 3, 4. & 6. 11, 12.
e 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 6. 1. ch. 3. 12. & 9. 2. & 6. 11—13. 1 Thes. 2. 19.
f Col. 1. 24. Jam. 1. 2. ch. 6. 10. & 2. 14. John 16. 33. Phil. 2. 17. Mat. 5. 12. Acts 5. 41. Rom. 5. 3.
g Acts 16. 19, 23. 1 Cor. 2. 3. & 15. 32. ch. 2. 13. & 4. 8—12. & 6. 4—10. & 11. 2, 3, 23—28. & 12. 20.
h Ch. 1. 3, 4. 1 Thes. 3. 6. 2 Thes. 2. 16, 17. Deut. 33. 25. & 32. 36. ch. 2. 13. Gen. 22. 14.
i Prov. 28. 23. & 9. 8, 9. & 27. 5. Ps. 141. 5. Mat. 18. 15.
k 1 Cor. 4. 18—21. ver. 6, 11. ch. 2. 4.
l Jer. 31. 18—20. Luke 15. 6, 7, 9, 10, 24, 32. 1 Pet. 2. 10.

that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry [m] after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. 10. [n] For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of: [o] but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11. For, behold, this self-same thing, * that [p] ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing of yourselves, yea, *what* indignation, yea, *what* fear, yea, *what* vehement desire, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge! In all *things* ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

m Or *according to God.* Ver. 10, 11. Acts 20. 21. Is. 55. 7.

n 2 Sam. 12. 13. Mat. 26. 75. Luke 18. 13. Jer. 31. 18—28.

o Mat. 27. 4, 5. Heb. 12. 17. Prov. 17. 22. & 15. 13, 15.

p 1 Cor. 5. 2. Acts 11. 18. Is. 57. 15. & 66. 2. Jer. 3. 12, 13. & 22. 23, 24. & 31. 18, 19. & 50. 4, 5. Ezek. 6. 9. & 7. 16. & 16. 63. & 36. 31. Zech. 12. 10—14. 1 Cor. 5. 13.

* Rather, *Now consider the very circumstance of your being led to contrition after, &c.*

Verses 1—11. Having mentioned the amazingly rich and gracious promises of God, he makes here,

1. An inference from them. *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,* avoiding every kind of intemperance or uncleanness, which would pollute our bodies, and mortifying the inward abominations of pride, malice, falsehood, &c. which defile the soul, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God,* growing in grace, and going on till ultimately our course shall be completed in sinless perfection.

2. He returns from the digression he had made to vindicate himself and his fellow-labourers from the slanders of the false teachers. *Receive us* with cordial regard; *we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man;* our principles have been according to God's word, and our practice upright and unblameable. *I speak not this to condemn you,* reflecting on you as a body, as having traduced us: *for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you;* such confidence have we in you, and such warm affection towards you. *Great is my boldness of speech towards you,* in censuring the disorders among you; *great is my glorying of you,* as, in general, obedient children, and ornaments to your profession. *I am filled with comfort* in you; *I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation,* to hear the late gracious accounts from you. *For when we were come into Macedonia,* in search of Titus, *our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side,* not only with the opposition of our enemies, but with the anxiety of our minds on your account; *without were fightings* from our foes, *within were fears* for you, lest you should be removed from the simplicity which is in Christ. *Nevertheless, God that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus,* whose arrival revived our drooping hearts; *and not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you,* by the affectionate and respectful reception he met with at Corinth, *when he told us your earnest desire* to obey our injunctions, *your mourning* for the offences which had been committed, *your fervent mind towards me,* vindicating with zeal my character against the false teachers, and longing for my coming, *so that I rejoiced the more,* and his report exceedingly heightened the pleasure of his arrival. *For though I made you sorry with a letter,* wherein I was constrained to use sharp rebukes, *I do not repent, though I did repent,* and grieved exceedingly, even at the time, that I should be necessitated to use such severity; *for I perceive the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season,* and engaged you immediately to correct what was amiss. *Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry;* in that I could have no satisfaction, and sympathized tenderly with you; *but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner,* mourning over your unfaithfulness, and returning in deep humility to God, *that ye might receive damage by us in nothing,* but contrariwise be abundantly profited. *For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of;* and what hath such a gracious effect cannot but in the issue prove matter of the most solid satisfaction; *but the sorrow of the world,* which men of earthly minds feel, on account of the losses and crosses here below, *worketh death,* driving them to despair, impairing their health, and sometimes even causing them to lay violent hands on themselves. *For behold this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort,* what a blessed influence it had upon you! *what carefulness it wrought in you* to remove the cause of offence; *yea, what clearing of yourselves* from any connivance of iniquity, *yea, what indignation* against what was evil in yourselves, or in the notorious delinquent; *yea, what fear* of God, and jealousy for yourselves: *yea, what vehement desire* to make a thorough reformation of all disorders; *yea, what zeal* for God's glory, and the honour of your holy profession; *yea, what revenge,* punishing with due severity the criminal. *In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter;* by your ready amendment. *Note,* (1.) Godly sorrow is the most profitable physic for the soul. (2.) Whatever bitterness we may have tasted, we shall never at last repent of that which worketh repentance unto salvation.

12. Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, [q] *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, † but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you. 13. Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, [r] because his spirit was refreshed by you all. 14. For [s] if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting which *I made* before Titus, is found a truth. 15. And his [t] inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the [u] obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. 16. [x] I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all *things*.

q 1 Cor. 5. 1. with ch. 2. 9.

† It would appear from this that the injured father was still alive. Michaelis, however, thinks that by the injured person, Paul here meant himself.

r Ver. 15. ch. 8. 16.

s Ch. 1. 12, 19. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 6. 7.

t Gr. *bowels.* Ver. 13. Phil. 2. 20.

u Ch. 2. 9. & 9. 13. Phil. 2. 2, 12.

x Phil. 2. 12. 1 Thes. 3. 4. Philem. 21. ch. 2. 9. & 10. 1—8.

Verses 12—16. Since his admonition had so good an effect, the apostle cannot but rejoice. *Wherefore, though I wrote unto you* with some sharpness, *I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong,* not merely that the incestuous person should be punished, *nor for his sake that suffered wrong,* out of any partial favour to his injured father, *but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you,* and the church be preserved from scandal. *Therefore we were comforted in your comfort,* the peace and purity of your society being restored: *yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all,* by the kind, obedient, respectful, and affectionate behaviour which you showed towards him. *For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed* of the character I gave you; *but as we spake all things to you in truth,* in simplicity and godly sincerity, *even so our boasting which I made before Titus is found a truth,* and the commendation I gave you hath been proved to be but just. *And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all* to my apostolic injunctions, *how with fear and trembling ye received him,* with deepest reverence and holy jealousy, lest you should not

duly profit by his advice. *I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things*, that you will continue to obey my admonitions, and to refresh my spirit by your dutiful and becoming conduct on every occasion. *Note*, It is a singular comfort to a minister, that he hath confidence in the fidelity of his people.

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter he acquainteth the Corinthians with, and commendeth, the good examples of the Macedonians in their work of charity, and that Titus was sent to Corinth to collect their bounty, ver. 1—6. *He then proceedeth to urge this duty with several cogent arguments*, ver. 7—15. *and commendeth the persons that were employed in this affair*, ver. 16—24.

1. MOREOVER, brethren, * we do you to wit of [a] the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; 2. How that, [b] in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. 3. [c] For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, *they were* willing of themselves; 4. Praying us with much entreaty [d] that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 5. [e] And *this they did*, not as we hoped, [f] but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God: 6. [g] Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same [h] grace also.

* Gr. *we must inform you.*

a Rom. 15. 25. Gal. 2. 10. ver. 2—7, 10, 19, 20. ch. 9. 1, 5, 9, 12—14.

b 1 Thes. 1. 6. & 2. 14. Mark 12. 44. Rom. 5. 3. & 12. 8, 12. ch. 7. 5. & 9. 11. Jam. 2. 5.

c Acts 11. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 16. 2. ch. 9. 6, 7.

d Acts 11. 29. Rom. 15. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 16. 1. ch. 9. 1. Heb. 6. 10.

e Ver. 3. with Acts 11. 29. 1 Cor. 16. 2.

f Is. 44. 4, 5. Jer. 50. 5. Ps. 116. 16. Mat. 25. 40. Phil. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 16.

g Ch. 12. 18. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

h Ver. 1, 4, 7. 14, 19, 20. ch. 9. 1, 5, 9, 12—14. Phil. 4. 15, 18.

Verses 1—6. As the brethren in Judea had undergone peculiar sufferings, and were reduced to great poverty, the Gentile churches, at the instigation of the apostles, had made a collection for their relief. The churches of Macedonia had begun it, and the churches of Achaia ought not to be backward in so good a work.

1. The apostle acquaints them with the generous conduct of the Macedonian brethren. *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia*, inclining them to exercise their generous benevolence; *how that in a great trial of affliction*, amidst sore persecutions, *the abundance of their joy* in the Holy Ghost, *and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality*, and set off with great lustre, their distinguished charity. *For to their power (I bear record) yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves*, needing no instigation, but *praying us, with much entreaty, that we would receive the gift* of their kind alms, *and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints*, distributing their bounty to the Christians in Judea. *And this they did, not as we hoped* merely, *but* with a noble generosity, far exceeding our most sanguine expectations; they *first gave their own selves to the Lord*, solemnly surrendering themselves, and all their possessions, to his glory, *and unto us by the will of God*, resolving to be directed by us as his ministering servants, according to his revealed word. *Note*, (1.) The grace of God opens the heart with love, and the hand with liberality. A lively Christian will rather go beyond his power, than be backward in acts of piety and charity. (2.) They who have truly given themselves to the Lord, will hold back nothing from him which may serve to promote his glory and the interests of his kingdom.

2. He recommended it to Titus, who had been so acceptable to them before, to go and finish what he had begun, exciting them to the exercise of the *same grace* of liberality, which had so eminently appeared in the Macedonian churches. *Note*, The success of our designs, in a great measure, depends upon the choice of proper instruments.

7. Therefore, as ye [i] abound in every *thing*, *in* faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and *in* your love to us, *see* that ye abound in this grace also. 8. [k] I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. 9. For [l] ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, † that ye through his poverty might be rich. 10. [m] And herein I give *my* advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be ‡ forward a year ago. 11. Now therefore perform the doing *of it;* that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have. 12. For [n] if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not. 13. [o] For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and you burdened: 14. But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want; that there may be equality: 15. As it is written, [p] He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack.

i 1 Cor. 1. 5. & xii xiv. ch. 7. 7, 11 Phil. 1. 9—11.

k 1 Cor. 7. 6, 12, 25, 40. Phil. 4. 11, 14—18. ver. 24.

l John 10. 30. Ps. 24. 1. & 50. 12. Heb. 1. 2. Phil. 2. 6—8. Mat. 20. 28. & 8. 20. Gal. 4. 4—6. & 3. 13, 14. ch. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. Eph. 5. 2. Gal. 2. 20. 1 John 4. 9, 10. & 3. 5, 8.

† The Biblical use of the verb here demands that we understand it in the sense to *become poor*, from a previous better condition. Hence an argument for the pre-existence of Christ.

m See ver. 8. Prov. 19. 17. Mat. 10. 42. Heb. 13. 16. ch. 9. 2. ver. 11. 1 Cor. 16. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 18.

‡ Gr. *willing.*

n Ch. 9. 7. Exod. 35. 6. Prov. 19. 22. & 3. 28. Mark 12. 43. Luke 21. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 10. Heb. 11. 17. & 13. 16.

o Acts 4. 34. Mat. 7. 12.

p Exod. 16. 18. Luke xii.

Verses 7—15. The apostle proceeds to excite the Corinthians to give liberally to the necessities of their brethren, by the most persuasive arguments.

1. Their eminence in other gifts and graces should make them ambitious to excel in this. *Therefore as*, or *but as ye abound in every thing*, great and gracious, *in faith, in utterance, and* eloquence, in clear *knowledge* of the mysteries of the gospel, *and in all diligence*, to advance the Redeemer's cause and interest; *and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also*, of Christian liberality. And this *I speak not by commandment*, as particularly ordered of God, or by my apostolic authority; *but* rather recommend it to you, *by occasion of the forwardness of others*, that you may not come behind them in any spiritual attainments; *and to prove the sincerity of your love* to Jesus and to his poor members for his sake. *Note*, (1.) We should be ashamed to be outdone in liberality by those who have less ability than ourselves. (2.) Where our love to Jesus is sincere, it will appear by a readiness to every good word and work.

2. He urges the example of the great Redeemer. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, the greatness of his love to

poor and perishing souls; *that though he was rich* in uncreated glory, the Maker and Governor of all things; *yet for your sakes he became poor;* so poor, as to want a house of his own to cover him when alive, and, when dead, was indebted to the charity of a friend for a grave. And to this he submitted, *that ye through his poverty might be rich;* filled with all the treasures of his grace here, and his glory hereafter: therefore standing so indebted to him, how could they withhold a pittance of their perishing goods from his necessitous saints and their brethren?

3. Their promising beginnings called for a suitable conclusion. *And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you,* and becoming the high rank in which you stand, *who have begun before, not only to do* something by way of such a collection, *but also to be forward a year ago,* testifying the greatest readiness to concur in this generous service. *Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have,* that your practice may correspond with your professions, and your contributions be according to your abilities; *for if there be first a willing mind,* and real charity in the heart, the gift is *accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not;* for it is not the sum contributed, so much as the spirit from whence it proceeds, that God regards.

4. Since the divine providence had favoured them with abundance of worldly goods, they were peculiarly obliged to liberal distribution to the poor. *For I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened;* either that you should impoverish yourselves, to enrich the poor in Judea; or that other churches should be excused, and you alone be called upon to bear the whole charge of their necessary relief: no, *but by an equality,* proportioning your gifts to your abilities, *that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that,* if by the strange vicissitudes of divine providence you should be hereafter reduced, and they prosperous, *their abundance may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality,* in the mutual beneficence exercised towards each other. *As it is written,* concerning the manna, *He that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack;* each had their omer; what remained to those who had gathered more being given to supply the wants of the aged and infirm, who had gathered less. In like manner should we who abound, reckon our superfluities as the debt we owe to the indigent.

16. [q] But thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. 17. [r] For indeed he accepted the exhortation: but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you. 18. And we have sent with him [s] the brother, whose praise *is* in the gospel * throughout all the churches; 19. And not *that* only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this [t] grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration of* your ready mind: 20. [u] Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: 21. [x] Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. 22. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which ‡ *I have* in you. 23. Whether *any do enquire* of Titus, [y] *he is* my partner and fellow-helper concerning you: or our brethren *be enquired of, they are* the messengers of the churches *and* the glory of Christ. 24. Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, [z] the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

q Phil. 4. 6. Col. 3. 17. Eph. 5. 20.

r Ch. 12. 18. ver. 6, 16. 1 Chr. 29. 2, 3, 6.

s Ch. 12. 18. ver. 22, 23. Acts 15. 22, 25. Generally supposed to have been St Luke. But some think it was Barnabas; and others, Mark.

* That is, in teaching the gospel.

t Or *gift.* See ver. 1, 4, 6. ch. 7. 14, 20. & 9. 1, 5, 9, 12, 13. Phil. 4. 15—18.

u 1 Cor. 16. 3, 4. Mat. 10. 16. Eph. 5. 15.

x Prov. 3. 4. Acts 24. 16. Rom. 12. 17. Phil. 4. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 12.

‡ Or rather, *which he hath.*

y Ch. 7. 6. & 12. 18. Phil. 2. 25. John 15. 8. ch. 1. 20.

z Ver. 8. ch. 7. 14. & 9. 2.

Verses 16—24. The apostle here,

1. Thanks God, who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus, to engage them in this blessed work, so that he needed no entreaty to undertake the journey; but full of zeal, as the apostle himself, for the honour of the Corinthian brethren, and for the relief of the poor, he was a volunteer in the service, and under a divine direction readily undertook to go. *Note,* Readiness to a good work shows the temper right.

2. He commends to them a brother, who accompanied Titus. *We have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches,* for his fidelity and zeal in the ministry; *and not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace,* or free gift, *which is administered by us,* and to be distributed to the necessitous in Judea, *to the glory of the same Lord,* who is hereby honoured as our common Master, *and* to the *declaration of your ready* and liberal *mind, which is* hereby manifested.

3. He intimates the care he took to remove all suspicion of dishonesty or partiality, by thus having others joined with him in this charge. *Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance, which is administered by us,* as if we misapplied or embezzled the least mite; *providing things honest, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men,* whom we would convince of our unblemished integrity. *Note,* In this censorious world we cannot be too careful to avoid every occasion of scandal; and ministers, for the gospel's sake, should be peculiarly cautious, and especially in money matters.

4. He commends to them another brother, who also accompanied Titus, but who it was is uncertain. He speaks of him with distinguished respect, as one *whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you,* that ye will receive him with respect, and attend to his exhortations.

5. In answer to any cavils of the false teachers, he adds, *Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner, and fellow-helper concerning you* in the work of the ministry: *or our brethren be enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches,* deputed by them to this service, *and the glory of Christ,* ornaments to the gospel which they preached. *Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love* to Christ, to me, and your afflicted brethren; *and of our boasting on your behalf,* that you may be found to answer the high opinion we have entertained of you, and the encomiums we have bestowed upon you.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle seemeth to excuse his earnestness in pressing the Corinthians to the duty of charity, ver. 1—5. *And proceedeth to give directions about the acceptable way and manner of performing it,* viz. *bountifully, deliberately, and freely; and giveth good encouragement for so doing,* ver. 6. *to the end.*

1. FOR, as touching [a] the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to [b] write to you: 2. For I know [b] the for-

a 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. Rom. 15. 25, 26. Acts 11. 29. ch. 8. 4. 19.

b Ch. 8. 10, 19, 24. 1 Thes. 1. 7, 8. Heb. 10. 24.

wardness of your mind, for which I
c 1 Cor. 16. 1. ch. 7. 14. & 8. 17, 24. boast of you to them of Macedonia, that
d Ch. 11. 17. & 8. 2, 4. ver. 2, 3. Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. 3. [c] Yet
* Or, *on account of this same confidence.* Griesbach rejects the words *of boasting.* have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready;
e Ch. 8. 6. 1 Cor. 16. 2. 4. [d] Lest haply, if they of Macedonia come with me and find you unprepared,
f Gr. *blessing.* Gen. 33. 11. Lev. 25. 21. 2 Kin. 5. 15. Job 29. 13. & 31. 19. we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.* 5. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they [e] would go
g Or *which hath been so much spoken of before.* Ver. 12. before unto you, and make up beforehand your [f] bounty, [g] whereof ye had
† Rosenmuller thinks that the word here used means any small parsimonious gift. notice before, that the same might be ready, as *a matter of* bounty, and not as *of* covetousness.†

Verses 1—5. The apostle, with admirable address, whilst he seems to wave many arguments he might have urged, yet by his confidence expressed in their readiness to comply with his request, lays the strongest obligations on them to show their generosity. He knew *their forwardness;* he boasted of *their zeal;* and it had excited a holy ambition in the Macedonians to follow them. For their own sakes therefore, as well as his, he wished them to be ready, and had sent Titus and the brethren for this purpose, that if any of the Macedonians came with them, he, not to say they themselves, would be put to shame, in the confident boasting he had made of them, should they be found unprepared, and their collections not completed. He sent therefore, that, having timely notice, all might be ready in the way most honourable for them, and most agreeable to the commendations he had given them: not as an extorted alms, but as a noble, generous, willing contribution, the grateful acknowledgment due to God for all the singular mercies they had received. *Note,* Alms given with reluctance, or squeezed out by mere importunity, only prove the covetousness, not the charity of the giver.

h 1 Cor. 1. 12. & 7. 29. & 15. 50. Gal. 3. 17. & 5. 16. Eph. 4. 17. Col. 2. 4. 6. [h] But this I *say,* [i] He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap
i Eccl. 11. 1. Mat. 7. 2. Ps. 18. 25. Prov. 11. 24, 25. & 19. 17. & 22. 9. Gal. 6. 8. Luke 19. 16, 19. also bountifully. 7. [k] Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so*
k 1 Sam. 25. 16. Deut. 15. 7. Luke 12. 20. Exod. 25. 2 & 35. 5. Lev. 1. 3. Rom. 12. 8. Prov. 11. 25. & 22. 9. ch. 8. 12. *let him give;* not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
l Prov. 10. 22. & 11. 24, 25. & 15. 16. & 19. 17. & 28. 27. Ps. 37. 16. & 84. 11. ch. 6. 10. & 8. 1, 6, 19. Phil. 4. 11, 18, 19. 1 Tim. 6. 6. Mat. 25. 34. Luke 16. 9. 8. And [l] God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: 9. As it is written, [m] He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. 10. [n] Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for *your* food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your [o] righteousness; 11. [p] Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us
m Ps. 112. 9. ver. 10, 11.
n Ps. 104. 13. Is. 55. 10. Hos. 10. 12.
o Ver. 9. Mat. 6. 1.
p Ch. 8. 2, 3, 16, 19. & 1. 11. & 4. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Luke 16. 9. thanksgiving to God. 12. For the administration of this service not only
q Ch. 8. 14, 15. Phil. 2. 25. & 4. 18. [q] supplieth the want of the saints, but is
r Ch. 5. 16. Rom. 15. 26. ch. 2. 9. & 6. 15. & 8. 4. Heb. 13. 16. Phil. 4. 10, 17—19. abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; 13. Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they [r] glorify
s Prov. 11. 26. 2 Tim. 1. 18. Phil. 4. 19. Luke 16. 9. God for your professed subjection unto
t Ch. 8. 1, 6, 7. 1 Cor. 1. 4, 5. ch. xii, xiv. the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men;*
u Ch. 3. 5. Ps. 115. 1. Rom. 11. 36. 1 Sam. 1. 17. 14. And [s] by their prayer for you, which long after you for the [t] exceeding grace
x Is. 9. 6. & 42. 6, 7. & 49. 6. & 55. 4. John 3. 16. & 4. 10. Rom. 8. 32. & 6. 23. of God in you. 15. [u] Thanks *be* unto God for his [x] unspeakable gift.

Verses 6—15. The apostle proceeds to direct them,

1. Concerning the right manner of giving. It must be done, (1.) *Bountifully,* according to our abilities. (2.) *With deliberation,* not inconsiderately, but after weighing well what we can afford, consistent with the provision we owe to our own house.

(3.) *Not grudgingly, or of necessity,* as if it was extorted by importunity; or that we were ashamed not to do as others; or as if our heart grieved to part with what our hand bestowed; such a spirit would mar the deed.

2. He suggests the strongest reasons to excite their liberality. (1.) It would be highly for their own advantage. *He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.* (2.) *God loveth a cheerful giver,* and his love is the greatest of blessings. (3.) He is able abundantly to recompense you, both in spiritual graces, and worldly goods; so that you shall still have an abundant sufficiency through his good providence, and be enabled to abound in every good work, finding yourselves never the poorer for what is spent in his blessed service. (4.) They would hereby secure lasting honour, since the Scripture testifies of him who liberally dispenses to the poor, that *his righteousness,* or alms, *remaineth for ever,* and shall bring forth the most blessed fruits in everlasting life, when the great Judge in the day of his appearing shall remember and reward him. (5.) Much glory will hereby accrue to God, as well as much good be done to the poor saints, who, experiencing the riches of your bounty, will be excited to offer their thanksgivings to God for this proof of your fraternal love and of your real *subjection to the gospel of Christ,* manifested in such liberality shown to them, and unto all men as occasion requireth. *Note,* Where true Christianity is enthroned in the heart, it will ever appear in godlike charity. (6.) This will also engage the prayers of those who partake of your bounty; and an interest in the supplications of the saints at a throne of grace, will abundantly repay us for every kindness done to them. *Note,* When we can make no other acknowledgment, we must pray for our kind benefactors, that God, the poor man's friend, may reward them.

3. The apostle offers up his own earnest prayers for them. *Now he that ministereth seed to the sower,* so that there is corn enough for the year's provision, and a sufficiency again to sow the ground, *both minister bread for your food,* and give you always a supply; *and multiply your seed sown,* restoring it a hundred-fold into your bosoms; *and increase the fruits of your righteousness,* enabling you to abound in liberality more and more, as I have confidence he will; *being enriched in every thing,* with all the blessings of grace and providence, which can enable and dispose you *to* exercise *all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God,* who bless his name both for the abundance he hath bestowed upon you, and for the heart he hath given you to employ it to his glory.

4. He concludes with this doxology, *Thanks be unto God for*

his unspeakable gift; for all he hath done for you, in you, and by you; above all, for Jesus Christ, that most transcendently invaluable gift, which comprehends all others, and for which all language is insufficient to express our gratitude.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle, in a mild and humble manner, asserteth his authority, ver. 1—6. *He then proceeds to reason the case with the Corinthians, and refuseth to justify himself, or to act by such rules as the false teachers did, but according to the better rules he had fixed for himself,* ver. 7. to the end.

1 NOW I [a] Paul myself beseech you [a] by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who * [b] in presence *am* base among you, but being absent am bold toward you: 2. But I beseech *you*, that [c] I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence wherewith I think to be bold against some, which † think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 3. For [d] though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4. [e] (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5. [f] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the [g] obedience of Christ; 6. [h] And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when [i] your obedience is fulfilled.

[a] Rom. 12. 1. Is. 42. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 23.
* Or *in outward appearance.*
[b] 1 Cor. 2. 3. & 4. 10, 21. Gal. 4. 13. ch. 11. 21, 30. & 12. 5, 9. & 13. 4, 9, 10. ver. 10.
[c] 1 Cor. 4. 19, 21. ch. 1. 17. & 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 3. 10, 22. & 12. 20. & 13. 2, 10. Phil. 2. 3.
† Or *reckon.*
[d] Gal. 2. 20. & 4. 13. ch. 2. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 18. 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. ch. 1. 12. & 7. 1.
[e] Jer. 1. 10. Is. 41. 14—16. Zech. 4. 6, 7. 1 Cor. 1. 18, 24. & 2. 5. Rom. 1. 16, 17. Ps. 110. 2, 3. ch. 6. 7. Eph. 6. 10—20. 1 Thes. 5. 8. ch. 3. 5. & 4. 7. with Josh. 6. 4—20.
[f] Zech. 4. 6, 7. Ps. 110. 2, 3. Acts 19. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 19. & 3. 19. Ps. 45. 4, 5.
[g] Ps. 18. 44. & 22. 27—31. & 68. 30, 31. & 110. 2, 3. & 45. 4, 5, 10, 11, 17. Rom. 1. 5. & 16. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 2. & 4. 11.
[h] Num. 16. 26. Acts 5. 5. & 8. 20. & 13. 10, 11. 1 Cor 4. 21. & 5. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 1. 20.
[i] Ch. 2. 9. & 7. 15. & 9. 13.

Verses 1—6. No where had the apostle met with more malignant insinuations, than from the false teachers at Corinth; he is obliged therefore, in justice to himself, to refute their slanders.

1. Though he had it in his power to punish, he rather chose mildly to entreat, imitating the meekness and gentleness of his blessed Master. The false teachers reviled him as a poor despicable animal, and mean in his abilities, as diminutive in his stature, who fawned and cringed when present, but when absent wrote in such a magisterial style; terrifying them into compliance with his will, by vain boasts of his apostolic rod. But he wished not to be compelled to exercise his power wherewith he was invested, and to their faces boldly to rebuke, and severely chastise, those who dared insinuate as if he *walked after the flesh*, with views of secular advantage, and influenced by carnal policy. *Note,* (1.) However great provocations we may meet with, the example of the meek and gentle Lamb of God should ever be in our eye. (2.) If men will not be reformed, they must be ruined. (3.) The best of men and ministers may expect malignant traducers.

2. He asserts the integrity of his preaching and conduct. *For though we walk in the flesh,* surrounded with the common infirmities of humanity, *we do not war after the flesh,* under the maxims of fleshly wisdom, or for any selfish ends. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal;* we war not against the powers of evil with an arm of flesh, or pretend to convince by mere human persuasion; *but* that gospel we preach becomes effectual through divine operation, and is *mighty through God,* the Spirit's energy, *to the pulling down of* the *strong holds* of sin and Satan in this world, and in the hearts of men; *casting down imaginations,* confuting the corrupt reasonings of self-righteous rabbins and proud philosophers; *and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,* confounding the pride and self-sufficiency of the unhumbled heart; *and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;* engaging the sinner to bow to his gentle yoke; submitting his reason to revelation, his will to the commands of Jesus, and in every sentiment of his soul yielding a willing subjection to the authority of the great Redeemer. *Note,* (1.) Men are not to be persuaded by the sword, but by the gospel. (2.) Satan's power is strong in the human heart; nothing but the power of Jesus can dethrone him. (3.) Nothing is more opposite to *the knowledge of God,* than a high conceit of our own wisdom and righteousness.

3. He threatens the offenders, *having a readiness to revenge all disobedience,* and inflict condign punishment on these false teachers, and maligners of the true apostles; *when your obedience is fulfilled,* and milder methods have recovered the penitent members from those who continue refractory.

7 [k] Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? [l] If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ's, even so *are* we Christ's. 8. For [m] though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, (which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction,) I should not be ashamed: 9. That I may not seem [n] as if I would terrify you by letters. 10. For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but [o] *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible. 11. Let such an one think this, that such as we are in word by letters [p] when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present. 12. For [q] we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves amongst themselves, ‡ are not wise. 13. But [r] we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the ‖ rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. 14. [s] For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure,* as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the [t] gospel of Christ: 15. [u] Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is,* of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be * enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, 16. [x] To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to

[k] 1 Sam. 16. 7. John 7. 29.
[l] 1 John 4. 6. 1 Cor. 14. 37. Acts 9. 6, 15. & 22. 10, 14. & 26. 16—18. 1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. ch. 5. 12. & 12. 11. & 11. 23. & 13. 3. Gal. 1. 1, 11, 16. & 2. 2—9.
[m] Ch. 12. 6. & 13. 2, 8, 10. 1 Cor. 4. 21. & 5. 3—5. ch. 2. 6, 7. & 12. 19—21.
[n] 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, 9, 11, 13. Several MSS. after the particle μὲν add δὲ. We may therefore perhaps render this passage, *But I forbear, that I may not,* &c.
[o] Ver. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 17. & 2. 1, 3—5, 13. ch. 11. 6, 21, 30. & 12. 5, 9. 1 Thes. 2. 4.
[p] 1 Cor. 4. 19, 21. ch. 12. 20. & 13. 2, 10.
[q] Ch. 3. 1. & 5. 12. Prov. 27. 2. Job 12. 2. Luke 18. 11. Is. 65. 5.
‡ Or *understand it not.*
[r] Ver. 15. Rom. 15. 20. Prov. 25. 14. 1 Cor. 12. 11. ch. 11 18. & 12. 5, 6. Eph. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. see ver. 14.
‖ Or *line.*
[s] Rom. 15. 19. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 10. & 4. 15. & 9. 1, 2. ch. 3. 1—3.
[t] Mark 1. 1. Acts 20. 24. Rom. 1. 1, 16. & 2. 16. & 16. 25. & 15. 16, 19. 1 Cor. 9. 12, 17, 18. ch. 4. 4. Gal. 1. 7. Eph. 1. 13. & 6. 15. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 11.
[u] Ver. 13. Rom. 15. 20. Prov. 25. 14.
* Or *magnified in you.*
[x] Rom. 15. 20, 24, 28.

† Or *rule.*

boast in another man's † line of things made ready to our hand. 17. [y] But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. 18. [z] For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

[y] Is. 65. 16, 23, 24. Jer. 9. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 31.

[z] Prov. 27. 2. Rom. 2. 29. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Luke 18. 10—14. & 14. 11.

Verses 7—18. The apostle reasons the case with the Corinthians. *Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?* and form your judgment merely on external show? *If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's,* that he belongs to him as a member of his body mystical, or is commissioned by him as a minister; *let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's;* whatever evidence he may produce of the one or the other, I can at least equal him. *For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority,* than I have done, or than the vainest of my traducers dare to do concerning the powers with which they are invested (*which* authority *the Lord hath given us for edification* of his church, *and not for your destruction,* to drive offenders to despair by severity,) *I should not be ashamed,* but dare speak with truth and confidence. But I forbear, *that I may not seem* as these men suggest, *as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful:* wrote in an authoritative strain, and big with menaces: *but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech is contemptible;* he appears with no dignity of presence and aspect, and his parts and elocution are as despicable as his stature. In answer to such a contemptuous insult, I reply,

1. *Let such a one think this,* and be assured, *that such as we are in word by letters, when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present,* and execute every threatening we denounce against the obstinately impenitent.

2. We never act with falsehood and ostentation, like these seducers; *For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves,* puffed up with vain conceit, and blinded with self-admiration: *but* whilst *they* fondly value themselves on their imaginary greatness, *measuring themselves by themselves,* and supposing themselves the standard of excellence, *and comparing themselves among themselves,* by the poor and insignificant endowments of others equally vain, they *are not wise,* foolishly fancying they are something, when in fact they are nothing. *Note,* All self-applause is hateful. We should look to others' superior excellences to be humble, and not proudly vaunt ourselves over those beneath us.

3. The apostle lays down the proper rule of conduct. *But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you:* like those who run in the Isthmian games, we have kept the line marked out for our race, and in a regular course have preached the gospel as far as Corinth. *For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure,* as these false apostles do, *as though we reached not unto you,* and had in coming to Corinth entered into another man's province; *for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ,* through countries where his name had not been heard before: *not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours,* and taking to myself the credit of their success; *but having hope when your faith is increased,* your church affairs regulated, and your divisions healed, *that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you,* where darkness still reigns uncontrolled; *and not to boast in another man's line of things, made ready to our hand,* assuming to myself the honour of their labours. *But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,* ascribing to the grace of God alone the whole of whatever gifts he enjoys, or success he may be blessed with, and taking no praise to himself; *for not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth,* and his approbation is the only true and substantial honour.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle apologizeth for his going about to commend himself, and giveth the reason for what he did, ver. 1—4. *Afterwards he mentioneth, in his own necessary vindication, his equality with the other apostles, and with the false apostles in this particular, of preaching the gospel to the Corinthians freely without wages,* ver. 5—15. *Then he maketh another preface to what he was about further to say in his own justification,* ver. 16—21. *And afterwards giveth a large account of his qualifications, labours, and sufferings, in which he exceeded the false apostles,* ver. 22. to the end.

1. WOULD to God ye could [a] bear with me a little in *my* folly; and indeed * bear with me. 2. For I am [b] jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have [c] espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. 3. But I [d] fear, lest by any means, [e] as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, [f] so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 4. For if he that cometh preacheth [g] another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him.*

[a] Ver. 16, 21—29. ch. 5. 13. & 12. 11.

* Or *you do bear with me.*

[b] Gal. 4. 11, 17, 18. Phil. 3. 18, 19.

[c] 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 3. 5, 10, 11. & 9. 1, 2. ch. 3. 2, 3. Is. 62. 4, 5. & 54. 5. Hos. 2. 19, 20. Eph. 5. 25, 30. Col. 1. 28. with Lev. 21. 13. Prov. 19. 14. & 31. 10.

[d] Gal. 4. 11. & 1. 6. & 3. 1. ver. 29. Phil. 3. 18, 19. 2 Tim. 1. 15.

[e] Gen. 3. 4, 13. John 8. 44. 1 Tim. 2. 14. Rev. 20. 2. & 12. 9.

[f] Rom. 16. 18. ch. 2. 17. & 4. 2. Gal. 1. 6. & 2. 4. & 3. 1 & 4. 9. & 5. 10. Eph. 4. 14. Phil. 1. 15. & 3. 2, 18. Col. 2. 4, 8, 18 1 Thes. 2. 3, 5. 2 Thes. 3. 2, 6. 1 Tim. 1. 3. & 4. 1—4. & 6. 3—5. 2 Tim. 2. 16. & 3. 2—5. Tit. 1. 10. Heb. 13. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 14. & 3. 3, 17. 1 John 2. 18. & 4. 1. Jude 4. Mat. 24. 11, 24.

[g] Gal. 1. 7, 8. & 3. 2. with Acts 4. 12. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Eph. 4. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 12. 4—11.

Verses 1—4. The apostle begins;

1. With an apology for what he was about to say. *Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly; and indeed bear with me,* compelled reluctantly to speak in my own commendation.

2. He gives the reasons for what he was about to say. It was,

(1.) Out of jealousy for them. *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ,* true to your solemn engagements, and faithful in all your conduct to this heavenly bridegroom of souls. *But I fear,* knowing the wiles of the false teachers, *lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ;* perverted from the principles, or seduced from the practice of the gospel.

(2.) Out of justice to himself. *For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him;* but since there is but *one* Jesus, *one* Spirit, *one* gospel, it was shrewdly to be suspected, that the person who pretended to preach another Jesus, boasted of a better spirit, and a more excellent gospel than that by which they had at first been converted to the faith, was a deceiver, and, instead of being connived at or caressed, should be rejected with abhorrence.

5. For I suppose I [h] was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. 6. But though [i] *I be* rude in speech, yet not in

[h] 1 Cor. 15. 10. ch. 10. 10. & 12. 11, 12. Gal. 2. 6, 9.

[i] 1 Cor. 1. 17. & 2. 1, 13. ch. 10. 10. Eph. 3. 4. ch. 4. 2. & 5. 11. & 12. 11, 12. & 1. 12. & 2. 14. & 7. 4.

knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things. 7. Have I committed an offence [k] in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? 8. [l] I robbed other churches, taking wages *of them*, to do you service. 9. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all *things* I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself*. 10. [m] As the truth of Christ is in me, [n] no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. 11. Wherefore? [o] because I love you not? [p] God knoweth. 12. But what I do, that I will do, [q] that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that, wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. 13. For such *are* [r] false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14. And no marvel; for [s] Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; [t] whose end shall be according to their works.

k 1 Cor. 9. 6, 12, 15, 18. ch. 10. 1. & 12. 12, 13, 15, 18. Acts 18. 3. & 20. 34. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 9. 18—23. & 4. 10, 12. ch. 6. 10.

l Acts 20. 33, 34. ch. 6. 5. & 12. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8. Phil. 4. 10, 15.

m Rom. 9. 1. & 1. 9. ch. 1. 23. & 12. 19. ver. 31. Gal. 1. 20. Eph. 4. 17. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 5, 10. 1 Tim. 2. 7. & 5. 21.

n Gr. *this boasting shall not be stopped in me.* See ver. 7—9, 12. 1 Cor. 9. 5.

o Ch. 6. 11. & 7. 3. & 12. 15. 1 Cor. 4. 15.

p Ch. 12. 2, 3. John 21. 1, 17. 1 Thes. 2. 5, 10.

q 1 Cor. 9. 12.

r Acts 15. 1, 24. & 20. 29, 30. Rom. 13. 18. ch. 2. 17. & 4. 2. Gal. 1. 7. & 2. 4. & 4. 17. & 6. 12. Phil. 1. 15. & 3. 2, 18. Col. 2. 4, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 3, 4, 6, 7. & 4. 1—3. & 6. 3—5. 2 Tim. 2. 17. & 3. 2—5. Tit. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 1, 2. 1 John 4. 1. & 2. 18. Jude 4. Rev. 2. 2, 9. Mat. 24. 11, 24.

s Ch. 2. 11. Rev. 12. 9.

t Phil. 3. 19. Gal. 1. 8, 9. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 8, 12. Rev. 9. 11. & 13. 10. & 20. 10. & 19. 20.

Verses 5—15. Constrained by the insinuations which had been cast out against him, the blessed Paul,

1. Asserts his equality with the very chief of the apostles. Though *rude in speech*, my style simple, my elocution not so graceful as some others, yet my knowledge of the gospel mysteries is inferior to none. *But we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things*; your consciences have borne witness to the efficacy of our preaching; and our conversation among you, as you know, hath been most unblameable.

2. He asserts his disinterested conduct, and vindicates himself from the cavils of his adversaries, who suggested, as though he acted below the apostolic character, in not receiving his maintenance from the church at Corinth. *Have I committed an offence in abasing myself*, to work for my subsistence, *that ye might be exalted* to the participation of the gospel privileges, *because I preached the gospel to you freely*, that no prejudices might obstruct your receiving our word, which such disinterested zeal could not but recommend? *I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service*; not really plundering them, but living upon their voluntary contributions, when the Corinthians, so much richer, should have rather afforded him a maintenance. However, he neither had been, nor would be, a burden to them; his former wants the Macedonians supplied, and he was firmly resolved, that none in all Achaia, in any future time, should have reason to reproach him on this behalf, or stop his glorying of having preached to them the gospel freely.

Wherefore do I this? out of pride or disgust, as the false teachers would insinuate, and *because I love you not?* No; *God knoweth* these were not my motives. But I have acted and will thus act, *that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion*, and would be ready to catch at any handle to fleece you, if I received any thing from you. Therefore I would wish, *that wherein they glory, they may be found even as me*, and as free from every mercenary view: *for* in truth *such are false apostles*, assuming a character to which they have not the least title; *deceitful workers*, corrupting the word of God; *transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ*, appearing under the most specious professions. *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light*, as he appeared when he came to seduce Eve from her integrity: *therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works*, and the issue be their everlasting destruction.

16. I say again, [u] Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool, † receive me, that I may boast myself a little. 17. That which I speak, [x] I speak *it* not after the Lord, but as it were [y] foolishly, in the confidence of boasting. 18. [z] Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. 19. For ye suffer fools gladly, [a] seeing ye *yourselves* are wise. 20. For ye suffer, [b] if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour *you*, if a man take *of you*, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. 21. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been [c] weak: howbeit, wherein soever any is bold (I speak foolishly,) [d] I am bold also. 22. Are they Hebrews? [e] so *am* I. Are they Israelites? so *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I. 23. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) [f] I *am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24. Of the Jews five times received I [g] forty *stripes* save one. 25. Thrice was I [h] beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep: 26. [i] *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; 27. [k] In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28. [l] Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29. [m] Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30. If I must needs glory, [n] I will glory of the things

u Ch. 12. 6, 11. ver. 1, 21, 23.

† Or *suffer*.

x 1 Cor. 7. 6, 12, 25.

y Ch. 9. 4. ver. 18—27. Phil. 3. 4—6.

z Ch. 10. 13. & 12. 5, 6. Phil. 3. 3—6. ver. 22, 27.

a 1 Cor. 4. 10. & 8. 1. & 10. 15.

b Gal. 2. 4. & 4. 9. & 5. 1, 10. & 6. 3, 12. Tit. 1. 11. 2 Pet. 2. 3, 14. 1 Thes. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 3. 6. Luke 20. 47. Rom. 16. 17, 18. Phil. 3. 19. ch. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 3. ver 21.

c Ch. 10. 1, 2, 10.

d Ver. 22—27. Phil. 3. 3—6.

e Phil. 3. 5. Acts 21. 39. & 22. 2. & 26. 4, 5. Gal. 1. 14. Rom. 11. 1. with Gen. 17. 7, 9. & 32. 28. Mal. 1. 2. 2 Chr. 20. 7.

f Ver. 5. ch. 12. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Acts 9. 16, 23. & xiii—xxviii. & 13. 23, 50. & 14. 19. & 16. 22. & 20. 20, 23. & 21. 11, 31. & 23. 10. & 26. 21, 22. & 28. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 9—12. & 15 31. ch. 1. 5, 8, 10. & 4. 8—11. & 6. 4—9. & 7. 5 & 12. 10, 15. Eph. 6. 20. Gal. 6. 14, 17. Phil. 1. 7, 13. & 2. 17. Col. 1. 24, 28, 29. 1 Thes. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 9, 10. & 3. 11. & 4. 6.

g Deut. 25. 3.

h Acts 14. 5, 19. & 16. 22, 23.

i Rom. 15. 19, 23—28. Acts ix, xi, xiii—xxi.

k Acts 16. 25. & 20. 7, 11, 31. 1 Cor. 4. 11. ch. 6. 5. Phil. 4. 12.

l Acts 20. 18—35. Col. 2. 1. Ps. 122. 6—9. & 51. 18. & 137. 5, 6. Jer. 51. 50.

m 1 Cor. 8. 13. & 9. 22. Rom. 12. 15. Gal. 6. 2. Heb. 13. 3. Ps. 35. 13, 14.

n Ch. 12. 5, 9. 16, Gal. 6. 14. Col. 1. 24. Rom. 5. 3.

which concern mine infirmities. 31. [o] The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which [p] is blessed for evermore, [q] knoweth that I lie not. 32. [r] In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king * kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: 33. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

o Ch. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 3. John 10. 30.
p Rom. 1. 25. & 9. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 17. & 6. 15, 16. Neh. 9. 5. Is. 57. 15.
q See ver. 10. Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. ch. 1. 23. Gal. 1. 20. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 5.
r Acts 9. 24.
* Of Arabia Petræa, and of the territory of Damascus.

Verses 16—33. The apostle with reluctance enters upon the subject of his own vindication. *I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little,* such boasts, in general, being indeed the indications of a vain mind. *That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly in this confidence of boasting;* but since I am compelled by the unhappy circumstances in which I stand, and *seeing that many glory after the flesh,* in their external privileges, *I will glory also. For ye suffer fools gladly,* and caress the vain boasters among you, *seeing ye yourselves are wise.* Probably the words are spoken ironically: Wise men indeed ye are, to be dupes to such ostentatious deceivers. *For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage,* tyrannizing over your consciences; *if a man devour you* under the specious pretences of religion; *if a man take of you* presents and salaries for preaching; *if a man exalt himself,* and treat you with lordly contempt; *if a man smite you on the face,* submissive to every insult. *I speak as concerning reproach,* with which these deceivers have treated you, *as though we had been weak,* and had no right to exert such authority as they pretend to claim: *howbeit whereinsoever any is bold (I speak foolishly) I am bold also,* and can produce as long a catalogue of privileges as the chief of these arrogant men.

1. As to *external Jewish privileges* or descent, *Are they Hebrews? so am I,* by both my parents, Phil. iii. 5. *Are they Israelites?* the sons of Jacob, *so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I,* a true descendent of this eminent patriarch.

2. As to *gospel privileges, Are they ministers of Christ?* commissioned by him, *(I speak as a fool,)* admitting their plea, though false to be true, *I am more,* having a more extraordinary commission, more eminent endowments, and suffering for the cause more than any of them. *In labours, more abundant, in stripes above measure,* unmercifully beaten; *in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft,* exposed to the most imminent dangers, a short enumeration of which will prove what I assert. *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods,* by the Roman lictors; *once was I stoned,* and left for dead; *thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep,* tossed on the foaming waves, and every moment ready to be swallowed up by them. *In journeyings often, in perils of water,* in fording rivers, or by land floods; *in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen,* who lay in wait for me; *in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city,* from dangerous insurrections; *in perils in the wilderness,* during my travels; *in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren,* the most dangerous of all enemies. *In weariness and painfulness,* under the most fatiguing labours, *in watchings oft,* my rest being broken; *in hunger and thirst,* for want of needful refreshments; *in fastings often,* voluntary, or necessitated by mere want; *in cold and nakedness,* exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and without sufficient clothing to keep me warm. *Besides those things* which affect my *body,* a heavier load of care lies upon my mind, *that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches,* to advance their purity and peace, rectify their disorders, and guard them against seducers. *Who is weak, and I am not weak?* sympathizing with him in his infirmity of body or mind? *who is offended, and I burn not* with jealousy for the offence, and zeal to restore him? *If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my infirmities,* and rather mention my sufferings and hardships, than my privileges. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands,* snatched as it were, from inevitable death. Such a glorious course marked indeed the great apostle: such sufferings for righteousness' sake are the highest honour.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle, first, maketh mention of the favour God had shown him, and the honour done him, and the methods God took to keep him humble; and the use he made of this dispensation, ver. 1—10. *Then he addresseth himself to the Corinthians, blaming them for what was faulty among them, and giving a large account of his behaviour, and kind intentions towards them,* ver. 11. to the end.

1. IT is not [a] expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to [b] visions and revelations of the Lord. 2. [c] I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4. How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not † lawful for a man to utter. 5. Of such an one will I glory: [d] yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. 6. For [e] though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me *to be,* or *that* he heareth of me. 7. And, lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, ‡ there was given to me a [f] thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8. For this thing [g] I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9. And he said unto me, [h] My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. [i] Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10. [k] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in perse-

a 1 Cor. 6. 12. & 10. 23. ver. 6, 7, with 11.
b Num. 12. 6. Joel 2. 28. Gal. 1. 12. & 2. 2.
c Acts 9. 3, 4. & 22. 6, 17. & 26. 16, 19. 1 Cor. 15. 8. ch. 5. 16, 17.
† Or *possible.* The neuter particle here used signifies not only a thing which is allowed to be done, but a thing possible to be done. In this latter sense, it is sometimes used by Paul, and frequently by classic writers.
d Ch. 11. 30. ver. 9, 10.
e Ch. 10. 8. & 11. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 9, 10.
‡ Rather, *these revelations.*
f 2 Chr. 32. 25. Ezek. 28. 24. Job 2. 6. Gal. 4. 14. Archbishop Newcome supposes the heavenly glory may have made a stronger impression on Paul's nerves than his strength could bear, and thus affected him with a tremulous pronunciation and paralysis.
g Deut. 3. 23. Mat. 26. 44.
h 1 Cor. 10. 13. Is. 40. 29, 30. & 41. 10, 14.
i Ver. 10. ch. 11. 30. 1 Pet. 4. 13, 14.
k Rom. 5. 3. ch. 1. 4. & 2. 14. & 4. 8. & 7. 4. Gal. 6. 14. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 10. Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. & 4. 13, 14. Acts 5. 41. ch. 13. 9.

cutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for [l] when I am weak, then am I strong.

[l] 1 Ver. 9. 1 Sam. 15. 7. Mat. 5. 3. & 15. 27, 28. Eph. 3. 16. & 6. 10.

Verses 1—10. Once more he will speak. Though (ordinarily he confesses) *it is not expedient for me doubtless to glory,* since others boast of extraordinary manifestations, *I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord;* one remarkable instance of which I will only mention.

I knew, or I know, *a man in Christ,* a faithful soul, *above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body,* whether in his spirit only, or in his whole man, *I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such a one caught up to the third heaven,* where angels dwell, and the most illustrious display of the divine glory is made. *And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise,* the region of the blessed, *and heard unspeakable words, which* contained such sublimity of ideas, and were delivered in such language, *as it is not lawful,* or possible, *for a man to utter,* in his present mortal state of weakness. *Of such a one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities,* and in such things as carry evident marks of my own weakness. *For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth,* and appeal to the heart-searching God for what I say: *but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me,* supposing me to be more than human, who am a mere worm. *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure:* what this was, whether some bodily affliction, or outward reproach, or more probably the workings of old corruptions; whatever it was, it was very grievous, yet sent for the most blessed purpose, and served to keep him humble. *For this thing I besought the Lord thrice* importunately, *that it might depart from me. And he said unto me,* by an audible voice, or some divine impression on my spirit, *My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness,* and shall carry thee victorious through all opposing foes without, and corruptions within. *Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me,* and be the more transcendently exalted in rescuing me out of all my trials, and carrying me safe through every temptation. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake;* not only resigned, but happy, rejoicing in the sufferings I endure; *for when I am weak, then am I strong,* and rise victorious over every foe, through the power of omnipotent grace. *Note,* (1.) To be humbled in the midst of high attainments is doubly excellent. (2.) No thorn more grievous to a gracious soul, than the warrings and buffetings of indwelling sin. (3.) Prayer is the great relief under every distress. (4.) Though God doth not always answer us according to our petitions, yet if he gives us strength to stand in our difficulties, we are bound to acknowledge that our prayers are answered. (5.) There is a sufficiency of grace in the Redeemer to carry us safe through every trial, and to make us at last more than conquerors. (6.) The more we see and feel our own weakness, the more firm we stand in the power of God.

11. [m] I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for [n] in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. 12. [o] Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

[m] Ch. 11. 1, 16, 17, 21.

[n] Ch. 11. 5. Gal. 2. 6, 9. 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10. & 3. 5, 7. & 4. 7. Eph. 3. 8. ch. 3. 5.

[o] Rom. 15. 19. 1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. ch. 4. 2. & 6. 4. & 11. 6. Acts 19. 11, 12. & 2. 22.

13. [p] For what is it wherein you were inferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong. 14. Behold, [q] the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you; for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. 15. And [r] I will very gladly spend and be spent for † you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. 16. But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being [s] crafty, I caught you with guile. 17. [t] Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? 18. [u] I desired Titus, and with *him* I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? *walked we* not in the same steps? 19. Again, think ye that we [x] excuse ourselves unto you? we speak [y] before God in Christ: but *we* [z] *do* all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying. 20. For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, [a] and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, * tumults: 21. *And* lest, when I come again, [b] my God will humble me among you, and *that* I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed.

[p] 1 Cor. 1. 4, 5. with 9. 12. ch. 11. 8, 9. ver. 14, 15.

[q] Ch. 13. 1. & 1. 15. 1 Cor. 4. 19. & 11. 34. & 16. 5. & 4. 15. Acts 20. 33. Phil. 4. 17.

[r] John 10. 11. Phil. 2. 17. 1 Thes. 2. 8. ch. 1. 6, 12, 13. & 6. 12. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 10.

† Gr. *your souls.*

[s] Prov. 11. 30. ch. 11. 9. ver. 13.

[t] Ch. 7. 2. 2 Pet. 2. 3. ch. 7. 2, 6. & 2. 12. 1 Cor. 16. 10.

[u] Ch. 8. 6, 16, 18, 22.

[x] Ch. 5. 12. & 3. 1.

[y] See ch. 11. 10, 31. Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1.

[z] 1 Cor. 9. 12, 23. & 10. 33. & 14. 26. ch. 5. 19. 13. & 10. 8. & 13. 10.

[a] Ch. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 1. & 10. 2. & 13. 2, 10. 1 Cor. 4. 16, 18, 21.

* Vain boastings and arrogant pretensions to superiority. The Greek word conveys the idea of anger, bloated pride, and insolence.

[b] Phil. 3. 18, 19. 1 Cor. 5. 11. Rom. 13. 13.

Verses 11—21. The apostle returns again,

1. To apologize for what might savour of vanity, *I am become a fool in glorying, ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you,* who have received such peculiar benefit by my labours; *for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles,* in my sufferings and labours, *though I be nothing,* considered in myself; our sufficiency and success is of God. *Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience,* amidst innumerable provocations and sufferings, *in signs,* miracles, *and wonders* of various kinds, *and mighty deeds,* which speak the arm of omnipotence. *For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches,* in gifts and privileges, *except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong,* than which never was a more beautiful turn, and a more poignant, though, polite rebuke, if it be considered as spoken ironically; or seriously, it pleads in a most elegant manner his excuse for refusing that reward from them, which might be construed as a mark of disdain. *Note,* (1.) Where we have received spiritual benefit, it is a debt we owe to our ministers to vindicate their injured characters. (2.) The greatest of men and ministers, when viewing themselves in their true colours, cannot but own, I am nothing.

2. He declares his purpose to show the same disinterested conduct. *Behold the third time I am ready to come to you,* having the second time been disappointed; *and I will not be burdensome to you,* but will preach the gospel to you freely; *for I seek not yours, but you,* your spiritual benefit, not your worldly substance. *For* I consider myself as your father in Christ, and shall treat you with paternal care, not desiring nor accepting ought at your hands: *for,* in general, *the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. And* all I have shall be willingly laid out for you; for *I will very gladly spend and be spent for you,* to promote the good of your souls, ready, if need be, to lay down my own life; *though* I should meet with the most ungrateful returns, and *the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved,* and even those who seduce you be preferred before me. *Note,* (1.) A true minister of Christ never serves for hire, but for love; delighting to feed, not to fleece the flock. (2.) True zeal for Christ and his cause will make his servants nobly prodigal of life, unto their power, and sometimes above their power exerting themselves in his service. (3.) The most ungrateful returns must not stay us from doing good even to the evil and unthankful.

3. He obviates an insinuation which the seducers suggested, that though he took no wages himself, those whom he sent were well paid. *Be it so,* they will argue, *I did not burden you: nevertheless being crafty, I caught you with guile;* so invidiously would they misrepresent my conduct. But in answer I appeal to yourselves. *Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you? I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother: did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?* showing the same disinterested generosity, and following my example in preaching the gospel freely, without any expense to you? *Again,*

4. *Think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you?* and want by specious pretences, for sinister ends, to insinuate into your regard, or to get off from visiting you as I promised? *We speak before God in Christ,* appealing to him for our sincerity: *but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying,* having this great end ever in view.

5. He declares his jealous fears for them. *For I fear, lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would,* obedient and orderly; *and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not;* obliged, though with reluctance, to exert my apostolic authority; *lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults,* and all other evil fruits of a proud, contentious, uncharitable spirit. *And lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they have committed. Note,* (1.) The falls of professors are a real grief to their faithful ministers: and every gracious soul cannot but mourn over them. (2.) They who persist in their iniquities must be faithfully rebuked; and, if they do not amend, their obstinate impenitence will inevitably issue in final perdition.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle threatens to be severe against obstinate sinners, and assigneth the reason thereof, ver. 1—6. *Then he maketh a suitable prayer to God on the behalf of the Corinthians, and the reasons inducing him thereto,* ver. 7—10. *And concludeth his epistle with a malediction and a benediction,* ver. 11—14.

1. THIS *is* [a] the third *time* I am coming to you. [b] In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. 2. [c] I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; * and, being absent, now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare: 3. Since ye seek a proof [d] of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. 4. For, though [e] he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak † in him, but we [f] shall live with him by the power of God toward you. 5. [g] Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves; how that [h] Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 6. But I trust that [i] ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

* This does not relate to any future time, but to the apostle's last visit to the Corinthians.

† Or *with him.*

Verses 1—6. Having once and again warned them by his epistle to amend their disorders, with Sosthenes and Timothy, who joined in his admonitions, he is now the third time ready to appear in person. Therefore,

1. He assures them, that if any continued yet refractory and disorderly, notwithstanding these repeated rebukes, *he would not spare,* but inflict condign punishment on such obstinate offenders. *Note,* No patience, human or divine, will always bear: there is an approaching end, when wrath to the uttermost will overtake the ungodly.

2. Since they demanded a proof of his apostleship, they should receive it. *Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me,* as if I threatened what I had no power or authority to execute; when you have had such demonstrations before of that gospel which I preach, and of that authority with which I am invested, *which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you,* who have experienced the efficacy of my preaching, and begun to smart under the chastening rod, 1 Cor. xi. 30. *For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God,* and hath all power now committed into his hands; *for we also are weak in him,* and because of our present sufferings, treated by many of you as despicable, and possessed of no authority from him: *but we shall live with him by the power of God towards you;* and as surely as he lives, shall we prove ourselves clothed with his power to punish offenders: And this would soon be experienced by them, if they did not instantly amend their ways.

3. He urges them to judge themselves, that they might not be judged of the Lord or his ministers. *Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith;* bring your hearts to the touchstone of God's revealed will: *prove your own selves,* by this divine rule: *know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you,* formed in your hearts by his Spirit, *except ye be reprobates,* and when brought to the test, like false metal, rejected as refuse, and found hypocrites. *But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates,* but approved and allowed of our Divine Master, and acknowledged by him as faithful in all things.

7. Now [k] I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be [l] as reprobates. 8. [m] For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. 9. [n] For we are

a See ch. 12. 14.

b Num. 35. 30. Deut. 19. 15. & 17. 6. Mat. 18. 16 Heb. 10. 28. John 8. 17.

c 1 Cor. 4. 19, 21. ch. 10. 2, 8, 11, 6. & 1. 23. & 12. 20, 21. ver. 10.

d Mat. 10. 20. & 18. 18 1 Cor. 5. 4. & 11. 30. ch. 10. 10. ver. 2, 4.

e Phil. 2. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rom. 6. 4, 9, 10. John 10. 18. Is. liii.

f Ch. 10. 3, 4. Rom. 6. 4—6, 8, 11. Phil. 3. 10, 11. John 14. 19.

g 1 Cor. 11. 28. Zeph. 2. 1. Lam. 3. 40.

h Eph. 3. 17. Col. 1. 27. John 17. 23, 26 Gal. 2. 20. & 4. 19.

i 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 3. 5. & 9. 2. ch. 3. 2, 3.

k Phil. 4. 6. Eph. 6. 18, 19. & 1. 16—19. Phil. 1. 10, 11. Col. 1. 9—11. 1 Thes. 5. 23.

l 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. ch. 6. 9. & 10. 10.

m 1 Tim. 1. 19. Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32. Is. 8. 20. Prov. 23. 23.

n Ch. 11. 30. & 12. 5, 9, 10. 1 Cor. 4. 10. Jude 3. Rev. 3. 10. John 8. 31, 32.

o 1 Thes. 3. 10. Mat. 5. 48. ver. 11

glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, *even* your [o] perfection. 10. Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present [p] I

p Ch. 2. 3, 7. & 10. 2. 8. & 12. 20, 21. 1 Cor. 4. 21. & 5. 5.

should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

Verses 7—10. The apostle adds his fervent prayer for them. *Now I pray to God that ye do no evil,* nor incur censure from us, or wrath from God: *not that we should appear approved,* and by the punishment we inflict, give a demonstration of our apostolic power; *but that ye should do that which is honest,* and praiseworthy: *though we be as reprobates,* and having no need to exert our power, should be thought of as insignificant persons, who really had it not. *For we can do nothing against the truth,* nor dare lift up the rod against such as walk according to the gospel; *but* our power is to be exercised *for the truth,* to defend it against heretical teachers, and to recover backsliders by needful correction. *For we are glad when we are weak, and ye are strong;* and when your exemplary practice renders censure unnecessary, and we appear as if we had no authority to inflict it. *And this also we wish, even your perfection, or restoration;* that every offence were removed, the church knit together in perfect harmony and union, and every member of it growing up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. *Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction;* desirous rather that all evils among you should be amended, and our reproofs effectual for your reformation, than that we should be constrained to give a proof of our power in executing deserved punishment on the impenitent.

q Rom. 12. 16, 18. & 15. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Phil. 2. 2. & 3. 15, 16. & 4. 8. Col. 3. 12—17. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 8. & 4. 8. 2 Pet. 1. 4—8. & 3. 18.

11. Finally, brethren, farewell. [q] Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the [r] God of love and peace shall be with you. 12. [s] Greet one another with an holy kiss. 13. All the saints salute you. 14. [t] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, *be* with you all. Amen.

r 1 John. 4. 8, 16. Rom. 15. 5, 13, 33. & 16. 20. Phil. 4. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20, 21. Col. 2. 19.

s Rom. 16. 13, 16. 1 Cor. 16. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 26. 1 Pet. 5. 14.

t Num. 6. 23—27 Rev. 1. 4, 5. Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 2, 3. Phil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Tit. 1. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 1 John 1. 3. John 1. 16, 17. Col. 1. 19. Eph. 1. 22, 23. 2 Thes. 2. 16. John 14. 16—23, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 13—15.

Verses 11—14. The apostle here,

1. Takes his leave of them with affectionate exhortations. *Finally, my brethren, farewell: Be perfect;* united to each other, walking in the purity of the gospel, and reforming every disorder; *be of good comfort; be of one mind;* let every dispute be silenced, and the spirit of party subside. *Live in peace* and love, *and the God of love and peace shall be with you,* and dwell in the midst of you with his especial presence and blessing. *Greet one another with an holy kiss. All the saints salute you,* wishing you all prosperity in your souls and bodies, in time and in eternity. *Note,* (1.) Union in affection and sentiment is the sure mark of the prosperity of the church. (2.) The God of love and peace commands us to be like himself, and that is to be happy.

2. He concludes with his apostolical benediction. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all;* may the grace of a dying Redeemer, which includes all spiritual and eternal blessings, be your portion! may a sense of the Father's love, the spring and source of your redemption, be warm upon your hearts! and may the richest communications from the Holy Ghost, revive, quicken, strengthen, comfort, stablish you ever more and more, till by the mighty operation of this Triune God, your salvation shall be completed in glory everlasting, and your happy service be his never-ending praise! Such is my prayer for you; cease not to join in my supplications for these inestimable benefits; and let every soul among you with faith and fervency say, *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

GALATIANS.

Introduction.

THIS epistle of Paul, written, as is supposed, about the year 59, is directed not to the church or churches of a single city, as some others are; but of a country or province; for so Galatia was. It is very probable, that these Galatians were first converted to the Christian faith by his ministry; but if he was not the instrument of planting, yet at least he had been employed in watering these churches, as is evident from this epistle itself, and also from Acts xviii. 23. where we find him going over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

While he was with them, they had expressed the greatest esteem and affection both for his person and ministry, but he had not been long absent from them, before some Judaizing teachers had got in among them, by whose arts and insinuations they were soon drawn into a meaner opinion both of the one and of the other.

That which these false teachers chiefly aimed at, was to draw them off from the truth as it is in Jesus, particularly in the great doctrine of justification, which they grossly perverted, by asserting the necessity of joining the observation of the law of Moses with faith in Christ in order to it; and the better to accomplish this their design, they did all they could to lessen the character and reputation of the apostle, and to raise up their own on the ruins of his; representing him as one who, if he was to be owned as an apostle, yet was much inferior to others, and particularly who deserved not such a regard as Peter, James, and John, whose followers, it is likely, they pretended to be: and in both these attempts they had but too great success.

This was the occasion of his writing this epistle; wherein he expresses his great concern, that they had suffered themselves to be so soon turned aside from the faith of the gospel; vindicates his own character and authority as an apostle against the aspersions of his enemies, showing that his mission and doctrine were both divine, and that he was not, upon any account, *behind the very chiefest of the apostles*, 2 Cor. xi. 5. He then sets himself to assert and maintain the great gospel doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law, and to obviate some difficulties that might be apt to arise in their minds concerning it: and having established this important doctrine, he exhorts them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, cautions them against the abuse of this liberty, gives them several very needful counsels and directions; and then concludes the epistle with giving them the true character of those false teachers by whom they had been insnared; and, on the contrary, reminds them of his own temper and behaviour. In all which his great scope and design was, to recover those that had been perverted, to settle those that might be wavering, and to confirm such among them as had kept their integrity.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

In this chapter, after the preface or introduction, ver. 1—6. *the apostle severely reproves these churches for their defection from the faith,* ver. 6—10. *And then proves his own apostleship, which his enemies had brought them to question:* 1. *From his end and design in preaching the gospel,* ver. 10. 2. *From his having received it by immediate revelation,* ver. 11, 12. *For the proof of which he acquaints them,* (1.) *What his former conversation was,* ver. 13, 14. (2.) *How he was converted, and called to the apostleship,* ver. 15, 16. (3.) *How he behaved himself afterwards,* ver. 16. to the end.

a See Rom. 1. 1, 5. Mat. 10. 2. Acts 9. 3, 6, 15. & 22. 10, 15. & 26. 16—18. ver. 11, 12. ch. 2. 7. Tit. 1. 3. Eph. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 12. 4, 11, 12. & 11. 5.

b Eph. 1. 19, 20. Acts 2. 24, 32. & 3. 15 & 4. 10. & 10. 40. & 13. 30, 35. Rom. 4. 24, 25. & 8. 11. & 6. 4, 9. & 10. 9. 1 Cor. 6 14. & 15. 15. 2 Cor. 4. 14. Col. 2. 12. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Heb. 13. 20. 2 Tim. 2. 8.

c See Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. & 13. 14. Jude 2.

1. [a] PAUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who [b] raised him from the dead,) 2. And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: 3. [c] Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ, 4. Who [d] gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this [e] present evil world, [f] according to the will of God and our Father: 5. To whom [g] *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

d Ch. 2. 20. Mat. 20. 28. John 1. 29. & 10. 11, 15. Eph. 5. 2. Tit. 2, 14. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 2. 24. & 3. 18. Heb. 9. 14. 1 John 2. 2. & 4. 9, 10. e John 15. 19. & 17. 14. ch. 6. 14. 1 John 2. 16. & 5. 4, 5, 19. Rev. 4. 3. with Is. 65. 17. Heb. 2. 5. & 6. 5. f Rom. 4. 25. & 8. 3, 32. Eph. 1. 9—11. & 2. 4—10. g See Rom. 16. 27. Jude 25. Ps. 115. 1. Eph. 3. 21.

Verses 1—5. Among the heaviest burdens which lay on the great apostle Paul was the care of all the churches: where many errors soon crept in, and Judaizing teachers sought to corrupt the simplicity of the gospel, and therewith to decry him who was the zealous defender of its glorious privileges. No where had these seducers practised with more success than among the Galatians: for whose recovery to the purity of the faith, the apostle writes this epistle.

1. He begins with his apostolical address. *Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man,* not assuming a character to which he had no title, nor acting under any ordination merely human, *but* immediately called to this high office, and commissioned *by Jesus Christ* himself, who personally appeared to him; *and God the Father, who raised him from the dead* declaring thereby his perfect satisfaction in the atonement and righteousness of his Son; and therefore Paul's commission bore this eminent distinction, that, whilst the chief apostles were only ordained by Jesus in the days of his humiliation, the great apostle of the Gentiles received his call and office from the glorified Redeemer, exalted on his mediatorial throne.

2. All the brethren which were with him joined the apostle in his address to the churches of Galatia, concurring with him in sentiment, and declaring thereby their approbation of the doctrines which he maintained, and of the just reproofs he was about to give. No titles of respect or regard are added: their general defection probably withheld him from making any honourable mention of them as was usual in his other epistles. Only,

3. He wishes that the best of blessings may attend them. *Grace be with you,* in all its happy effects of pardon, comfort, strength, purity, perseverance, *and peace* the consequence thereof: both proceeding as a free and sovereign act of favour *from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,* the meritorious cause of all our mercies, *who gave himself for our sins* in infinite compassion to our wretched state, humbling himself to take our nature upon him, and as our substitute and representative to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, *that he might* obtain eternal redemption for us, and *deliver us from this present evil world,* from the guilt and condemnation under which it lies, and from the power of iniquity by which it is enslaved; and this hath our adored Redeemer done for us *according to the will of God, and, or even, our Father,* who is reconciled to us by the blood of his cross, and regards us as dear children. *To whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen!* Both to the Father and his coequal Son, for such a contrivance of infinite love and grace, in order to the redemption of lost souls, be all praise and honour ascribed by men and angels, in time and to eternity. *Note,* (1.) The oblation of Jesus once for all, is the only substantial foun-

dation of the sinner's hope towards God. (2.) This world in which we dwell is full of evil: we must in spirit and temper be delivered from it, or we shall be condemned with it.

6. I marvel that ye are so [n] soon removed from him that [l] called you into the grace of Christ unto [k] another gospel: 7. Which is not another; [l] but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8. But [m] though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you [n] than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

h Ch. 3. 1—5. & 4. 9. & 5. 7. Ps. 106. 13. Jer. 2. 13, 31.
i Ch. 5. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 3. Rom. 8. 28, 30. & 9. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9.
k 2 Cor. 11. 4. Rom. 10. 3.
l Acts 15. 1, 5, 24. ch. 5. 10, 12. & 6. 12. Acts 20. 29. 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 4, 13. ch. 4. 2. Heb. 13. 8.
m 2 Cor. 11. 14. 1 Cor. 16. 22. ver. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Tim. 2. 17, 18. Tit. 3. 10.
n Deut. 4. 2. & 12. 32. Prov. 30. 6. Rev. 22. 18.

Verses 6—9. Abrupt the apostle hastens to his point, and expresses,

1. His astonishment at their defection from the faith. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ,* from the blessed God himself, and from us his ministers, *unto another gospel,* different from that which we preached to you, wherein the glorious grace of a Redeemer was exalted: *which* new doctrine *is not indeed another* gospel, bringing no glad tidings to the sinful soul of free pardon and salvation by Jesus Christ, but is clogged with conditions which it is, impracticable for a fallen creature to perform; *but* the truth is *there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ,* destroying the riches of the grace, and adulterating the truth with the base alloy of error. *Note,* (1.) They who in whole or in part would introduce works as the gospel condition of justification before God, are the most dangerous perverters of the souls of men. (2.) There is but one way to regain the lost favour of God, and that is through grace by faith: and they who propose any other must perish with a lie in their right hand.

2. He expresses his detestation of any other pretended gospel besides that which he had preached to them. *But though we, or an angel from heaven,* if we could suppose it possible, *preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed,* and lie down under the most dreadful anathemas of divine vengeance. *As we said before,* with the deepest solemnity I repeat it, *If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received* from us, *let him be accursed.*

10. For [o] do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. 11. But I certify you, brethren, [p] that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it,* but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. 13. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that [q] beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14. [r] And profited in the Jews' religion above many my * equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. 15. But when it pleased God, who [s] separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace, 16. [t] To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; [u] immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18. Then after three years I [x] went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19. But [y] other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, [z] before God, I lie not. 21. [a] Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; 22. And was unknown by face unto [b] the churches of Judea which were [c] in Christ: 23. But they had heard only, [d] that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. 24. And they [e] glorified God in me.

o 1 Thes. 2. 4. 1 Sam. 29. 7. Mat. 28. 14. Jam. 4. 4. Or, *do I now approve myself to men?*
p Ver. 1. 1 Cor. 15. 1, 3. Eph. 3. 3, 8. Acts ix, xxii, xxvi. 2 Cor. 12. 2, 11, 12.
q Acts 8. 3. & 9. 1, 21. & 22. 4. & 26. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Phil. 3. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 13.
r Acts 22. 3. & 26. 5. & 23. 1. Phil. 3. 4—6. Is. 29. 13. Mark 7. 3, 4.
* Gr. *equal in years.*
eir. 35.
s Is. 49. 1. Jer. 1. 5. Mat. 11. 26. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. 1 Cor. 15. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15.
t Mat. 16. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Eph. 1. 17, 18. & 3. 3, 4, 8. Acts 26. 16—18. & 9. 15. & 22. 21. Rom. 11. 13. & 15. 16. ch. 2. 2, 7—9. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11. Col. 1. 27. 1 Cor. 2. 2.
u Mat. 16. 17. Eph. 6. 12. John 13. 19. Prov. 3. 5, 6.
x Or *returned.* Acts 9. 26.
y 1 Cor. 9. 5. Mark 6. 3. Mat. 10. 2—4. & 13. 55. Acts 2. 13, 14. & 8. 1. Jam. 1. 1. Jude 1.
z Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 23. & 11. 11, 31. 1 Thes. 2. 5, 10. 1 Tim. 5. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 1.
a Acts 9. 30. & 11. 25.
b Ver. 2. 1 Thes. 2. 14.
c Rom. 16. 2, 3, 7—13. & 13. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 21. John 15. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. & 2. 14. Acts ix, xxii, xxvi. & 9. 21.
d 1 Cor. 15. 8—10. 1 Tim. 1. 11—14.
e Acts 11. 18. Col. 1. 3, 4. Luke 7. 16. & 15. 32. 1 Tim. 2. 11—19. Acts 9. 31.

Verses 10—24. To vindicate himself from the aspersions of the Judaizing teachers who affected to set up Peter and the other apostles as far his superiors, he enters into a detail of his divine mission and ministry.

1. He declares the scope of his preaching. *Do I now persuade men, or God,* endeavouring to engage them to obey human inventions, or to submit to the gospel of the blessed God? *or do I seek to please men,* and ingratiate myself with you, as the Jewish zealots? No. *For* I am well persuaded, that, *if I yet pleased men,* and made that my study to accommodate the gospel to their prejudices, *I should not be the servant of Christ,* and with fidelity and simplicity discharge the trust committed to me. *Note,* (1.) To please God, not men, must be our great design. (2.) It is impossible that our fidelity in preaching the gospel should not offend those who, in pride and self-sufficiency, cannot bear the humbling truth of the necessity of submission to the righteousness of God therein revealed.

2. He demonstrates to them the divinity of his mission. The gospel he preached was not *after man,* a human invention, or received at second hand from men's information, but immediately by *revelation* from the exalted Jesus, now entered into his glory. They knew his past conversation: what a bigot he had been for Judaism: how greatly he had excelled many of his fellow-students in rabbinical knowledge, exactly skilled in all their laws and traditions: to propagate these he had exerted all his zeal, and, with rage approaching madness, had persecuted the professors of the Christian name with the savage fury of the most barbarous foe. No prejudices of education, therefore, could have led him to embrace Christianity; but, on the contrary, such a rivetted enmity against it, could be only overcome by some very extraordinary method of conviction. *But when it pleased God,* who hath in his hands the hearts of all men, *who* of his rich and sovereign grace *separated me from my mother's womb,* having predestinated me for his own to serve him in the gospel, *and*

called me by his grace, in such a distinguishing manner, when I was going with the most implacable enmity to persecute the disciples at Damascus; when, I say, God graciously was pleased then *to reveal his Son in me,* making my inmost soul, by divine irradiation, acquainted with the fulness of the redemption which is in him, *that I might preach him among the heathen,* as peculiarly ordained to be their apostle, *immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood,* consulting no longer my own worldly ease, interest, or honour, or asking advice about what God had so clearly determined: *neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them which were apostles before me,* as if I needed instruction, or a confirmation in my office; *but,* divinely taught and ordained, *I* immediately entered on my work, and *went into Arabia,* where the gospel had not been preached before, *and returned again unto Damascus. Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem, to see Peter,* not to learn of him, but to communicate the success of my labours, and enjoy the comforts of Christian fellowship with him and the rest of the brethren there; *and abode with him* only *fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother,* or near kinsman; so that I received not my knowledge or commission from them. *Now the things which I write unto you, behold before God, I lie not,* but with the deepest solemnity appeal to him for the truths I advance. *Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,* preaching the gospel; *and was,* during many years, *unknown by face unto the churches which were in Christ,* and professed faith in his name; so that from them I could not have received any knowledge of the truth. *But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past, now preached the faith which he once destroyed. And they glorified God in me,* ascribing to him praise for my wondrous conversion. *Note,* (1.) Christ must be revealed by his Spirit in us, as well as by his word to us, if we would know him to the saving of our souls. (2.) When occasion requires it, we honour God by a solemn appeal to him.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 59.

The apostle in this chapter continues the relation of his past life and conduct, and with the same view, 1. *Informs them of another journey which he took to Jerusalem many years after the former, and how he behaved himself at that time,* ver. 1—11. *And,* 2. *Gives them an account of another interview he had with the apostle Peter at Antioch, and how he was obliged to behave himself towards him there. And from the subject matter of that conversation, he proceeds to discourse on the great doctrine of justification by faith in Christ without the works of the law; which it was the main design of this epistle to establish, and which he enlarges more upon in the two following chapters.*

cir. 52.
1. [a] THEN, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. 2. And I went up [b] by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which [c] I preach among the Gentiles, but [d] privately to them which were of reputation, [e] lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. 3. [f] But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4. And [g] that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: 5. [h] To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. 6. But of those [i] who seemed to be somewhat; whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: [k] God accepteth no man's person; for they who seemed *to be somewhat* in conference added nothing to me. 7. But, contrariwise, when they saw that the [l] gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the* [m] *gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter; 8. (For he that [n] wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was [o] mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) 9. And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be [p] pillars, perceived [q] the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; [r] that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. 10. [s] Only *they would* that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

a Acts 15. 2. ch. 1. 18.
b Acts 13. 2. & 19. 21. & 16. 9, 10. & 18. 9. & 21. 17, 18. & 23. 11.
c Ver. 9. Acts 9. 15. & 26. 17, 18. Rom. 1. 16, 17. & 15. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 23. & 2. 2. Eph. 3. 8. Acts 15. 1, 2.
d Or *severally.* Ver. 9. 1 Cor. 9. 5 Acts 1. 13.
e Mat. 10. 16. Eph. 5. 15. Phil. 2. 16. 1 Cor. 9. 26. M c. 7. 5. 1 Thes. 3. 5.
f 1 Cor. 9. 21. with Acts 16. 3. & 15. 10. 24, 28, 29. ch. 5. 2, 4.
g Acts 15. 1, 10, 24. 2 Cor. 11. 13, 15, 20, 26. ch. 3. 25. & 4. 9. & 5. 1, 13. & 6. 12, 13. & 3. 1.
h Ver. 14. Col. 2. 7, 8. 2 Cor. 7. 8. & 3. 7, 8 ch. 3. 1, 2. & 4. 16, 21. with 2 Thes. 2. 17. Phil. 2. 15.
i Ver. 2, 9. ch. 6. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Cor. 11. 5. & 12. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 13. Heb. 13. 7, 17.
k Rom. 2. 11. Deut. 10. 17. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Job 34. 19. Acts 10. 34. Eph. 6. 9. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17.
l Acts 9. 15. & 22. 21. & 13. 46. & 28. 28. & 26. 17, 18. Rom. 1. 5. & 11. 13. & 15. 16, 19. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11.
m Acts ii—xii. & 15. 7—9, 14.
n Acts ii—v, viii. Mat. 28. 20. Luke 24. 49. John 14. 12.
o Ch. 3. 5. Acts 9. 15. 22—29. & xiii.—xx. Rom. 1 16, 17. & 15. 16, 19. 1 Co 3. 5. 10. & 9. 2. & 4. 15. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. & 11. 5. & 12. 11, 12.
p Mat. 16. 18. Eph. 3. 20. Rev. 21. 14, 19. & 3. 12. Prov. 9. 1. ch. 8. 19. ver. 2, 6.
q Rom. 1. 5. & 12. 3. & 15. 15. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Acts 9. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. ver. 7.
r Acts 15. 23, 25, 30.
s Acts 11. 30. & 24. 17. Rom. 11. 25—28, 31. 1 Thes. 2. 14. Heb. 10. 34. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. 2 Cor. viii, ix. Heb. 13. 16. Jam. 2. 15, 16. 1 John 3. 17. Prov. 19. 17. & 3. 27, 28.

Verses 1—10. The apostle, in vindication of his divine mission and ministry, as in nothing inferior to the other apostles, relates what passed at Jerusalem, when fourteen years after his conversion, he went up thither, with Barnabas and Titus, by a special revelation from God, on occasion of the dissensions which the Jewish teachers had raised in the church at Antioch about the necessity of circumcising the Gentiles, and engaging them to keep the law of Moses.

1. He communicated, and explained in conversation, to those who were of greatest note and *reputation,* the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, in all its freedom and latitude, *but privately,* because of the known prejudices which many of the Jewish Christians entertained concerning the necessity of still observing the law. And this method he took, *lest by any means he should run or had run in vain,* and, through the clamours of the hot zealots for Judaism, his *past* labours should have been in some measure rendered abortive, or his future usefulness be obstructed.

2. Though he acted with all prudence, he made no sinful compliance to their prejudices, maintaining the purity of the gospel, and firm to his principles that the Gentiles were in no manner obliged to the observation of the Mosaical law; therefore, though Titus was a Greek, he was not compelled to be circumcised; nor did the apostles insist upon it. And Paul took Titus, a Gentile Christian and minister of the gospel, on purpose that in him he might bear a public testimony against those false brethren who had craftily insinuated themselves into the church at Antioch, and with prying eyes observed the apostle's conduct at Jerusalem, whether he would there maintain the liberty of the Christian Gentiles from the Mosaical institutions. For they would have been happy if they could have had such a plea as the circumcision of Titus, to urge the same upon the Gentile converts. But *not for an hour* would the apostle and his colleague Barnabas give way to such a dangerous imposition, *that the truth* and freedom *of the gospel* might be maintained in-

violable, and the Gentiles enjoy that entire liberty from every yoke of bondage, which in Christ Jesus was preached unto them. *Note*, False brethren are our most dangerous foes. Against them we need peculiar watchfulness.

3. Though he conferred with the apostles of chief eminence, and who were so preferred to him by the Judaizing teachers, whatever had been the case *formerly* (ποτε,) and whatever privileges they had enjoyed above him, that affected not the matter at present, God, who *accepteth no man's person*, can, when he pleases, reveal his gospel to the bitterest enemy of the truth, and raise the vilest persecutor to the honour of apostleship. However great the names of Peter, James, and John were, *they added nothing* to him, nor contributed the least to his improvement in knowledge; so thoroughly had he been taught of God the mysteries of gospel truth.

4. The issue of the conference was the perfect satisfaction expressed by the apostles at Jerusalem in what they heard; it appearing most undeniably, that the same Lord, who had wrought by Peter's ministry among the Jews, who was more particularly sent to them, had wrought as effectually by Paul among the Gentiles; to whom they therefore concluded the apostleship of the Gentiles was committed. Therefore these pillars of the church, James, Cephas, and John, convinced of the grace and apostleship conferred upon him, with cordial affection gave to him and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; and concurred in their sentiments, that it fully appeared the will of God, that Paul and his fellow-labourer should go to the Gentiles more immediately; whilst their own ministry was more generally confined to the Jews: only they recommended it to them that they should remember the poor saints in Judea, and obtain some relief for them from the Gentile churches; a service in which Paul warmly engaged. So that it was evident, from the result of this conversation, that there was a perfect harmony in doctrine between Paul and the apostles at Jerusalem, and that they fully recognized his divine authority and mission.

11. [t] But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. 12. [u] For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he [x] withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. 13. [y] And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. 14. But when I saw that they [z] walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter [a] before *them* all, [b] If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? 15. [c] We *who are* Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16. [d] Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even [e] we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: [f] for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. 17. But if, [g] while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found [h] sinners, *is* therefore Christ the [i] minister of sin? [k] God forbid. 18. For if [l] I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19. For I [m] through the law [n] am dead to the law, [o] that I might live unto God. 20. [p] I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: [q] and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, [r] who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for [s] if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

t Acts 15. 35. Jude 3. 1 Tim. 5. 20. ver. 5. Acts 15. 5, 10, 24, 28, 29.
u Acts 21. 20. & 10. 28. & 11. 3.
x 1 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Rom. 15. 5, 6. Phil. 1. 10. & 2. 2, 3. Prov. 20. 25.
y Col. 3. 9. Ps. 25. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Eccl. 7. 20. Jam. 3. 2.
z Ver. 12, 13, 15. Tit. 2. 11, 12. 1 Kin. 18. 21. Hos. 7. 8. & 11. 12.
a 1 Tim. 5. 20. Prov. 27. 5. 2 Tim. 4. 2.
b Acts 10. 28. & 11. 3—18. & 15. 10, 24, 28, 29.
c Rom. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4, 5 with Matt. 9. 11. Eph. 2. 3, 12. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.
d Acts 13. 38, 39. Rom. 3. 18, 19—30 & 8. 1—4. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 21. Phil. 3. 9. Heb. 7. 18, 19.
e Rom. 1. 17. & 22, 25, 26, 30. & 4. 3, 24. & 5. 1. ver. 20. Acts 13. 39. & 15. 9, 11. Phil. 3. 9. 2 Cor. 5. 21.
f Rom. 3. 19, 20. ch. 3. 10, 11. Job 9. 2. Ps. 130. 3. & 143. 2. Eccl. 7. 20. Jam. 3. 2.
g Ver. 16, 20. Phil. 3. 9. Rom. 5. 1.
h Rom. 3. 10—19. Gen. 13. 13. Rom. 6. 1. 1 John 3. 9.
i Mat. 1. 21. 1 John 3. 5, 8. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Heb. 9. 14, 25. 1 Cor. 1. 30. & 6. 11.
k Gen. 44. 17. Josh. 22. 29. Rom. 3. 4, 6, 31. & 6. 2, 15.
l Ch. 5. 12. ver. 12. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22.
m Rom. 3. 19, 20. & 7. 8—13. & 10. 4. 5. ch. 3. 24.
n Rom. 6. 11, 14. & 7. 4, 6, 9. & 8. 2. & 14. 7. Col. 3. 3.
o 2 Cor. 5. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 2, 6. ver. 20. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Heb. 9. 14. Luke 1. 74, 75.
p Ch. 5. 24. & 6. 14. Rom. 6. 6. & 8. 3, 4. & 7. 4. Eph. 5. 8. Col. 2. 10, 13. & 3. 3, 4.
q 1 Pet. 1. 8. 2 Cor. 1. 24. & 5. 7. John 15. 4, 5. & 14. 19. Phil. 4. 13. Zech. 10. 12.
r Ch. 1. 4. Mat. 20. 28. Eph. 5. 2. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18.
s Heb. 7. 11. Rom. 11. 6. & 10. 3. & 9. 30—32. ch. 5. 2, 4. Mat. 9. 13.

Verses 11—21. Nothing could serve more effectually to establish the character of the great apostle of the Gentiles than the occurrence here recorded, wherein, so far from being Peter's inferior, as the Judaizing teachers suggested, he appears his faithful and zealous reprover.

1. Peter's fault was, that, at his coming to Antioch, he freely communed with the Gentile Christians, and eat and drank with them, though uncircumcised; but on the arrival of some Jewish brethren sent from James, he temporized, and, for fear of offending the prejudiced Judaizers, to the great discouragement of the Gentile brethren, he suspended his former familiar intercourse with them; and influenced by him, the Jewish Christians at Antioch dissembled likewise, and withdrew from free converse, as before, with their Gentile brethren; and, overcome by such bad examples, even Barnabas himself was carried away with their dissimulation, and, contrary to all his former conduct and teaching, joined in this separation: for which Peter most justly was to be blamed. *Note*, (1.) The fear of men, and undue desire of their esteem, hath sometimes warped the most steady Christians from the simplicity of the gospel. (2.) Bad examples are ever dangerous, especially the examples of those who are high in men's esteem, and whose influence is most extensive.

2. The rebuke Paul gave him was such as his dissimulation deserved. And as the offence given was public; publicly, and to his face, he with noble fidelity withstood him; and, seeing him so sadly decline from the path of truth, and the liberty of the gospel, he addressed himself to Peter, and said unto him, before them all, *If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews*, satisfied that the ceremonial law is no longer binding, *why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews*, and by the example thou hast lately shown wouldest enslave their consciences to the Mosaical institutions, as if necessary to their acceptance with God? What a glaring contradiction appears between such a conduct and your late avowed principles and practice!

3. He suggests the strongest arguments for the unreasonableness of such a conduct, since all distinction of Jew and Gentile now was ceased, both needing the same Redeemer, and expecting to be justified by the same rich grace of the gospel. *We who are Jews by nature*, God's chosen people, and trained up in the law; *and not sinners of the Gentiles*, who in general are looked upon by the Jews as persons abandoned and reprobate; *knowing that a man is not*, cannot be *justified by the works of the law* which none can perfectly fulfil; *but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ* for pardon and acceptance with God,

that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, through that divine righteousness which he wrought out for us; *and not by the works of the law:* and if this was the case with us, much more must the Gentiles have recourse to the same free grace; *for by the works of the law,* moral or ceremonial, *shall no flesh be justified,* none being able to produce a righteousness adequate to its demands. *But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves are found sinners,* as must be the case of those who are under the law, Rom. iii. 9. *is therefore Christ the minister of sin,* who, notwithstanding all he hath done for us and in us, would in such a case leave us under the condemning guilt and prevailing power of sin? *God forbid;* with abhorrence is the thought to be rejected. Yet this would be the consequence of seeking to the law for acceptance with God, *for if I build again the things which I destroyed,* and, after preaching the grace of the gospel, have recourse to the law for justification before God, *I make myself a transgressor,* contradict my own doctrine, and acknowledge myself still under guilt and condemnation, which my faith in Christ hath not removed. So inconsistent was this behaviour therefore in Peter and his associates.

4. Though some might object to the doctrine of free justification without the deeds of the law, the apostle declares his own and every believer's judgment and practice. *for I through the law am dead to the law,* unable to obey it as a covenant of life, and renouncing all my expectations from it, *that I might live unto God,* abiding in a constant state of favour with him through the Redeemer's righteousness, and quickened by his grace to newness of life. *I am crucified with Christ,* as my law-fulfiller; in him the law is satisfied, and hath no more demands upon me than it hath upon the dead: *nevertheless I live* in a state of reconciliation with God, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness; *yet not I* by any inherent power or principle in myself, *but Christ liveth in me;* by virtue of union with him I possess that righteousness which gives me a title to life, and receive from him, as my head of vital influence, his quickening Spirit: *and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live* not after the flesh, but *by the faith of the Son of God,* placing my whole dependence upon him, and drawing continual supplies of grace and strength out of his fulness *who loved me, and gave himself for me,* to make a complete atonement, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness, for me and all who embrace his great salvation. *I do not frustrate the grace of God,* and slight, as of no value, the transcendent favour of God's dear Son, and the righteousness unto life which is in him, as they do who go to the works of the law for acceptance with God: *for if righteousness come by the law,* and were to be obtained by our personal obedience, *then Christ is dead in vain;* for in that case righteousness and salvation might have been obtained without him. *Note,* (1.) We must die to the law, and renounce all hope of being justified thereby, before we can fly to Jesus, and live unto God. (2.) By faith alone is the life of our souls maintained, whilst from the fulness of our Redeemer we derive the constant supplies of grace and strength. (3.) All who either in whole or part place their dependence on their own doings and duties for acceptance with God, they make Christ to have died in vain.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 58.

The apostle, in this chapter, 1. *Reproves the Galatians for their folly in suffering themselves to be drawn away from the faith of the gospel.* 2. *He proves the doctrine which he had reproved them for departing from, viz. That of justification by faith, without the works of the law.* (1.) *From the example of Abraham's justification.* (2.) *From the nature and tenor of the law.* (3.) *From the express testimony of the* Old Testament. *And* (4.) *From the stability of the covenant of God with Abraham. And lest any should hereupon say,* Wherefore then serveth the law? *He answers,* [1.] *It was added because of transgressions.* [2.] *It was given to convince the world of the necessity of a Saviour.* [3.] *It was designed as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. And then he concludes the chapter, by acquainting us with the privileges of Christians under the gospel state.*

1. O FOOLISH Galatians, who hath [a] bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes [b] Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you? 2. This only would I learn of you, Received ye [c] the Spirit by the works of the law, or by [d] the hearing of faith? 3. [e] Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? 4. [f] Have ye suffered * so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain. 5. He therefore that [g] ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

[a] Ch. 1. 6. & 2. 5, 14. & 4. 9, 16. & 5. 7, 8. & 6. 12, 13.
[b] Rom. 15. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2—4. Eph. 3. 8.
[c] Acts 2. 28. & 8. 15. & 15. 8. Heb. 6. 4. Eph. 1. 13, 14. & 4. 30. ver. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 7—13.
[d] Rom. 1. 17. & 10. 16, 17.
[e] Ch. 4. 9, 21. & 5. 7, 8. & 6. 12, 13. Heb. 7. 16, 18, 19. & 9. 9, 10.
[f] 2 John 8. Ezek. 10. 24. Heb. 6. 4—6. 2 Pet. 2. 20—22.
* Or *so great.*
[g] Ver. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 8.

Verses 1—5. With warm expostulation, and sharp rebuke, the apostle upbraids the stupidity and folly of these Galatians, who had departed so grievously from the simplicity of the gospel. *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you,* what emissary of Satan by his craft hath perverted your souls, *that you should not obey the truth,* but depart from the grand principles of the gospel, renouncing the doctrine of free justification through the Redeemer's blood and righteousness? Several things served to aggravate their folly:

1. The clear display of the truth which had been made to them. *Before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth,* and his death and sufferings, with all the effects and design of them, represented in such a lively manner, as if he had been *crucified among you.*

2. What they had received under the ministration of the gospel. *This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit,* his gifts and grace, *by the works of the law,* by the ministration of it or obedience to it, *or by the hearing of faith,* the preaching of justification through the free grace of a Redeemer? They must own it was through the latter: and therefore most inexcusable was their folly to quit that gospel, the blessed and most happy effects of which they had experienced.

3. *Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?* and, forsaking your dependence on the grace of the gospel, do you expect to reach perfection by your obedience to the law? *Are ye so foolish* to have recourse to the ministration of death, in order to obtain righteousness unto life?

4. *Have ye suffered so many things in vain,* for the cause of Christ and the profession of the gospel? How absurd were it to expose yourselves thus, *if it be yet in vain,* and after all you should apostatize, and lose the blessings of your profession and sufferings? You must then of all men be most foolish and most miserable.

5. *He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law,* as the way of justification, *or by the hearing of faith,* in the ministry of the gospel? If these miracles, as was evident, were wrought in confirmation of the doctrines of grace, how preposterously absurd were they to quit the truth confirmed by such divine and incontestable evidence!

6. [h] Even as Abraham believed God, and it was † accounted to him for righteousness. 7. Know ye therefore that [i] they which are of faith, the same are the chil-

[h] Gen. 15. 6. Rom. 4. 3. Jam. 2. 23.
† Or *imputed.*
[i] Rom. 4. 11—18, 16, 24. & 9. 6—8. ver. 29. ch. 4. 28, 31. Mat. 8. 11. John 8. 39.

dren of Abraham. 8. And [k] the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, [l] In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9. [m] So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. 10. [n] For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, [o] Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11. But [p] that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, [q] The just shall live by faith. 12. And [r] the law is not of faith: but, [s] The man that doeth them shall live in them. 13. [t] Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, [u] Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: 14. [x] That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we [y] might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15. Brethren, [z] I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's ‡ covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 16. Now [a] to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17. And this I say, *that* the covenant, that [b] was confirmed before of God in Christ, [c] the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that [d] it should make the promise of none effect. 18. For [e] if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

k Rom. 9. 17. ver. 22. ch. 4. 30.
l Gen. 12. 3. & 18. 18. & 22. 18. & 26. 4. & 28. 14. Ps. 72. 17. Acts 3. 25.
m Ver. 7, 8, 14, 29. Rom. 4. 11—16, 24. Gen. 18. 19.
n Ps. 143. 2. Rom. 3. 19, 20, 28. & 9. 30—32. & 4. 14. & 10. 3. Luke 18. 11—14.
o Deut. 27. 26. Jer. 11. 3. Ezek. 18. 4. Rom. 3. 19, 23. & 6. 23.
p Ch. 2. 16. Rom. 3. 20, 28. 1 Kin. 8. 46. Eccl. 7. 20. Job 9. 3. & 40. 4. Ps. 143. 2. Jam. 2. 10. & 3. 2.
q Hab. 2. 4. Rom. 1. 17. Heb. 10. 38. ch. 2. 19, 20.
r Rom. 4. 4, 5. & 10. 5, 6. & 11. 6. & 9. 30—32.
s Lev. 18. 5. Neh. 9. 29. Ezek. 20. 12. Rom. 10. 5, 6. Mat. 19. 17.
t Is. 53. 4—6, 10—12. Jer. 23. 6. Dan. 9. 24, 26. John 1. 29. & 10. 15. Mat. 20. 28. Rom. 3. 24—26. & 4. 25. & 5. 15—21. & 8. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 5. 21. & 8. 9. ch. 4. 4, 5. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. & 1. 18, 19. Eph. 5. 2. Tit. 2. 14. Rev. 5. 9.
u Deut. 21. 23.
x Ver. 8, 9. Acts 2. 39. & 3. 25, 26.
y Is. 32. 15. & 44. 3—5. Jer. 31. 33. & 32. 40. Ezek. 11. 19. & 36. 27. Joel 2. 28, 29. Zech. 12. 10. Luke 24. 49. Acts 1. 4. & 2. 33. & 10. 44. & 19. 6.
z Rom. 6. 16, 19. 1 Cor. 15. 32. Heb. 9. 17.
‡ Or *testament.*
a Ver. 8, 9, 14, 29. Gen. 12. 7. & 15. 5. & 17. 7. & 21. 12. & 22. 18.
b Gen. 12. 2. & 15. 18. Heb. 2. 3, 4.
c Exod. xx—xxxi. Lev. i—xxvii. Gen. 15. 13. Acts 7. 6. Exod. 12. 40, 41.
d Rom. 4. 13, 14. Heb. 6. 13—18. Num. 23. 19. Tit. 1. 2. 17. & 4. 13, 14. Heb. 6. 15. Mic. 7. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 6.
e Ch. 2. 21. ver. 10, 12. Rom. 8.

Verses 6—18. The apostle having sharply rebuked the folly of the Galatians in departing from the truth, proceeds to confirm the great doctrine of justification by faith alone, from which they had been seduced. And he proves it,

1. By the example of Abraham. He *believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness:* The Lord Messiah, on whom his faith rested, became his justifying righteousness before God, *Know ye therefore, that they who are of faith,* and place their whole dependence for acceptance with God on *the same* object, they *are the* spiritual *children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham,* when neither circumcision was yet instituted, nor the law given, *saying, In thee,* that is, in thy seed, the Messiah, *shall all nations be blessed,* accepted of God in him, and admitted to the participation of all the privileges of God's peculiar people. *So then* it is evident from hence, that *they who be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham,* without the least respect to the works of the law.

2. It is impossible for any man to be justified before God any other way than by faith. *For as many as are of the works of the law,* and seek justification and salvation on the footing of personal righteousness, are, and must be, *under the curse* denounced on every transgressor: *for as it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them;* the least failure in thought, word, or deed, but once, even in the longest life, effectually cuts off the sinner from all hope by the law, and leaves him under the wrath of an offended God. Therefore *Christ,* viewing our desperate guilt and hopeless misery, *hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,* by the price of his own blood, *being made a curse for us,* by divine constitution appointed to be our surety, treated by inexorable justice as a trangressor, and bearing, in his own body on the cross, the punishment due to our iniquities: *for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* And to this most painful, shameful, and accursed death he submitted, *that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ,* and righteousness be imputed to them also for justification; *that we,* whether Jews or Gentiles, being taken into a state of acceptance with God, *might receive the promise of the Spirit,* in all his plenitude of gifts, graces, and consolations, *through faith* in the Redeemer, and not on account of any works of our own, or legal services. *Note,* (1.) Every man, being unable to keep the law in perfection, is consequently a transgressor, and sealed up under wrath. (2.) Despair is written on every effort of the fallen sinner to escape from the condemnation under which he lies. (3.) The gospel brings relief to the desperate, by revealing to us a Divine Substitute, all-sufficient to bear our sins, and to restore us to the enjoyment of God's forfeited favour. (4.) By faith alone we embrace, and actually possess, all the blessings obtained for us in and by the great Redeemer.

3. The scriptures of the Old Testament are express to the point. *But that no man is justified by the works of the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith,* or *the just by faith shall live;* he only who by faith is counted righteous before God, can live here in a state of favour with him, and hereafter be admitted to the enjoyment of him. *And the law is not of faith:* but the way it prescribes for justification is directly opposite, even by perfect personal obedience: *The man that doeth them,* and keeps in spirit and practice, universally and abidingly, all the commands enjoined, *shall live in them:* but every defect, flaw, or failure, brings down death as the wages of sin. So that the saints of old were justified in the same way as we are, and the gospel was preached to them even as unto us.

4. The stability of the covenant made with Abraham could not be vacated by the law. *Brethren, I speak after the manner of men,* and use a familiar instance to elucidate the point in hand: *though it be but a man's covenant, yet, if it be confirmed,* and duly signed and sealed, *no man disannulleth or addeth thereunto,* except the parties interested by mutual consent. *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made,* of justification, adoption, grace, and glory. *He saith not to seeds, as of many,* as if the promises referred to all his *natural* as well as *spiritual* children; *but as of one,* in the singular number, *and to thy seed, which is Christ,* who was *personally* meant, and in whom all the spiritual seed are mystically included. *And this I say,* as evident, *that the covenant which was confirmed before,* to Abraham, *of God in Christ,* or *with respect to Christ,* who was the Mediator, Surety, and Substance of the covenant in his own person, *the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect,* and introduce another way of justification before God different from, yea, contrary to, that which God had before established with

Abraham. *For if the inheritance be of the law,* and the title to eternal life be obtained by personal obedience, *it is no more of promise, but God gave it,* graciously and absolutely, *to Abraham by promise,* which no subsequent dispensation could set aside; for God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent; and therefore the promise of justification, adoption, and the internal inheritance, is in Christ secured to all the spiritual seed of faithful Abraham.

19. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? [f] It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained [g] by angels in the hand of [h] a mediator. 20. [i] Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one; but God is one. 21. *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22. But the scripture hath concluded [k] all under sin, [l] that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23. [m] But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24. Wherefore the law was [n] our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25. But after that faith is come, [o] we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26. [p] For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27. For [q] as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28. [r] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29. [s] And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

f John 15. 22. Rom. 11. 15. & 5. 20. & 7. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 9.
g Acts 7. 53. Heb. 2. 2. Deut. 33. 2
h Deut. 5. 5, 27. John 1. 17. Acts 7. 38.
i Job 9. 33. 1 Tim. 2. 5. with Mal. 3. 6. Deut. 6. 4.
k Rom. 3. 9, 19, 23. & 5. 20. & 11. 32. Ps. 14. 3.
l Rom. 5. 21. & 4. 11—16, 24 ver. 14, 17, 18, 29. ch. 3. 14—17. & 4. 6.
m Ch. 4. 1—3. ver. 24.
n Heb. 7. 19. & 9. 9—11. & 10. 1. Col. 2. 17. Rom. 7. 9. & 10. 4. & 3. 19—31. & 5. 20, 21. ver. 22, 25. Mat. 5. 17, 18. Acts 13. 38, 39. Tit. 3. 3—7.
o Ver. 23. ch. 4. 1—6. Rom. 6. 14. & 7. 4. & 8. 2. Heb. vii—xi.
p Is. 56. 5. John 1. 12. Rom. 8. 15. ch. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 9. 1 John 3. 1, 2.
q Rom. 6. 3—5. & 13. 14.
r Rom. 9. 24. & 3. 29, 30. & 10. 12. 1 Cor. 12. 13. & 7. 19, 24. Eph. 4. 4, 15. & 6. 8. & 2. 14, 15. Col. 3. 11. ch. 6. 15. & 5. 6. John 17. 21.
s Gen. 12. 2. Rom. 9. 7. & 4. 16, 24. Heb. 11. 18. Eph. 3. 6. Rom. 8. 17. Rev. 21. 7. 1 Cor. 3. 22.

Verses 19—29. In answer to the objections which he knew the Jewish zealots would raise, as if he derogated from the honour of the law, and rendered it useless, he states and answers them.

1. They might say, *Wherefore then serveth the law,* if no creature can be justified or saved by it? I reply, *it was added because of transgressions,* in subservience to the design of the covenant of grace, in order to restrain by its penalty, and to convince, discover, and condemn the transgressors, showing them the necessity of a better righteousness than their own, *till the seed should come to whom the promise was made,* and who should be the end of the law for righteousness to every believer; *and it was ordained by angels,* delivered by their ministry, *in the hand of a mediator,* even Moses, who was typical of the great Mediator, Jesus Christ. *Now a mediator is not a mediator of one,* but stands between the two parties; *but God is one,* unchangeable in his purposes and promises; and as the Gentiles were not represented at all at mount Sinai, nor regarded as one of the parties in that covenant, which was a transaction merely between God and Abraham's natural seed, this cannot exclude them from the benefit of the antecedent promise which God made to Abraham and his spiritual seed.

2. Some may argue from hence, *Is the law then against the promises of God,* made to Abraham, and his seed? are they at variance with each other? *God forbid:* there is the most perfect harmony between them. *For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;* and could man have kept in his own person the righteousness of the law, his title would have been clear, and the promised Substitute had been unnecessary; *but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin,* hath shut up every man, as in a dungeon, under the guilt and condemnation of sin, all having come short of the glory of God; *that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe,* and that pardon and salvation might come to us as the free gift of God in him. *But before faith came,* before Christ, the great object of faith, appeared incarnate, and his gospel was more clearly manifested, we, who were under the Mosaic dispensation, *were kept under the law,* as in a castle, separate from other nations, and, as captives under a yoke of bondage, *shut up* in close custody *unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed,* and till Christ, opening to us a door of hope, should bring us from this state of servitude into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster,* and served most directly *to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith:* the *moral* precepts and sanction convinced us of our desperate case, as unable to answer the demands of the law, and obnoxious to the curse; the *ceremonial* institutions led us to look for the divine Substitute, in all the sacrifices which were enjoined for the expiation of sin; and both taught the necessity of justification by faith through a better righteousness than our own. *But after that faith is come,* and Christ, the sinner's Substitute, hath appeared, and is held forth to us in the gospel, *we are no longer under a schoolmaster,* being delivered from our former state of minority and legal bondage. For now ye who believe *are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ,* arrived to maturity of age, and entitled to all the blessings of adoption, which Jesus hath obtained for the many sons whom he shall bring unto glory. *For as many of you,* whether Jews or Gentiles, *as have been baptized into Christ,* by faith really united to him, and by baptism making open profession of him, *have put on Christ,* and, clothed in his divine righteousness, have a title to all spiritual and eternal blessings. *There is* now *neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, their is neither male nor female,* all distinction of nation, sex, condition, is ceased; for ye, who believe, *are all one in Christ Jesus,* united to him in one body, and alike freely partakers of all the privileges contained in the eternal covenant of redemption. *And if ye be Christ's,* living members of his body mystical, *then are ye Abraham's seed;* in a spiritual sense, *and heirs according to the promise,* entitled to claim, under Christ, your great covenant head, all the blessings which he hath purchased for his redeemed. So that circumcision, and the Mosaical institutions, are in no wise necessary, either for present pardon or eternal salvation.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle in this chapter, in correspondence with his great design, shows us, (1.) *The great excellence of the gospel state above the legal,* ver. 1—8. (2.) *The happy change that was made in them at their conversion,* ver. 8—12. (3.) *The affection they had had for him and his ministry,* ver. 11—17. (4.) *The character of the false teachers by whom they had been perverted,* ver. 17, 18. (5.) *The very tender affection he had for them,* ver. 19, 20. (6.) *The history of Isaac and Ishmael, by a comparison taken from which he illustrates the difference between such as trusted on Christ, and such as trusted in the law.*

1. NOW I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2. But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3. Even so we, [a] when we were children, were in bondage under the * elements of the world: 4. But when [b] the fulness of the time was come, [c] God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5. [d] To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6. And because ye are sons, [e] God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7. Wherefore [f] thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

a Ch. 3. 7, 29. & 5. 1. ver. 3. Col. 2. 8. 20. Heb. 7. 16. 18, 19. & 9. 9, 10.
* Or *rudiments.*
b Eph. 1. 10. Mark 1. 15. Dan. 9. 24—26. Ezek. 21. 27. Mal. 3. 1.
c Gen. 3. 15. Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. & 4. 2. Jer. 23. 5. & 31. 22. & 33. 15. & 30. 21. Ezek. 34. 29. Mic. 5. 2. Hag. 2. 7. Zech. 3. 8. & 6. 12. & 9. 9. John 1. 14. & 3. 16. Phil. 2. 7, 8. Mat. 3. 15. & 5. 17. Heb. 2. 14, 16. & 9. 11.
d Mat. 20. 28. Mark 10. 45. Acts 20. 28. Eph. 5. 2. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 18—20. & 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. ch. 3. 13, 26, 29. Heb. 9. 12. & 2. 10. John 1. 12. & 3. 1, 2.
e Mat. 7. 11. Is. 44. 3—5. John 14. 26. Rom. 8. 9, 15. 26, 27. Zech. 12. 10. 2 Cor. 1. 22. Eph. 1. 13. & 4. 30.
f Ver. 5, 6. ch. 3. 7, 13, 14, 26, 27. Rom. 8. 16, 17. Tit. 3. 7. Jer. 3. 19. Rev. 21. 7. 1 Cor 3. 22.

Verses 1—7. The apostle had hinted before, that the state of those who were under the law, was a kind of minority. He here enlarges on that subject, showing the vast superiority of the gospel above the legal dispensation.

1. Before Christ came, they were in a state of non-age. *Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all,* and entitled to the inheritance, *but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father,* when he should be declared of age, and enter upon the management of his own affairs. *Even so we,* and all the people of God under the Old Testament, *when we were children,* in the infantile state of the church, *were in bondage under the elements of the world,* subject to the law, with all the carnal ordinances, which were, as the first letters of the alphabet, designed to lead us on to higher attainments, and kept us, during this time of non-age, in a state of fear, as children who dread correction, if they perform not their appointed tasks. *But,*

2. Under the gospel dispensation our condition is much happier. *When the fulness of the time was come,* appointed in the eternal decree, *God sent forth his Son,* his only begotten, one in the same divine nature and essence, *born of a woman,* that he might be manifested in the flesh, *made under the law,* appointed both to endure the penalty due to our transgressions, and by his obedience to the precept in our stead, *to* bring in an everlasting righteousness for us, that he might *redeem them that are under the law,* under its bondage and curse, *that we,* who believe in him, *might receive the adoption of sons,* admitted to that high privilege, with all its happy consequences. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts,* through the glorified Redeemer, who hath all fulness of the Spirit to bestow on his people, and forms their hearts, by his divine operations, to the temper becoming the high dignity and relation with which they are honoured; so that, through the effectual working of the Holy Ghost, we are enabled, with fiducial dependence, filial love, and sacred joy, to approach a throne of grace, *crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore,* whenever this Spirit is given, *thou art no more a servant, but a son,* admitted to that honourable place in God's family; *and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ,* and entitled to everlasting blessedness: so that to return to the law for acceptance with God, is absurd and needless. *Note,* (1.) God manifest in the flesh is the foundation of every hope to the sinner. (2) If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; the *grace* of adoption always accompanies the *privilege* of adoption. (3.) It is happy for the soul that is enabled with humble boldness to approach a holy God, *crying, Abba, Father*; and claiming this kindred with him, which he will not disown. (4.) Our present adoption is the earnest of our eternal redemption.

8. Howbeit then, [g] when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. 9. But now, [h] after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye † again to the weak and beggarly ‡ elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? 10. [i] Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. 11. [k] I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

g Acts 17. 23. & 14. 15, 16. Rom. 1. 23, 25. Eph. 2. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 3.
h John 10. 3, 4, 14. 1 Cor. 8. 3. & 13. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Phil. 3. 7—11.
† Or *back.*
‡ Or *rudiments.* Ver. 3. Heb. 7. 18. & 9. 10. & 10. 1.
i Rom. 14. 5. Col. 2. 16. Lev. xxiii, xxv. Num. xxviii, xxix.
k 2 Cor. 11. 2, 3. Acts 16 6. ch. 2. 2. & 5. 2, 4. 1 Thes. 3. 5.

Verses 8—11. To show them the glaring folly of their having recourse to the law for justification, he reminds them,

1. Of their former state of Gentilism. *Howbeit then, when ye knew not God,* grossly ignorant of his being, perfections, and attributes, and, in fact, without God in the world, *ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods,* worshipping senseless idols, and ascribing divinity to stocks and stones. In this state of horrid ignorance and guilt did the gospel find them, and called them out of darkness into marvellous light.

2. How absurd then was their defection from the truth which they had received! *But now after that ye have known God,* through the gospel of his dear Son, *or rather are known of God,* approved and accepted of him in the Redeemer, *how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?* What infatuation hath seized you, to leave the gospel dispensation of light, love, and liberty, for the bondage, darkness, and fear of the Mosaical institutions, *weak* and insufficient to cleanse the soul from guilt, or to obtain acceptance with God; and *beggarly,* when compared to the superior riches of gospel grace. *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years,* placing dependence on the ceremonial ordinances of the Jewish ritual, as essential to your justification before God. And where this is the case, *I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain,* and departing thus from the fundamentals of the gospel, notwithstanding all our preaching, you should finally perish. *Note,* (1.) Many who make, for a while, fair professions, prove, in the end, foul apostates. (2.) Nothing more effectually destroys the soul, than a departure from that fundamental point of the gospel, *justification by faith alone.* (3.) It is a deep concern to the true ministers of Christ, when they, in whom they hoped to see the fruit of their labours, disappoint their expectations.

12. Brethren, I beseech you, [l] be as I *am;* for I *am* as ye *are:* [m] ye have not injured me at all. 13. Ye know how [n] through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. 14. And [o] my temptation, which was in my flesh, ye despised not, nor rejected; [p] but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus. 15. ‖ Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, [q] that if *it had been* possible, ye would have plucked out your

l Gen. 34. 15. Phil. 3. 7, 8. ch. 6. 14.
m 2 Cor. 2. 5. ver. 16.
n 1 Cor. 2. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 7. & 11. 6, 30. & 10. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 2.
o Acts 20. 19. Jam. 1. 2. Rom. 12. 15. Heb. 13. 3. see ver. 13.
p Gen. 18. 2, 3. & 19. 1, 2. Mal. 2. 7. Zech. 12. 8. Mat. 10. 40. John 13. 20. 1 Thes. 2. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 20.
‖ Or *what was then.*
q Ver. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 13. Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Tim. 5. 17.

1 Kin. 21. 20. & 22. 8. Prov. 27. 5. Ps. 141. 5. ch. 3. 1—4. & 2. 14. ver. 9—11. ch. 5. 1—9.

own eyes, and have given them to me. 16. [r] Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

Verses 12—16. The apostle here,

1. With affectionate address desires to win upon them. *Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am,* united with me in affection as I am to you, and imitate my example, leaving these Jewish rites as matters of indifference, and cleaving to Christ and his righteousness only for justification before God; *for I am as ye are,* one with you in fervent charity, and we are equally entitled to the privileges of the gospel: *ye have not injured me at all;* the injury you do is to Christ and your own souls; and what I say proceeds not from any private resentment, but purely from a zeal for his glory and your good; and if any disrespect may have been cast on me, I entirely overlook it. *Note,* The rebuke that is tempered with love will always be most effectual.

2. He reminds them of the former affection and esteem which they had showed him. *Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation in the flesh,* (whether his sufferings, weakness of body, or ungraceful appearance, they knew what he meant, though we do not for certain; but whatever it was, he could say) *ye despised not, nor rejected;* did not therefore slight my ministry, nor treat my person with contempt, *but received me as an angel of God,* with all veneration and regard, as a messenger sent from heaven, yea, *even as Christ Jesus;* had he himself appeared in the flesh among you, religious adoration excepted, ye could not have paid him greater respect. *Where is then the blessedness you spoke of?* those ardent wishes for my happiness, and the delight you expressed in the gospel which I preached unto you? *for I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them unto me,* counting nothing too great to testify the sense of your gratitude towards me. *Note,* Many, in their first love, are all on fire for Christ, and never think they can enough testify their regard to the ministers of their conversion, who by and by grow cold or perverted from the truth, and treat with contempt those whom they once respected as almost angelical.

3. He expostulates with them on the strange alteration which now appeared. *Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth,* and kindly warn you of the deadly consequences of your defection from the purity of the gospel? *Note,* (1.) Truth, honestly spoken, often creates us enemies. (2.) Ministers may expect that their fidelity will offend. (3.) Whether men will hear or forbear, we must speak, nor fear any consequences.

s Rom. 10. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 2. ch. 6. 12. Phil. 2. 21.

17. [s] They zealously affect you, *but* not well; yea, they would exclude * you, that ye might affect them. 18. But *it is* good to be zealously affected always in *a* good *thing*, and not only when I am present with you.

* Or *us.*

Verses 17, 18. St Paul knew the spirit and temper with which the Judaizing teachers acted, and he,

1. Warns the Galatians of it. *They zealously affect you,* and pretend great zeal for you, *but not well;* their professions are dissembled, and their designs crafty; *yea, they would exclude you* from me and your true friends, who preach the pure gospel to you, *that you might affect them,* and yield your consciences up to their direction. *Note,* All is not gold which glitters; we should try, before we trust: hypocrisy, for selfish ends, can put on the fairest guise of truth.

2. He points out to them the rule they should follow. *But it is good,* and the proof of an excellent spirit, *to be zealously affected always in a good thing,* or to a good man, *and not only when I am present with you,* whilst an unsteady, wavering conduct shows that the heart is not well grounded in the truth, and discovers a dishonourable levity and inconstancy.

19. [t] My little children, of whom I [u] travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, 20. I [x] desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for [y] I stand in doubt of you. 21. Tell me, ye [z] that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? 22. For it is written, [a] That Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. 23. [b] But he *who was* of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman *was* by promise. 24. Which things are [c] an allegory: for these are the two [d] covenants; the one from the mount Sina, [e] which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. 25. For this Agar is mount Sina in Arabia, and † answereth to Jerusalem [f] which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26. But [g] Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27. For it is written, [h] Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. 28. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are [i] the children of promise. 29. [k] But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. 30. Nevertheless, what saith the scripture? [l] Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. 31. So then, brethren, [m] we are not children of the bond woman but of the free.

t Ch. 1. 6. & 3. 1. 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 5. 5, 10. Philem. 10. Jam. 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 23. Col. 1. 27.
u 1 Cor. 2. 2—5. 2 Cor. 11. 28, 29. Col. 2. 1. & 1. 9—11, 28, 29.
x Rom. 1. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 4. 19, 21. 2 Thes. 2. 17, 18.
y Or *I am perplexed for you.* Ver. 11.
z Rom. 9. 30—32. & 10. 2, 3. ver. 9. Mat. 22. 29. Heb. 5. 11, 12.
a Gen. 16. 15. & 21. 1, 2. Acts 7. 8. Heb. 11. 11.
b Gen. 16. 4. & 17. 6, 16. & 18. 10, 14. Rom. 9. 6, 7. John 8. 39.
c Hos. 12. 10. Ezek. xv, xvi, xix, xxiii, xxxvii. Mat. xiii. Luke xv, xvi.
d Or *testaments.* Heb. 8. 7, 8. & 9. 15—17.
e Ch. 5. 1. Rom. 8. 15. Acts 15. 10. Heb. 2. 15.
† Or *is in the same rank with.*
f Luke 19. 41—44. & 21. 24. Rom. 9. 30—32. & 10. 2, 3. & 11. 7—11.
g Is. 2. 2. Heb. 12. 22. Rev. 3. 12. & 21. 2, 10. Phil. 3. 20. John 8. 36. Rom. 8. 1, 2. & 6. 14, 18. & 7. 4. Eph. 2. 15. 2 Tim. 1. 7. ch. 5. 1. Ps. 87. 4, 5.
h Is. 54. 1—5. Mat. 8. 11, 12. Rev. 7. 4, 9. Gen. 49. 10.
i Rom. 9. 8. & 4. 13, 16, 17. ch. 3. 7, 9, 26, 29. Acts 3. 25
k Gen. 21. 9. Job 19. 28. Mat. 23. 34, 37. Acts iv—viii, xii—xiv, xvii, xviii, xxi—xxv. 1 Thes. 2. 14, 15. Heb. 10. 33, 34. ch. 5. 11. & 6. 12—14.
l Gen. 21. 10, 12. John 8. 35. Mat. 8. 11, 12. Rom. 11. 7. ch. 3. 8, 22. Ezek. 26. 17.
m Rom. 8. 1, 2, 15. 2 Tim. 1. 7. Heb. 2. 14, 15. John 8. 36. ch. 3. 29. & 5. 1, 13. 1 John 3. 1. 2 John 1. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2—4, 23.

Verses 19—31. To engage their hearts, and prevail on them to return from their sad defection from the truth,

1. He expresses his tender affection towards them. *My little children,* dear to me, as such amidst all the weakness you discover, *of whom I travail in birth again,* with such agonies of spirit, longing for your present recovery, as when I first desired to turn you from your foul idolatry, *until Christ be formed in you,* your souls effectually brought under the influence of his gospel, and his image stamped upon your hearts; *I desire to be present with you,* that I might more fully enter upon the subject, confound the gainsayers, and defend the fundamental articles of Christianity from which you have swerved; *and,* if it so pleased the Lord to make my preaching effectual to your conversion, *to change my voice* from rebuke to consolation; *for* I own at present, *I stand in doubt of you,* whether you have ever truly believed to the saving of your souls, and may not yet be cast away. *Note,* (1.) Ministers travail in birth for immortal souls, and feel

an affection for those whom they have begotten in the gospel, like the tender mother's sensibility towards her infant offspring. (2.) Christ can never be formed in the heart where self-righteousness and self-independence still prevail. (3.) It is no charity to think well, when we see evidently what is evil, though we wish to change our voice, and to behold a happy reformation.

2. He expostulates with the Judaizers, who sought justification by the deeds of the law. *Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?* If you attentively considered the history of Abraham, you would see the folly of your attempt. *For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid,* Hagar an Egyptian, *the other by a free-woman,* Sarah. And *he who was of the bond-maid,* Ishmael, *was born after the flesh,* in the ordinary course of nature: *but he of the free-woman,* Isaac, *was by promise,* given of God, when both his parents were naturally incapable of issue. *Which things are an allegory,* or *allegorized,* and have a spiritual meaning, beyond the mere letter of the words; *for these,* Hagar and Sarah, *are the* figures of the *two covenants; the one from the mount Sina, which gendereth to bondage,* begetting a slavish spirit, and leaving the soul under condemnation, *which is Agar,* and represented by her. *For this Agar is mount Sina in Arabia;* and her being cast out with her son, is a lively figure of the rejection of those who are under the law, which was delivered on that mountain, *and* this bond-woman *answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children,* abandoned for their infidelity, and excluded from all the blessings of the covenant. *But Jerusalem which is above,* the church of the redeemed, who by faith in Christ look for glory and immortality, *is free* from all the condemnation of sin and the law, of *which* Sarah *is* the type, and may be considered as *the mother of us all,* whether Jews or Gentiles, who, like her son Isaac, are entitled to all the promised blessings. *For it is written,* with particular reference to Sarah and Hagar, *Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not;* thou Gentile land, which, like Sarah, hast long been without ever bringing forth one child for God, now exult in thy vast progeny, *for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband,* more converts springing from among the heathen, where all the hope of such a seed was despaired of, than are to be found among those who, under the Sinai covenant, were, during so many hundreds of years, espoused to the Lord as their husband. *Now we, brethren,* who through grace are joined to Christ by faith, *as Isaac was, are the children of the promise,* and heirs of the eternal inheritance. *But as then he that was born after the flesh,* (Ishmael) *persecuted,* with mockery and reproaches, *him that was born after the Spirit,* to wit, Isaac, the child of the promise, *even so it is now,* the carnal Jews, who contend for justification by the works of the law, deride and persecute us, who maintain that justification is by faith alone. *Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman;* and so surely will they be excluded from the heavenly inheritance, who seek it by the deeds of the law. *So then we, brethren,* who expect justification by faith only, *are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free,* and shall inherit that eternal life, from which they who are of the law, and depend upon their own doings for their acceptance with God, must be for ever excluded. *Note,* (1.) To understand the Scriptures, we must look further than the letter. (2.) Reproach and ridicule are, in God's account, persecution; and this, at least all who live godly in Christ Jesus, must endure.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 58.

In this chapter the apostle (1.) *applies his foregoing discourse: exhorting them to stand fast in the liberty of the gospel,* ver. 1—12. (2.) *He cautions them against abusing their liberty,* ver. 13—15. (3.) *Exhorts them to walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh, enumerating the works of each,* ver. 16—25.

1. STAND [a] fast therefore in the [b] liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and [c] be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. 2. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that [d] if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3. For I [e] testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he [f] is a debtor to do the whole law. 4. [g] Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. 5. For [h] we through the Spirit wait [i] for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6. [k] For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. 7. [l] Ye did run well; * who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? 8. [m] This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you. 9. [n] A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. 10. [o] I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but [p] he that troubleth you shall bear *his* judgment, whosoever he be. 11. And I, brethren, [r] if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. 12. [r] I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

[a] Prov. 23. 23. Jude 3. 1 Cor. 16. 13. & 15. 58. Heb. 3. 6, 14. & 4. 14. & 10. 23.
[b] John 8. 32, 36. Rom. 6. 14, 18. & 7. 7. 1 Cor. 8. 9. & 9. 19. ch. 3. 7. 13, 25, 26. & 4. 5, 26, 28, 31. & 2. 4. Is. 9. 2, 4.
[c] Ch. 4. 9, 21. Acts 15. 10. Mat. 23. 4. Heb. 9. 8—11. Col. 2. 16—22. 2 Pet. 2. 19 20.
[d] Acts 15. 1, 24. ch. 2. 3—5. Rom. 9. 31, 32. & 10. 2, 3.
[e] Acts 20. 21, 24. Neh. 9. 26. 1 Thes. 4. 6. Eph. 4. 17.
[f] Ch. 3. 10. Rom. 9. 31.
[g] Ch. 2. 21. Rom. 4. 4, 5. & 7. 2, 4. & 9. 31, 32. & 10. 2, 3. Heb. 12. 15—17. & 10. 38.
[h] Rom. 8. 13, 26. Gen. 49. 18.
[i] Col. 1. 5. Rom. 8. 24. Tit. 2. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 8.
Rom. 5. 1—5, 10, 21.
[k] 1 Cor. 7. 19. & 8. 8. ch. 6. 15. Rom. 5. 25—29. & 3. 28—31. ch. 3. 26—28. Col. 3. 11. Jam. 2. 22. 1 Thes. 1. 3.
[l] Mat. 13. 21. 1 Cor. 9. 24. ch. 3. 1. Heb. 12. 1.
* Or *who did drive you back?*
[m] Ch. 1. 6. & 3. 1. & 4. 17.
[n] 1 Cor. 5. 6. & 15. 33. 2 Tim. 2. 17. with Mat. 13. 33.
[o] 2 Cor. 2. 3. & 8. 22. with ch. 1. 6. & 4. 11.
[p] Ch. 1. 7. & 3. 1. & 4. 17. & 6. 12, 13. Acts 15. 1, 10, 24. 1 Cor. 4, 5, 13. 2 Cor. 10. 6.
[q] Ch. 6. 12, 17. & 4. 29. 1 Cor. 1. 23. Acts 16. 3. ch. 2. 3.
[r] Josh. 7. 25. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, 13. 2 Cor. 10. 6. ch. 1. 8, 9. Tit. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 20.

Verses 1—12. Having established the doctrine which he undertook to prove, of free justification by faith alone, without the works of the law, he passes on to exhort them steadily to hold fast the truth. *Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free* from the curse of the law; and its obligation as a covenant of works, seeing for us he hath endured the one and fulfilled the other: *and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage,* and by submitting to circumcision, return to the Mosaical law, as obligatory, and necessary to salvation. *Note,* (1.) Every believer is Christ's freed-man, and hath nothing to fear from the law as denouncing a curse, and owes it no obedience as a covenant. (2.) The liberty of the gospel is not a liberty to sin, but to serve God, with freedom of Spirit and willing obedience. The apostle enforces his exhortation with several arguments.

1. *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.* If you depend on this as essential to your justification before God, all Christ hath done and suffered will be of no avail to you, ver. 4. *ye are fallen from grace,* and excluded from all the blessings of that gospel, whose doctrines you once professed to hold. *Note,* The moment we pretend to join any thing of our own, any doings, duties, desires, or deserts, to Christ's finished work of atonement and righteousness, this is so high a contempt upon him, as must necessarily cut us off from all the blessings of that complete salvation which he hath wrought out, and of which he expects to have the entire glory.

2. Every man, who was circumcised, was obliged to perfect obedience to the law, under the penalty of the curse it denounces. *For I testify again* (so earnest am I that this important matter be clearly understood) *to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to keep the whole law;* and having laid himself under such an obligation, must perish under the least failure, whilst he expects eternal life on the footing of his own obedience.

3. *For* even *we*, who are Jews, whose consciences have been enlightened to see the spiritual demands of the law, despairing of acceptance with God that way, do, *through the Spirit*, under his divine illumination and influence, *wait for the hope of righteousness by faith*, expecting earnestly and patiently that eternal life which God hath promised, not by the works of the law, but through faith in the righteousness of our great Redeemer, as our only sufficient title and availing plea: and if the Jews were thus necessitated to renounce all dependence on their circumcision, and the legal institutions under which they had been brought up, what folly would it be for Gentiles, who had never been subject to the law, to have recourse thereto? *Note*, Our hope towards God is founded on a better righteousness than our own, even on that of our divine Substitute and Surety.

4. The gospel hath cancelled all distinction of Jew and Gentile. *For in Christ Jesus*, and under that gracious dispensation which he hath introduced, *neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision*, as a recommendation to God's favour, *but* it is *faith that worketh by love*, that alone is available to salvation; faith, which lays our whole dependence on Christ alone, and from a confidence in his love, engages our souls in love to him, and in universal benevolence to mankind. *Note*, (1.) Christ is to the believer all in all. (2.) Faith justifies, not as a grace in us, but as it receives and embraces the divine righteousness provided in the gospel, and leads us to renounce every other hope. (3.) Wherever faith is unfeigned, the genuine fruits of love will spring from it, and hereby it shall be proved and evidenced.

5. It was the more grievous for them to depart from the faith, whose beginnings hath been so exceedingly promising. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you* from proceeding in the happy ways of the gospel, and hath diverted you from your course, *that you should not obey the truth*, which once you embraced? *This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you;* these Judaizing sentiments I never taught you; and God, by his Spirit in the gospel, laid down a quite different method for your acceptance before him. *Note*, (1.) Many run well for a season, who afterwards falter in their heavenly course. (2.) It should be matter of serious inquiry to us, what hath turned us aside or retarded us in our Christian race? (3.) They who receive the truth in the light of it, must show their love of it also by the unfeigned obedience of their hearts thereunto.

6. The insinuation of such dangerous tenets was likely to produce the most fatal effects. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.* Where once a departure from the principles of truth begins, like the plague it spreads through the whole body; and one corrupt member in the church may communicate the most fatal and pernicious heresies to the whole.

7. The apostle, notwithstanding the fears he could not but entertain, yet charitably expresses his confidence in many of them, that they would resist these innovations. *I have confidence in you through the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded*, and cleave unshaken to the principles of the gospel: *but he that troubleth you*, (ὁ ταράσσων) the arch-heretic, and author of these pernicious opinions, *shall bear his burden*, and be laid under the just censures of the church, *whosoever he be*, however great and distinguished; at least the righteous judgment of God shall surely overtake him at the last.

8. He exculpates himself from every insinuation, which these seducers suggested, as if he himself was of their sentiments. *And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision* as necessary to salvation, which they would make you believe, *why do I yet suffer persecution* from the Jewish zealots, my most envenomed foes? *then is the offence of the cross ceased:* if this were the case, there would be no reason for them to be any longer exasperated with me. His sufferings therefore proved the zeal wherewith he opposed a notion so subversive of the fundamentals of Christianity.

9. He, with just indignation, expresses his earnest wish, that these troublers of the church's peace had their deserts. *I would they were even cut off that trouble you*, excommunicated from the society of the faithful, or silenced by the righteous vengeance of God. *Note*, The troublers of the church's peace, who broach their destructive opinions, sow dissensions, and promote schisms in the undivided body of Christ, shall be severally dealt with in the day of recompense.

13. For, brethren, [s] ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; [t] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15. [u] But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

s Ver. 1. ch. 4. 5—7, 26, 28, 31. 1 Cor. 8. 9. & 9. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 16. Rom. 14. 13, 14. ch. 6. 1, 2. with 2 Pet. 2. 19, 20. Jude 3, 4.

t Lev. 19. 18. Mat 7. 12. & 22. 38, 39. Rom. 13. 8—10. Jam 2. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 1 Cor. 13. 4—7. 2 Pet. 1. 5—8. Heb. 13. 1.

u 2 Cor. 12. 20. Jam. 3. 14—16. & 4. 1. Is. 9. 20, 21. ver. 26.

Verses 13—15. As the apostle had before exhorted them to hold fast their liberty, he here teaches them wherein that liberty consisted. *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh*, as if you were discharged from every moral obligation, and might gratify the corrupt desires of the flesh and of the mind; *but* the gospel of grace teaches us a different lesson, and engages us, by the most powerful principle, even *by love*, to *serve one another*, in every instance of brotherly affection seeking to promote each other's spiritual, temporal, and eternal interests. *For all the law is fulfilled in one word*, all the precepts of the second table are summed up in one, *even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another*, disputing, reviling, and with fierce contentions, like savage beasts exasperated against each other, *take heed that ye be not consumed one of another*, and, forsaken of God, be given up to the evil of your own hearts, which must end in your ruin. *Note*, Nothing tends to the destruction of Christianity so immediately as dissensions among those who bear the Christian name.

16. *This* I say then, [x] Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil † the lust of the flesh. 17. [y] For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18. [z] But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19. [a] Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these;* Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom

x Rom. 6. 12. & 8 1. 4. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 2 Cor. 7. 1. ver. 22—25.

† Or *fulfilment.*

y Rom. 7. 14—24. & 8. 5—8, 13. Eph. 6. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Col. 3. 5. Eph. 5. 3, 4, 7, 11.

z Ezek. 36. 27. Ps. 143. 10. John 16. 13. 1 John 2. 20 27. Rom. 6. 14. & 8. 1, 2, 4, 13—15. 2 Cor. 3. 17. 2 Tim. 1. 7. ch. 4. 5, 6

a Job 14. 4. & 15. 16. Lev. xviii, xx. Mat. 15. 19. Mark 7. 20—23. Rom. 1. 28—31. & 3. 10—18. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Eph. 5. 3—6. Col 3. 5—9. Jam. 3. 14—16. Rev. 21. 8. & 22. 15. Is. 5. 8—24. & 3. 11. Rom. 3. 19, 20. & 2. 8, 9. & 8. 13. Ezek. 18. 4.

of God. 22. But [b] the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23. Meekness, temperance: [c] against such there is no law. 24. [d] And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the ‡ affections and lusts. 25. [e] If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26. [f] Let us not be desirous of vainglory; provoking one another, envying one another.

h John 15. 2. Eph. 5. 9. Ezek. 26. 26, 27. 2 Pet. 1. 5—8. Col. 3. 10—16. Rom. xii.—xiv. & 15. 14. 1 Thes. v.

c 1 Tim. 1. 1, 9. Rom. 13. 3. ch. 3. 9.

d Ver. 16, 18. Rom. 6. 6. & 8. 13. ch. 2. 20. Eph. 4. 22. Col. 3. 5, 9. Rom. 13. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 11. ch. 6. 14.

‡ Or *passions.*

e Rom. 8. 1, 4, 5, 6. ver. 16, 18, 22, 23. Eph. 5. 9. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Tit 2. 11—14. Phil. 3. 3.

f Phil. 2. 3. Luke 14. 10. Rom. 12. 10. 2 Cor. 12. 20. Eph. 5. 21. James 3. 14—16. 1 Pet. 5. 5. ver. 15.

Verses 16—26, The advice which St Paul upon the whole gives is this,

1. In general, *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit,* under his blessed influence, dictates, and guidance, according to the gospel word, *and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh,* be given up to the native corruptions of your heart, and so finish and perfect sin, (τελεσητε) as to become absolute slaves to it, and to perish under its reigning dominion. In this imperfect state, indeed, you will not be free from the warrings of indwelling evil; *for* these are two contending principles in every believer's heart, corruption and grace; *the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,* craving indulgence and gratification, *and the Spirit against the flesh,* opposing and mortifying its corrupt desires, *and these are contrary the one to the other,* in their nature, actings, and tendencies; *so that ye cannot do,* or *ye do not, the things that ye would;* the workings of the old man are checked and restrained by the power of divine grace, and though the propensity to evil remains in the regenerate, he is enabled by the nobler and divine nature, which he hath received, to oppose his carnal will and affections, though the conflict is often sharp, and sometimes corruption may prevail. *But if ye be led by the Spirit,* habitually under his influence, *ye are not under the law,* its condemnation is no longer to be apprehended, nor are ye subject to it as a covenant of works, but brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

2. He particularly enumerates those works of the flesh which must be avoided, and those gracious fruits of the Spirit which should be produced by them. *Now,*

1. *The works of the flesh,* of the corrupt nature which is in fallen man, *are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,* with every act of bodily pollution, or mental impurity. Also, *idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings,* which more immediately are the iniquities of the carnal mind. Add to these the deadly crimes of *murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like* debaucheries and abominations, *of the which I tell you before* the day of vengeance comes, *as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things,* unless they repent, *shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Reader, mark these awful words, so express, so full, so distinct. Examine thyself; are either of these things found, allowed, indulged in thy heart or conduct? Then assuredly the wrath of God abideth on thee. *But,*

2. *The fruit of the Spirit,* which he produces in the souls of the redeemed, *is love* to God and men, *joy* in the Lord through Jesus Christ, *in his people* who live to his glory, *in his ordinances,* now become our delight; *peace* of conscience, and with all mankind; *long-suffering,* under all afflictive providences, or the provocations of the perverse; *gentleness* of temper and manners towards every creature; *goodness* that makes us ready to every word and work for the benefit of others; *faith* and truth in all our promises, engagements, and dealings; *meekness,* that is not easily provoked, and is instantly pacified: *temperance* in all our desires, and in the use of every earthly enjoyment: *against such* dispositions, and those who are possessed of them, *there is no law,* nor any condemnation to be apprehended.

3. *They that are Christ's,* in reality living members of his body mystical, will give demonstrative proof of the truth of their profession by their spiritual practice, for they *have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.* Their old man is nailed to their Redeemer's cross, and though not utterly dead, yet is dying daily, till, with the death of the body, the body of sin shall be utterly abolished, and buried with the corpse never to rise up again. And whilst we are here in a state of warfare, *if we live in the Spirit,* actuated and influenced by his mighty energy, *let us also walk in the Spirit,* and act according to our profession as believers, and the obligations we are under to die daily unto sin, and to live unto righteousness. *Let us not be desirous of vain glory,* puffed up with a high conceit of our attainments or performances, and affecting human approbation; *provoking one another* by a proud superciliousness, or *envying one another* for their superior gifts; tempers the most opposite and contradictory to the profession of Christianity. *Note,* (1.) All who are truly Christ's evidence it by their conduct; the same mind in a measure is in them, and they follow his steps: if we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie. (2.) Only from pride cometh contention, envy, and every evil work; this must therefore be mortified, or we cannot be saved.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 58.

This chapter chiefly consists of two parts: In the former the apostle gives us several plain and practical directions, which more especially tend to instruct Christians in their duty to one another, and to promote the communion of saints in love, from ver. 1. *to* ver. 10. *In the latter he revives the main design of the epistle, which was to fortify the Galatians against the arts of their Judaizing teachers, and confirm them in the truth and liberty of the gospel: To which purpose he,* 1. *Gives them the true character of these teachers, and shows them from what motives, and with what views they acted, from* ver. 10. *to* ver. 14. *And,* 2. *On the other hand he acquaints them with his own temper and behaviour: from both which they might easily see how little reason they had to slight* him, *to fall in with* them. *And then he concludes the epistle with a solemn benediction.*

1. BRETHREN, * if a man be [a] overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2. [b] Bear ye one another's burdens, and so [c] fulfil the law of Christ. 3. [e] For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. 4. But [e] let every man prove his own work, and then shall he [f] have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5. For [g] every man shall bear his own burden. 6. [h] Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 7. [i] Be not deceived; God is not mocked: [k] for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8. For [l] he that soweth to

* Or *although.*

a 2 Sam. 11. 2—15. Rom. 14. 1. & 10. 1. & 12. 10. & 15. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 2. 15. & 3. 1. & 4. 21. & 9. 22. & 10. 12. 2 Thes. 3. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 14. Heb. 12. 15. Jam. 5. 19. 1 John 5. 16. 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. Mat. 7. 1—5. Jam. 3. 1, 2.

b Exod. 23. 5. Rom. 15. 1. ch. 5. 13, 14. 1 Thes. 5. 14. & 4. 9.

c Mat. 11. 29. John 13. 14, 34. & 15. 12. 1 John 4. 21. 1 Cor. 9. 21. Jam. 2. 8.

d Prov. 25. 14. & 26. 12, 16. Luke 18. 11. 1 Cor. 8. 2. ch. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 3. 18.

e Lam. 3. 40. Zeph. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 28. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

f Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Phil 3. 3. 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4. g Ezek. 18. 4. Ps. 96. 13. Is. 3. 10, 11. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Mat. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. & 14. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 2. 23. & 20. 12, 13. & 22. 12. h Mat. 10. 10. Rom. 15. 27. 1 Cor. 9. 7—14. 1 Tim. 3. 2. & 5. 17, 18. i Job 13. 9. Mat. 24. 4, 24. Luke 21. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 9. & 15. 33. & 3. 18. Eph. 5. 6. 2 Thes. 2. 3. 1 John 3. 7. Jer. 37. 9. Jam. 1. 16. k Luke 16. 25. Rom. 2. 6—10. 2 Cor. 9. 6. Is. 3. 10, 11. ver. 8. l Job 4. 8. Prov. 11. 18. & 22. 8. Hos. 8. 7. & 10. 12 Amos 6. 4, 6. Rom. 8. 13. & 6. 23. & 2. 6—10. Jam. 3. 18.

his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9. And [m] let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10. [n] As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of [o] the household of faith.

[m] 1 Cor. 15. 58. & 2. 8. Mat. 24. 13. Rom. 12. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 16. 2 Thes. 3. 13. Heb. 3. 6, 14. & 10. 35, 39. Rev. 2. 7, 10, 11, 17, 26. & 3. 5, 12, 21. & 16. 15. & 22. 14.

[n] John 9. 4. & 12. 25. Rom. 12. 11. 1 Tim. 5. 8. & 6. 18. Tit. 3. 8, 14. Heb. 13. 16. Phil. 4. 8. Eph 2. 10.

[o] Eph. 2. 19. Heb. 6. 10. & 3. 1, 6, 14.

Verses 1—10. As he had so warmly recommended to them that love, which would engage them to serve one another, he passes on to the exercise of it in several instances.

1. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault,* through surprise, temptation, and human frailty, *ye which are spiritual,* and strong in the grace which is in Jesus Christ, *restore such an one in the spirit of meekness,* with all the tenderness that an able surgeon handles a dislocated joint, in order to reduce it; using, not rough reproaches, but tender expostulations; *considering thyself,* as no man is secure, *lest thou also be tempted,* and suffered to fall, to punish the undue severity you may have used towards others, and justly to smart under the same scourge. *Note,* (1.) A sense of our own weakness will make us compassionate towards an offending brother. (2.) Peculiar tenderness is needful, when the soul is already vexed and grieved by sin, lest we drive those to despair, whom we should lead to repentance. (3.) Angry reproofs, however great the provocation may be, never can do good.

2. *Bear ye one another's burdens,* sympathizing with the afflicted; patient with the infirmities of the weak; and desirous to alleviate every grief, under which your brethren groan, by your prayers, your counsel, or your substance; *and so fulfil the law of Christ,* that law of love, which he hath taught both by precept and example.

3. In humility, every man should watch over and examine himself. *For if a man think himself to be something* extraordinary, and self-sufficient to withstand every temptation, *when* in fact *he is nothing,* and hath no strength of his own, *he deceiveth his own self,* as he will find, by dire experience, when he comes to be tried. *But let every man prove his own work,* examining into his principles and practice according to the gospel rule, *and then,* if he finds a happy correspondence between them, *shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another;* he will exult in the blessed testimony of the Spirit and his own conscience, ascribing to the grace of God what had been wrought in him; and will seek no glory from human applause, nor desire to rake up others' faults as a foil to set off his own excellences; satisfied if God in Christ Jesus accepts and approves his services. *For every man shall bear his own burden,* and stand or fall, not according to the opinion he hath entertained of himself, or that others form of him, but according to the decision of the eternal Judge. *Note,* (1.) A high opinion of ourselves ever argues great ignorance of our own hearts. (2.) The testimony of a good conscience is matter of solid satisfaction. (3.) Though we know nothing declaredly evil in ourselves, we must remember he that judgeth us is the Lord, who sees many evils, which we through blindness overlook; and therefore it becomes us ever to be humble before him.

4. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things,* contributing liberally and cheerfully to the support of a gospel ministry, for the labourer is worthy of his hire. *Be not deceived* by your deluding teachers, who would engross your regard, nor by the covetousness of your own hearts, that would divert you from this or any other instance of liberality; *God is not* to be *mocked* by vain pretences; *for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,* according to his work will be his wages. *For he that soweth to the flesh,* making provision for it to fulfil the lusts thereof, or inordinately anxious to hoard up worldly wealth, to the defrauding of God's altar or the poor, *such a man shall of the flesh reap corruption*; his perishing acquisitions will soon be fled, and endless misery succeed; *but he that soweth to the Spirit,* in every instance of bounty and benevolence, under the Spirit's guidance, laying out himself, his time, his talents, for the glory of Christ, and the good of his people, *shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life,* and in eternity receive the blessed recompense of his deeds. *And let us not be weary in well-doing,* though we may not see all the happy effects we expected, *for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.* Nothing can be lost which is employed in God's service: though, like the seed under the clod, it may seem to be buried for a while, it will surely spring up and afford a plenteous increase, often in this world, and always in a better.

5. This is the day for labour, therefore we should diligently improve it. And *as we have opportunity, let us,* according to our abilities, *do good unto all men,* with liberal hearts, and open hands, not restraining our charity to any party or nation, though *especially* exercising it *unto them who are of the household of faith,* for whom we are bound particularly to interest ourselves, by peculiar ties of love and duty, as children of the same family, and heirs of the same inheritance.

11. Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

[p] 2 Cor. 11. 13. ch. 5. 11. & 2. 3, 14. Phil. 1. 15—18. & 2. 4.

12. As many as desire to make a [p] fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

[q] Mat. 23. 3, 15, 23. Rom. 2. 17—24 & 3. 9—18. with Acts 20. 30. 2 Pet. 2. 19.

[r] Is. 45. 24, 25. Phil. 1. 20. & 3. 3, 7—11. 1 Cor. 1. 23. & 2. 2. Rom. 1. 16. or Col. 1. 24. 2 Cor. 12. 9, 10. & 11 23—27.

13. For [q] neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. 14. But God forbid that [r] I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by † whom the world [s] is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 15. [t] For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16. And [u] as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. 17. From henceforth [x] let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. 18. Brethren, [y] the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

† Or *which.*

[s] Rom. 6. 4, 6. & 7. 4. ch. 1. 4. & 2. 20. 1 John 5. 5. Rom. 8. 37.

[t] 1 Cor. 7. 19. ch. 5. 6. & 3. 26, 28. Col. 3. 1. 2 Cor 5. 16, 17. Mat. 12. 50. John 15. 14. Eph. 2. 10. John 3. 3, 5, 6.

[u] Phil. 3. 3, 16. Ps. 125. 5. Rom. 2. 28, 29. & 4. 12. & 9. 6—8, 24. & 10. 12, & 3. 29, 30. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. Heb. 3. 1. Is. 45. 25. ch. 3. 7.

[x] Ch. 5. 11. with 2 Cor. 1. 5, 8. & 4. 10, 11. & 11. 23—27. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 3. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 4. 9—13.

[y] See Rom. 16. 20, 24. 2 Cor. 13. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 22. Philem. 25.

Verses 11—18. Though in his other epistles he usually employed an amanuensis, out of his great affection to them he wrote this long letter on so important a subject with his own hand. And now, being about to conclude, he,

1. Marks out to them the true character of their seducing teachers, that they may beware of them. *As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh,* and by their pompous professions, and zeal for the ceremonials of religion, would insinuate into your confidence, *they constrain you to be circumcised,* and urge this upon you as necessary to salvation; when in fact, their design is not your good, but their own ease and honour; for they do it *only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ,* from the furious zealots for Judaism, who cannot bear the doc-

trine of free justification through faith in Christ alone, without circumcision, or the works of the law; for eager as they are for your submitting to this rite, *neither they themselves who are circumcised, keep the law* in its moral purity and perfection, rigidly as they are attached to the ceremonials of it; *but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh*, and make a merit of it with their countrymen that you are their proselytes to circumcision. *Note*, (1.) They who are ashamed of the cross, are assuredly the enemies of Christ. (2.) Many make their boast of the form of religion, who are the greatest strangers to the power of it.

2. He declares to them his own temper and conduct. What the false teachers were ashamed of, he gloried in: *God forbid that I should glory* in external privileges, attainments, gifts, duties, or any thing else, *save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and in that atoning sacrifice which he there offered, as my whole dependence for pardon and acceptance with God; *by whom also the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world;* through faith in him I am mortified to all its allurements, honours, and interests, and content to be treated with that contempt and virulent enmity which for the truth's sake I suffer from a world that lieth in wickedness. *Note*, (1.) The cross is the glorious object ever in the Christian's eye; for to the sacrifice there offered he is indebted for all his hopes in time and eternity. (2.) Faith in a crucified Jesus is the victory that overcometh the world, and nothing else can enable us to do it.

3. He lays down the essential point of true Christianity. *For in Christ Jesus*, with regard to the salvation which is in him, *neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision;* the one is no advantage, the other no obstruction; *but* that which must prove our interest in Christ, and that we are partakers of the grace of God in truth, is our becoming *a new creature*, having our principles, tempers, and conduct, cast into the mould of the gospel, through the mighty energy of faith which worketh by love.

4. He offers up his prayers for those who held fast the truth. *As many as walk according to this rule*, laid down in this epistle, with regard to justification by faith, and the new creature, without respect to circumcision or uncircumcision, *peace be upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God;* may they enjoy peace with God and in their own consciences, and every divine mercy which is purchased by the crucified Jesus for his redeemed people, who, whether Jews or Gentiles, are God's spiritual Israel.

5. He with authority enjoins them to give him no farther trouble on this point, but to submit to the apostolic warnings and reproofs. *From henceforth let no man trouble me* with farther disputes and contentions, or with injurious reproaches, as though I had ever countenanced the doctrine of these Judaizing teachers; the contrary of which is most evident: I have ever opposed them, and severely suffered for it; *for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus*, the scars of the wounds and stripes endured for his sake, the signs of my conformity to him, and of my adherence to the offensive doctrines of his cross, and particularly of justification by faith alone. *Note*, It is a proof we believe the doctrines we preach, when we dare boldly suffer for them, and can produce the glorious scars received in the service of the captain of our salvation.

6. He concludes with his usual benediction. *Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen!* The treatment he had received from them did not quench his love towards them. Earnest to promote their salvation, he prays that they may experience the inestimably precious love of a dying Redeemer, and partake of all the invaluable privileges which he freely bestows on his chosen, even pardon, peace, comfort, holiness, and eternal life.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

EPHESIANS.

Introduction.

THIS epistle bears date out of a prison: and some have observed that what this apostle wrote when he was a prisoner had the greatest relish and savour in it of the things of God. When his tribulations did abound, his consolations and experiences did much more abound. From whence we may observe, that *the afflictive exercises of God's people, and particularly of his ministers, do oftentimes tend to the advantage of others as well as their own.*

The apostle's design is to settle and establish the Ephesians in the truth: and further to acquaint them with the mystery of the gospel in order to it. In the former part he represents the great privileges of the Ephesians, who, being in time past idolatrous heathens, were now converted to Christianity, and received into covenant with God, which he illustrates from a view of their deplorable state before their conversion, chap. i, ii, iii. In the latter part (which we have in the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters)

he instructs them in the principal duties of religion, both personal and relative; and exhorts and quickens them to the faithful discharge of them. Zanchius observes, that we have here an epitome of the whole Christian doctrine, and of almost all the chief heads of divinity.

Ephesus was the chief city of the proconsular Asia, and particularly famous for the magnificent temple of Diana. Idolatry there reigned triumphant, till the standard of Christ was erected, the pillars of Satan's kingdom shaken, and multitudes brought by the preaching of Paul to the obedience of the faith.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter we have, 1. *The introduction to the whole epistle, which is much the same as in others,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The apostle's thanksgivings and praises to God for his inestimable blessings bestowed on the believing Ephesians,* ver. 3—14. 3. *His earnest prayers to God in their behalf,* ver. 15—23.

1. [a] PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to [b] the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2. [c] Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

a Acts 13. 9. with 9. 3, 15. Rom. 1. 1, 5. 1 Cor. 1. 1. & 15. 8—10. Gal. 1. 15, 16. Col. 1. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 1.

b 2 Cor. 1. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 2. & 4. 17. Phil. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. ch. 2. 10. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 3. 12. & 2. 1. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 2.

c See Rom. 1. 7. Gal. 1. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 2. Tit. 1. 4. 1 Pet.

Verses 1, 2. The epistle opens with the apostle's usual address.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, appointed to this high office and honour *by the will of God* immediately revealed from heaven, *to the saints which are at Ephesus,* by profession and practice separated from this present evil world, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost; *and to the faithful in Christ Jesus,* who by faith are united to him, and approve their fidelity before him: *Grace be to you, and peace,* in all their comprehensive import, *from God our Father,* the foundation of blessedness; *and from the Lord Jesus Christ,* the purchaser and bestower of every good and perfect gift. *Note,* (1.) All true Christians are *saints* upon earth. (2.) They who have obtained grace to be faithful have need still to look to the same fountain from whence they derive continual supplies, that their stability may be secured, and their peace be enlarged.

3. [d] Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who [e] hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly * *places* in Christ. 4. According as he [f] hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5. [g] Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; 6. [h] To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath [i] made us accepted in [k] the Beloved. 7. [l] In whom we have redemption through his blood, the [m] forgiveness of sins, according to the [n] riches of his grace: 8. [o] Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9. [p] Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, [q] according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10. That [r] in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might [s] gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in † heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: 11. [t] In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who [u] worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12. [x] That we should be to the praise of his glory, who [y] first trusted in Christ. 13. [z] In whom ye also *trusted,* after that ye heard the word of truth, [a] the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, [b] ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, 14. Which is the [c] earnest of our inheritance until the [d] redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

d 2 Cor. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 3. ver. 17. Mat. 27. 46. John 20. 17. Heb. 1. 9. Ps. 45. 7. Is. 49. 4, 5.

e Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 18. Rom. 8. 30, 32. ver. 4—11. ch. 2. 4—10. Ps. 72. 17. with Lev. 26. 4. Deut. 2. 7. & 7. 13. & 8. 7. & 28. 2.

* Or things.

f Rom. 8. 29, 30. 1 Pet. 1. 2. & 2. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. & 2. 10, 19. 2 Thes. 2. 13. Jam. 2. 5. ch. 3. 11. & 5. 27. Luke 1. 5 Col. 1. 22. Tit. 2. 12, 14. Mat. 20. 16. & 22. 14. John 15. 16.

g Rom. 8. 29, 30, 15—17. Mat. 11. 25, 26. Luke 12. 32. John 1. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 21. 2 Cor. 6. 18. & 7. 1. Gal. 4. 5, 6. 1 John 3. 1. Ps. 4. 3. & 135. 4. Is. 43. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Deut. 32. 9. John 17. 9. Acts 9. 15. Rom. 11. 4. ver. 6, 12—14. Rom. 9. 11. Jer. 1. 5. & 3. 19. & 32. 41.

h ver. 12, 14. ch. 2. 7. & 3. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Is. 43. 21. Rom. 9. 23. Luke 2. 14. Ps. 115. 1. & 107. 1, 2, 8.

i Is. 45. 24, 25. Jer. 23. 6. Rom. 3. 24. & 5. 15—19. 2 Cor. 5. 21.

k Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. Prov. 8. 30, 31. Is. 42. 1. & 49. 1—3. Zech. 13. 7. Col. 1. 13. John 3. 35. & 10. 17.

l Mat. 20. 28. & 26. 28. Acts 20. 28. Rom. 3. 24—26. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Col. 1. 14. Heb. 9. 12, 14, 15. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. 1 John 2. 2. Rev. 5. 9.

m Luke 1. 77. Acts 10. 43. Col. 2. 13.

n Ch. 2. 7. & 3. 8, 16. Phil. 4. 19. Rom. 9. 23. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

o 1 Cor. 1. 5. & 12. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 14, 16. 1 Pet. 1. 3. or ver. 17. Col. 1. 9, 10. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Rom. 12. 2. Phil. 1. 9, 10.

p Rom. 16. 25. Col. 1. 26. ch. 3. 9, 11. & 2. 17. Mat. 13. 11. ver. 17.

q Ver. 5, 11. Is. 46. 10. Mat. 11. 26, 27. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. & 2. 19. Tit. 1. 2. Rom. 8. 28—30. & 9. 11—23. ch. 3. 11.

r Gen. 49. 10. Dan. 9. 24. Mal. 3. 1. Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 1. 2. & 9. 10, 26. 1 Pet. 1. 20.

s Col. 1. 20. & 2. 10. Heb. 12. 22—24. 1 Tim. 1. 15. ver. 22. 1 Cor. 3. 22. & 11. 3. & 15. 24. Phil. 2. 9—11. ch. 3. 15. & 2. 15.

† Gr. *the heavens.*

t Acts 20. 32. & 26. 18. Col. 1. 12. & 3. 21. Rom. 8. 17. & 9. 30. Gal. 3. 2, 9, 29, & 4. 7. Tit. 3. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 4. & 3. 9.

u Is. 46. 10. Ps. 33. 11. & 135. 6. & 104. 24. Mat. 10. 29. Acts 15. 18. Phil. 2. 13. Is. 14. 24, 27.

x Ver. 6, 14. ch. 2. 7. & 3. 21. Rom. 9. 23. Luke 2. 14. Is. 43. 21. Phil. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 11. John 15. 16, 18. Mat. 5. 16.

y Acts 3. 26. & 13. 46. & 2. 41. Rom. 1. 16. & 11. 16. 2 Thes. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 18.

z Rom. 10. 17. & 1. 16, 17. Col. 1. 6, 23. 1 Thes. 1. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Rev. 19. 9. John 1. 17. Gal. 2. 5, 14. & 3. 1. & 4. 16. & 5. 7. ch. 4. 21. 2 Cor. 6. 7.

a Mark 16. 15, 16. Rom. 1. 16, 17. Is. 55. 3. Tit. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 3. John 3. 14—17.

b Rom. 8. 15, 16. 2 Cor. 1. 6, 22. & 5. 5. ch. 4. 30. Gal. 4. 6. Luke 24. 49. John 14. 26. & 16. 13.

c Ver. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 22. & 5. 5. Gal. 4. 6. Rom. 8. 15—17, 23.

d Ch. 4. 30. Rom. 8. 23. Luke 21. 28. Acts 20. 28. Rev. 5. 9. with Exod. 19. 5. Deut. 7. 6. & 14. 2. & 26. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

Verses 3—14. Deeply impressed with a sense of the inestimable blessings of which in Christ Jesus they had been made partakers, the grateful apostle breaks forth in praises and thanksgivings to the God of all grace.

1. In general. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* the adored Redeemer, in whom he is now become our reconciled and covenant God, *who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things* or *places in Christ,* blessings descending from above, and leading up our souls to high and heavenly things, till we reach the mansions of eternal blessedness. And for all these rich gifts which we now enjoy, and all the greater glory, which we hope for, be everlasting praise, honour, and thanksgiving ascribed to the ever blessed fountain of mercies. *Note,* (1.) We cannot bless God as he *blesseth* us; his blessings are real gifts conferred; ours are only the grateful acknowledgments we owe for them. (2.) In Christ Jesus *all* spiritual blessings are freely given to us; and though we are not in possession of them *all,* our title to them is sure.

1. In particular,

(1.) He praises God for the spiritual blessing of *election.* *Ac-*

cording as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, in his own eternal mind having sovereignly fixed upon us as the objects of his love, not for any thing foreseen in us, but as regarded in Christ, our covenant-head and representative, who is most eminently his *elect*, and in and with whom he hath predestinated us to life and salvation; and, as the way thereto, hath ordained, *that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love*, sanctified by his Spirit, in sincerity and truth enabled to approve ourselves before him, as acting under the influence of that divine principle of love which he hath shed abroad in our heart; *having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself;* from everlasting, in his eternal purpose, singling us out from the rest of mankind, and, through union with his own Son, admitting us to the high dignity of children, bestowing on us the Spirit of adoption, and designing us for the eternal inheritance, that we might be thus a people for his praise; *according to the good pleasure of his will*, not for any worthiness foreseen in us, or any previous obligation lying upon him so to do, but merely out of his own divine sovereignty, that we might be *to the praise of the glory of his grace*, which is thus magnified in the highest, and all the glory of a complete and finished salvation, from the beginning to the end, to be ascribed to him alone by every redeemed soul.

(2.) He blesses God for the reconciliation and acceptance obtained through Christ Jesus. *Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, in his boundless grace he hath taken us for his own, and, regarding us as we stand united with his dear Son, embraces us with the arms of his everlasting love, accepting both our persons and services for his sake, in whom being found, we are esteemed complete and perfect, lacking nothing.

(3.) He praises God for the great and inestimable blessings of redemption and remission of sins through the adored Saviour. *In whom we have redemption*, an entire deliverance from all evil, and a restoration to all blessedness, in virtue of the inestimable price which he hath paid, *through his* most precious *blood*, shed on purpose to satisfy divine justice, and obtain our deliverance from the curse of a broken law, in virtue whereof we have *the forgiveness of sins*, and are saved from all their deadly consequences in time and eternity, *according to the riches of his grace;* though it was due to our Substitute, the pardon is absolutely free to us; and that such a Redeemer should be ever provided was itself a matter of the most transcendent grace and favour; *wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence*, manifesting the most astonishing depths of *wisdom* in the contrivance, and *prudence* in the execution of this wondrous scheme of salvation.

(4.) He blesses God for the knowledge he had communicated to them of his will. *Having made known unto us the mystery of his will*, which was hid from former ages, or but darkly made known, but now is revealed to us, both by an external revelation of it clearly in his word, and by the internal illumination of his Spirit, *according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself*, flowing from his own sovereign determination, without the least inducement whatever thereunto moving him in those who are the objects of his choice; *that in the dispensation of the fulness of times* under the gospel, the last dispensation of grace which will be vouchsafed to the sinful sons of men, *he might gather together in one all things in Christ*, reducing things again to order from the confusion which sin had introduced, recovering his elect, whether Jews or Gentiles, from the miseries of their fallen state, and under Christ as their living head, uniting them in one body; *both which are in heaven, and which are on earth*, angels as well as saints being formed into one glorious company; *even in him*, who is their centre of union, whom they acknowledge as their common Lord, and alike owe to him their stability and eternal blessedness.

(5.) He blesses God for the glorious inheritance obtained for them in Christ. *In whom also we have obtained an inheritance*, holding a title to eternal life on his complete obedience to death, and virtually possessed of it through him who, as our forerunner, is for us entered into heaven itself; *being predestinated* to this glorious portion, *according to the purpose of him who worketh all things* with irresistible efficacy (ενεργουντος) *after the counsel of his own will, that we*, to whom the word was first preached, *should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ*, and embraced his gospel. *In whom ye* Gentiles, *also trusted*, and obtained a like inheritance with us, *after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation*, and became thereby obedient to the faith, and partakers in common of all our blessings.

(6.) He blessed God for the seal and assurance which they had received of their interest in the everlasting promises. *In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed up with that Holy Spirit of promise*, which, shining on his own work, conveyed the fullest evidence to your consciences of your particular interest in the salvation of the gospel, *which is the earnest of our inheritance*, a pledge and foretaste of the glory which shall be revealed, *until the redemption of the purchased possession*, when we, whom he purchased with his own blood, shall be brought to the perfection of holiness and happiness above, and the work be completed in the resurrection of a glorified body at the last day, *unto the praise of his glory*, when to eternity his great name shall be exalted by all the redeemed that shall surround his throne with never-ending praises.

15. Wherefore [c] I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16. Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17. That [f] the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you [g] the spirit of wisdom and revelation ‡ in the knowledge of him: 18. [h] The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is [i] the hope of his calling, and what [k] the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19. And what *is* [l] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working ‖ of his mighty power, 20. [m] Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, 21. [n] Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in [o] that which is to come; 22. And [p] hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* [q] the head over all *things* to the church, 23. Which is [r] his body, the fulness of him that [s] filleth all in all.

c Rom. 1. 8, 9. Phil. 1. 3, 4. Col. 1. 3, 4. 1 Thes. 1. 2—5. & 3. 5—8. 2 Thes. 1. 3. Philem. 4, 5.

f See ver. 3. John 20. 17. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Acts 7. 2. Ps. 19. 1.

g Col. 1. 9, 10. 2 Pet. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 12. 18. & 14. 6, 26.

‡ Or *for the acknowledgment.*

h Ps 110. 18. Luke 24. 45. Acts 26. 18. ch. 5. 8. 1 John 2. 20, 27. & 5. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

i Ch. 4. 4. Gal. 5. 5. Rom. 8. 24, 25. 1 John 3. 2, 3. Col. 1. 5.

k Ver. 7. ch. 2. 7. & 3. 8, 16. Mat. 13. 44. Phil. 4. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

l Col. 2. 12. Ps. 110 2, 3. Is. 53. 1. ch 3. 7. Phil. 3. 21. 1 Pet. 1. 5.

‖ Or *of the might of his power.*

m Ps. 16. 10, 11. & 89. 21, 27. & 110. 1. Acts 1. 24. & 3. 15, 26. Mark 14. 62. & 16. 19. Heb. 2. 9. & 1. 3. & 10. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 3, 22.

n Phil. 2. 9—11. Col. 2. 10. & 1. 15, 16, 18. & 2. 15. ch. 4. 10. & 3. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Heb. 1. 4. ver. 22.

o Heb. 2. 5, 8. 2 Pet. 3. 7.

p Ps. 8. 6—8. Mat. 28. 18. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Phil. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 8. & 5. 23. Col. 1. 18. John 17. 2. Phil. 3. 21.

q Ch. 3. 15. & 4. 15, 16. & 5, 23, 30. Col. 1. 18, 24.

r Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 6, 12, 27. ch. 2. 16. & 3. 15. & 4. 12, 16. ch. 5. 18. & 3. 19. Phil. 1. 11. Col. 1. 19. & 2. 10. & 3. 11.

s John 1. 14, 16. ch. 4. 10. Ps. 68. 18. 1 Cor. 12. 6. & 15. 28.

Verses 15—23. The apostle accompanies his grateful thanksgivings with his affectionate prayers. *Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints*, shown by the most genuine proofs, *cease not to give thanks for you* at every approach to the throne of grace, *making mention of*

you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our covenant God in him, *the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him,* making a more clear and experimental discovery to you of the glorious truths of his word, and manifesting with greater energy his love to your souls, that you may know, choose, and delight in him as your God, *the eyes of your understanding,* which by nature were darkened, *being now enlightened that ye may know,* (1.) *What is the hope of his calling,* assured with the utmost certainty of the solid foundation on which it is built, and seeing the unutterably glorious privileges which it comprehends. *And,* (2.) *What the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,* at present in all the inestimably precious gifts and graces which he bestows, and hereafter in the complete and everlasting blessedness which he hath provided for them. (3.) *And what the exceeding greatness of his mighty power, to us-ward who believe,* how surpassing marvellous, that we, who were dead in sins, should ever be quickened to the life of faith and grace, preserved amidst all the enemies, spiritual and temporal, without and within, which fight against us, and our bodies at last raised from the dust in glory, *according to the working of his mighty power,* an act of omnipotence no less than that *which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead,* leading captivity captive, *and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,* triumphant over all his foes, and exalted to the throne of Majesty on high, *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come,* whether angels of light, or demons of darkness, or earthly potentates and princes, by whatever name or title distinguished, all are made subject unto him; *and hath put all things under his feet,* as the exalted Mediator, *and gave him to be head over all things to the church;* to govern, protect, and preserve it from all foes, and so to order every event, as that in its issue it shall conduce to the spiritual and eternal benefit of the whole and every individual believer; whilst he, as their living head of vital influence, actuates, quickens, and strengthens every member of his church, *which is his body* mystical, and in that sense they are *the fulness of him;* for if the least member were wanting, the body would be incomplete; though in himself Christ is infinitely perfect, and needeth us not, whilst we receive our all out of him *that filleth all in all,* supplying every want of his people, and bestowing on them the abundance of his grace, that they may grow up into him in all things, and be conformed to him their head. *Note,* (1.) Prayer is the constant duty we owe to each other. (2.) The prospect of the glorious inheritance before us should quicken our desires after it. (3.) Every believer is as much an instance of omnipotent power, as if a dead body were raised from the dust. (4.) Christ hath all power committed to him for the good of his people, and they may be confident of his care and support in every time of need, nor shall any be able to pluck the meanest of his people out of his hands.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

This chapter contains an account, 1. *Of the miserable condition of these Ephesians by nature,* ver. 1—3. *and again,* ver. 11, 12. 2. *Of the glorious change that was wrought in them by converting grace,* ver. 4—10. *and again,* ver. 13. 3. *Of the great and glorious privileges that converted Jews and Gentiles both receive from Christ,* ver. 14—21.

1. AND [a] you *hath he quickened,* who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2. [b] Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the [c] prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the [d] children of disobedience: 3. Among whom also [e] we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling * the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

a Ver. 5, 6. Col. 2. 13. Rom. 8. 2, 7, 8. 2 Cor. 5. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Rev. 3. 1, 16, 17.

b 1 Cor. 6. 11. ch. 4. 22. Col. 3. 7. & 1. 21. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

c John 8. 44. & 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. Rev. 12. 9. 2 Cor. 4. 4.

d Ch. 5. 6. Col. 3. 6. 1 John 5. 19.

e Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Gal. 2. 15. ch. 4. 17—19. Ps. 51. 5. Rom. 5. 12—14. & 8. 7, 8. & 3. 9—20. & 1. 28—32. Mark 7. 21, 22.

* Or *the wills.*

Verses 1—3. Behold the miserable state of every man by nature.

1. We are dead in trespasses and sins; spiritually dead, as criminals under the curse and condemnation of a broken law, and the life of God extinguished in our souls; and in this state of desperate misery we must for ever continue, till redeemed by the blood, and quickened by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus.

2. Though dead to God, we have been but too much alive to the practice of sin; *in which in time past we walked according to the course of this world;* our spirit apostate, our ways perverse, conformed to the maxims, and copying the manners of a world that lieth in wickedness, the consequence of which could not but be our condemnation with the world.

3. We were at that time the bond-slaves of the god of this world; acting *according to* the instigation of *the prince of the power of the air,* the devil, who with his legions is permitted to exercise sometimes his power and agency in the aerial regions, and is *the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience by* himself, and those foul fiends his fellows, tempting, seducing, governing, hardening the unbelieving and disobedient. *Among whom also we all,* Jews as well as Gentiles, even apostles as well as others, *had our conversation in time past,* enslaved by sin, and led captive by the devil at his will; a state how fearful!

4. We then lived *in the lusts of our flesh,* indulging every corrupt appetite, and *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,* as the beasts which perish; devoted to the gratification of brutal passions, and in our souls filled with pride, envy, malice, hatred, revenge, and the whole train of spiritual wickednesses; disposed to every abomination, and only wanting temptation and opportunity to commit every iniquity in which body or soul can be engaged.

5. As the source of all our evil, *we are by nature children of wrath,* obnoxious to the displeasure of that God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; born with every evil propensity; and herein there is no difference even between the elect of God and others, all lying in the same corrupted mass, till separated by sovereign grace. The more we are acquainted with this our natural state of desperate corruption, remediless guilt, and hopeless misery, the more we shall value the unsearchable riches of Christ, and be filled with admiration, love, and praise, in the view of an incarnate Redeemer.

4. But God, who is [f] rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5. [g] Even when we were dead in sins, [h] hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6. And [i] hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: 7. That in the ages to come [k] he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8. For [l] by grace are ye saved [m] through faith; and that not of your-

f Ver. 7. ch. 1. 7. & 3. 8, 16. Rom. 10. 12. Luke 7. 2. Cor. 1. 3. Jam. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Ps. 51. 1. & 69. 13. & 86. 15. & cxxxvi. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Exod. 34. 6, 7.

g Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10, 20, 21. & 6. 4, 5, 8. & 8. 11. Col. 2. 12, 13. & 3. 1, 3. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

h Acts 15. 11. Rom. 3. 24. & 5. 20, 21. & 6. 23. Tit. 3. 5, 7. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Gal. 1. 15. 2 Tim. 1. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 2—4, 13.

i 1 Cor. 15. 20. Rom. 6. 4, 5. Col. 1. 18. Mat. 8. 11. & 26. 29. Luke 22. 29, 30. Rev. 3. 21. John 12. 26. & 14. 3. & 17. 21—24, 26.

k 1 Tim. 1. 16. ch. 3. 8. see ver. 4, 5.

l See ver. 5.

m Rom. 3. 24. & 4. 16. & 5. 1. Gal. 2. 16, 20. Mat. 16. 17. Acts 16. 31. John 3. 14—18, 36. & 6. 40, 44, 45, 65. Acts 13. 9, 14. & 6. 14. Rom. 10. 14, 15, 17. ch. 1. 19. Phil. 1. 29.

selves: *it is* the gift of God: 9. [n] Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10. For we are [o] his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before [†] ordained that we should walk in them. 11. Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called [q] Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12. That at that time [r] ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13. But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

n Rom. 3. 20, 27. & 4. 2. & 11. 6. & 9. 11, 16. 1 Cor. 1. 29—31. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 3. 5.

o Deut. 30. 6. Ps. 100. 3. Is. 29. 23. & 43. 1, 21. & 44. 21. John 3. 3, 5. 1 Cor. 3. 9. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. ch. 1. 4. & 4. 24. Col. 3. 10. Tit. 2. 14. Jam. 1. 18.

† Or *prepared.*

p Ch. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 6. 11. & 12. 2. Col. 1. 21. & 3. 7. Tit. 3. 3.

q Rom. 2. 27—29. & 3. 29, 30. Col. 2. 11, 13. Tit. 1. 10.

r John 15. 5. & 16. 16. Ezek. 13. 9. Gal. 4. 8. ch. 4. 18. Col. 1. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 5. with [s] John 14. 6. Acts 4. 12. & 3. 25. & 26. 18. Rom. 9. 4, 5, 8. ch. 1. 18. 1 Thes. 4. 13.

s Gen. 49. 10. Is. 11. 10. & 43. 6. & 49. 12. & 55. 7. Acts 2. 39. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Rev. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Col. 1. 34. ver. 14—22.

Verses 4—13. With exultation and wonder should we contemplate the astonishing mystery of redeeming love. Here in its brightest glories we see it displayed, and God in that delightful attribute of mercy appears exalted in the highest.

1. The original cause of our redemption is God's eternal love and grace who is *rich in mercy*, the source inexhaustible of all our blessings; not *for* any thing done by us, or foreseen in us, but purely to magnify *his own great love wherewith he loved us* before the worlds were, having fixed upon us sovereignly as the objects of his choice, and predestinated us to grace in time, and glory in eternity.

2. What serves as a foil to set off in the most distinguished lustre this mercy of our God, is the state in which we lay, *even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins;* and, instead of any thing to engage his love, had in us every thing to excite his loathing: even then, when we were foul, odious, and in a condition desperate as that of the fallen angels, did the God of all grace regard us, and plucked us as brands from the burning. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

3. The inestimable blessings conferred upon such wretched sinners are, [1.] *Life* in Christ our living head. *He hath quickened us together with Christ:* forasmuch as in his resurrection we see the sentence of death passed on our nature repealed, and the life which he possesses is for the use of his body mystical, who, as considered in him, are alive before God, and by virtue of our union with him will in due time be raised to spiritual life, and conformed to the image of their living Lord. *By grace ye are saved,* and thus through the transcendently rich and sovereign love of God, restored to his favour here, and receive a sure title to his glory hereafter. [2.] *He hath* also *raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:* for since he, as our forerunner and representative, is for us entered into the heavenly glory; we, as *virtually* included in him, may be said to be there also, and are thereby assured we shall in due time *actually* possess the same inheritance, and reign with him for ever. May our affections then be ever placed above with our exalted head.

4. The end God proposes in this great salvation. *That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us, through Jesus Christ;* encouraging to the latest days of time poor and perishing sinners to come and trust in this boundless mercy revealed in the gospel; and that in the better world, when all the glory of his grace in brightest colours shall appear, he might be the object of ceaseless praise and adoration to men and angels through all the countless ages of eternity.

5. The means appointed to convey all these blessings to us is *faith. For by grace ye are saved,* freely, fully, everlastingly, *through faith,* which is the way wherein we receive all the great and precious promises; *and that not of yourselves,* faith being not the produce of our own free-will, nor the effect of others' reasoning; but *it is the gift of God,* and like all other blessings, flows from his boundless love, and is the work of his Spirit in our hearts; and both the salvation itself, and the faith which embraces it, are bestowed without the least respect to any works of ours, that the glory of the divine grace might not suffer the least diminution. *Not of works, lest any man should boast;* for could one fallen creature produce the least thought or action, which would give him a superiority over others, and recommend him to the divine favour, as a more worthy object than they, the salvation would be no more of grace, and the sinner might justly glory.

6. Though our salvation be purely of grace, God hath taken care to engage our hearts to himself by the strongest ties, whilst all the work and all the glory appear to be his own. *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus;* all that is excellent in us comes from his mere gift; our souls, by divine operation renewed, now produce the genuine fruits of righteousness; he works all that is good in us, and, though he excludes our glorying, secures our obedience *unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them;* such being his eternal purpose, and he hath prepared (προητοιμασεν) disposed us and enabled us to the practice of them. *Note,* The doctrines of grace, far from loosening, as some vainly imagine, the obligations to morality, can only effectually engage and enable the soul for the practice of righteousness and true holiness.

7. He reminds the Ephesians of what they should ever keep warm upon their memories, to awaken their gratitude, and bind their hearts to God. *Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made with hands;* treated by the native Jews with contempt and disdain, and indeed excluded from all the peculiar privileges which they enjoyed: *that at that time ye were without Christ,* having neither knowledge of him nor union with him; *being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,* out of the pale of God's church, *and strangers from the covenants of promise,* which were peculiarly confirmed to Abraham's natural seed; *having no hope,* at least no well grounded one, of God's favour and life eternal; *and without God in the world,* atheists both *speculative* and *practical;* even whilst you worshipped *gods many,* being without the least knowledge of the one true Jehovah. *But now in Christ Jesus,* since by faith ye have been united to him, and heard and embraced his gospel, *ye who sometimes were far off* from all good, and all hope, *are made nigh by the blood of Christ,* received into a state of favour and reconciliation with God, and entitled to the eternal blessedness which he hath purchased. *Note,* Sinners in their natural state are far removed from God, and must, but for the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, remain so for ever.

14. For he is [t] our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the [u] middle wall of partition *between us;* 15. [x] Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain [y] one new man, *so* making peace; 16. And that he might [z] reconcile both unto God in one body by

t Is. 9. 6, 7. Mic. 5. 5. Acts 10. 36. Rom. 5. 1, 10. Col. 1. 20. John 10. 16. & 16. 33. Ezek. 37. 22, 26. Rom. 3. 29, 30. & 9. 24. & 10. 12. Gal. 3. 28.

u Eph. 3. 8. Acts 10. 28.

x Col. 2. 14. & 1. 20, 22. Rom. 6. 6. & 8. 3, 4. Gal. 4. 4, 5. & 3. 13. Rom. 10. 4. Heb. vii—x.

y Ver. 16—21. ch. 3. 6. & 4. 13. Gal. 6. 15. Rom. 7. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 17. ch. 4. 23, 24. Col. 3. 10.

z Col. 1. 20, 22. & 2. 14. Rom. 8, 3. & 6. 6.

the cross, having slain the enmity ‡ thereby: 17. And came and [a] preached peace to you which were far off, and to them [b] that were nigh. 18. For [c] through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but [d] fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20. And are [e] built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-*stone*; 21. [f] In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22. [g] In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

‡ Or *in himself.*

a Is. 57. 19. Zech. 9. 10. Acts 10. 36. & 2. 39. ver. 12. Ps. 73. 27.

b Ps. 148. 14. & 135. 4. & 76. 1, 2. & 147. 2, 19, 20.

c John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. Rom. 5. 2. 1 Cor. 12. 13. ch. 1. 13. & 3. 12. & 4. 4. Heb. 4. 16. & 10. 19, 20. & 7. 19. ver. 12. ch. 4. 18, 19.

d Ch. 3. 6. Gal. 3. 26, 28. & 4. 26, 31. Heb. 3. 1, 6. & 12. 22. Gal. 6. 10. Phil. 3. 3, 20.

e Mat. 16. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 4—6. Rev. 21. 14. 1 Cor. 3. 9—11. & 12. 28. ch. 3. 5. & 4. 11—13. Ps. 118. 22. Is. 28. 16.

f Ch. 4. 13, 15, 16. Col. 2. 2, 19. Ps. 122. 3. 1 Cor. 12. 14, 25—27. & 14. 33. & 3. 17. & 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Ps. 93. 5. Ezek. 43. 11, 12. John 4. 23. & 14. 17, 23. & 17. 21—23.

g See ver. 20, 2. 1 Pet. 2. 5, ch. 3. 17.

Verses 14—22. All the blessings in time and eternity, which sinners can ever hope for, flow down to them through the channel of a crucified Jesus. *For he is our peace,* having reconciled us to God by his own blood, *who hath made both one,* uniting Jews and Gentiles together in one body under himself our common head, *and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us,* which till now excluded the nations from the blessings peculiar to Israel; *having abolished in his flesh the enmity,* that which had been the cause of much enmity between Jews and Gentiles, *even the ceremonial law,* called *the law of commandments contained in ordinances,* which, as they pointed all to Christ, were now fulfilled by him, and abrogated, he designing *for to make of twain,* of Jews and Gentiles, *one new man,* cementing them together in one church, and forming his own blessed image alike in their hearts; *so making peace,* between them, as members of one body, united by faith and love in him; *and that he might reconcile both unto God,* who by nature and practice were alike estranged from him, and must have perished together, but for the same atoning blood which he shed *in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby,* sin, the cause of enmity between God and the sinner, being removed, and the ceremonial law, the great cause of variance between Jews and Gentiles, being abolished; *and came and preached peace,* by his divinely constituted ministers, *to you,* Gentiles, *which were afar off,* inviting you, who were at the greatest distance from his church, to come and find pardon and peace with God; *and* the like message he *sent to them that were nigh,* to the Jewish people, who needed the same gracious salvation, and could only through a Redeemer be saved from the curses of a broken law; *for through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father;* the same spirit of adoption being shed abroad in both our hearts; the same advocate standing to plead for us; the same gracious God appearing as the Father of mercies, and ready alike to hear and answer our petitions. *Now therefore ye* Gentiles *are no more strangers and foreigners,* as before, *but fellow-citizens with the saints,* partaking of the same privileges, *and of the household of God,* entitled to the same inheritance; *and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,* who both concurred in the same testimony, leading the souls of sinners to *Jesus Christ himself, as being the chief corner-stone,* on whom alone they could safely build for eternity; *in whom all the building fitly framed together,* of Jews and Gentiles, *groweth into a holy temple in the Lord,* daily accessions of converts being made to it; a temple infinitely more glorious than that of Solomon's; a living temple, where the Lord peculiarly dwells, as in his own house; *in whom you also are builded together,* and compose part of the glorious fabric, that ye might be *for a habitation of God through the Spirit,* who takes up his blessed abode among you, and in your hearts, until ye shall come to the perfect enjoyment of him for ever in heaven. *Note,* (1.) There is but one safe foundation on which a sinful soul can build, and that is Jesus Christ. (2.) They who are truly grounded on him shall never fail, but be growing, by the mighty agency of his indwelling Spirit, more holy and happy, till they arrive at the perfection of blessedness in glory everlasting.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

This chapter consists of two parts. 1. *Of the account which St Paul gives the Ephesians concerning himself, as he was appointed by God to be the apostle of the Gentiles,* ver. 1—13. 2. *Of his devout and affectionate prayer to God for the Ephesians,* ver. 14—21. *We may observe it to have been very much the practice of this apostle to intermix, with his instructions and counsels, intercessions and prayers to God for those to whom he wrote, as knowing that all his instructions and teachings would be useless and vain, except God did render them effectual. This is an example that all the ministers of Christ should copy after, praying earnestly that the efficacious operations of the Divine Spirit may attend their ministrations, and crown them with success.*

1. FOR this cause, I Paul, the [a] prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2. (If ye have heard of the [b] dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3. How that [c] by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; [d] as I wrote * afore in few words; 4. Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the [e] mystery of Christ; 5. [f] Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6. [g] That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7. [h] Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8. Unto me, who am [i] less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that [k] I should preach among the Gentiles the [l] unsearchable riches of Christ; 9. And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, [m] which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who [n] created all things by Jesus Christ: 10. [o] To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the [p] manifold wisdom of

a Acts 28. 16, 17. & 21. 23. & 26. 23, 29. Philem. 19. Gal. 5. 11. ch. 4. 1. & 6. 20. Col. 1. 24. & 4. 3, 18. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 10. Phil. 1. 13.

b 1 Cor. 4. 1. & 3. 10. ch. 4. 7. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2, 46. & 22. 4. & 26. 17, 18. Rom. 1. 5. & 11. 13. & 12. 3. & 15. 15, 16. Gal. 1. 15, 16. & 2. 9. ver. 8. Col. 1. 25, 26. 1 Tim. 1. 11. & 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11.

c Acts 26. 16, 17. Gal. 1. 12, 16. & 2. 2. Rom. 16. 27. Col. 1. 26. ver. 6.

d Ch. 1. 9, 10. & 2. 13, 19, 20.

* Or *a little before.*

e Luke 2. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 4. 2. & 2. 2, 6, 7. & 14. 2. Rom. 11. 11, 12, 25. & 15. 16, 19. 1 Tim. 3. 16. ver. 5, 6. ch. 16. 19.

f Mat. 13. 17. John 16. 13. Acts 10. 28. & 15. 32. & 21. 10. Rom. 16. 25, 26. Col. 1. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 2. 12. & 12. 10, 28. ch. 2. 20. & 4. 11—13. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. Tit. 1. 1—3. 1 Pet. 1. 10—12.

g Rom. 8. 15—17. & 5. 8—12. 1 Cor. 12. 27. Gal. 3. 9, 14, 28, 29. ch. 1. 3. & 2. 13—22.

h Acts 9. 15. & 26. 16—18. Rom. 1. 5. & 11. 13. & 15. 18, 19. 2 Cor. 3. 6. & 4. 1. & 5. 18—20. Gal. 2. 8. Col. 1. 23, 25, 26. ch. 1. 19. see ver. 2, 8.

i 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. 2 Cor. 11. 5. Gen. 32. 10.

k Ver. 2. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 26. 16—18. Rom. 1. 5 & 11. 13. & 15. 8, 15—19. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 16. & 2. 8, 9. 1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11.

l Ps. 31. 19. Is. 64. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 9. ch. 1. 7. & 2. 7. ver. 19. Col. 1. 27. & 2. 9, 10. & 3. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 30. ch. 1. 3. John 1. 14, 16. Phil. 4. 19.

m Ch. 1. 9. & 2. 13—22. see ver. 3—6. Rom. 16. 25, 26. Col. 1. 25—27. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Heb. 1. 1, 2. Tit. 1. 2, 3.

n Ps. 33. 6. John 1. 3. Col. 1. 16, 17. Heb. 1. 2.

o 1 Pet. 1. 12. Rom. 8. 38. ch. 1. 21. Col. 1. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Ps. 103. 20.

p Rom. 11. 33. 1 Cor. 2. 7. & 1. 23, 24, 30. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Prov. viii.

God, 11. [q] According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12. [r] In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. 13. Wherefore I desire that ye [s] faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

q Ch. 1. 4, 9, 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Rom. 8. 28—30. ix, xi. Is. 46. 10. & 14. 24, 27.
r John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. Rom. 5. 2. ch. 2. 18. Heb. 10. 19—22. & 4. 14, 16. Acts 4. 12.
s Phil. 2. 14. 1 Thes. 3. 3. Col. 1. 24. 2 Cor. 1. 6. ver. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 10.

Verses 1—13. The apostle gives his beloved Ephesians an account of his sufferings for the truths which here he had asserted. *For this cause*, because I declare the privileges to which the Gentiles, in common with the Jews, are admitted through the gospel, *I Paul* am *the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles;* and those are honourable bonds which in his service are laid upon us: *if*, or *since, ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward*, as especially commissioned and sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles; and *how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery* of his gospel, as a common salvation for men of all nations, *(as I wrote afore* in this epistle, *in a few words, whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ*, and how fully and clearly he hath acquainted me with his gracious designs,) *which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men*, the Gentile world being left in utter ignorance, and those to whom the light of truth was revealed in types and prophecies, seeing but through a glass darkly, compared with the present clear dispensation of the gospel, *as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit*, since the ascension of Jesus into the heavens, *that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs* with his Israel, *and of the same body*, incorporated in one church, *and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel*, sharing in all the present and eternal blessedness of his redeemed people, equally with the Jews. *Whereof I was made a minister*, by a divine call and ordination not of men, nor by man, but immediately from Jesus Christ himself, *according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me*, appointing me to this office, and qualifying me for the discharge of it, *by the effectual working of his power*, enabling me for my work, and crowning it with success. *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints*, so exceeding lowly doth the great apostle speak of himself, and wants words sufficiently abasing to express the sense he entertained of his own unworthiness of so high an honour; even to me, vile as I am, *is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ:* those treasures of grace and glory which reside in him for his people's use, that can never be fathomed, never be exhausted; a store that mocks computation, and in which we know neither where to begin nor where to end the wonderful account. *And to make all men see*, as far as my ministry should reach, *what is the fellowship of the mystery*, and how blessed is that communion of saints into which by the gospel they are admitted, even Gentiles as well as Jews, *which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God*, a secret lodged in his own eternal mind, *who created all things by Jesus Christ*, without whose co-efficient agency was not any thing made that was made. And the revelation of this mystery, which was so long concealed, is made known, *to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God*, that fresh matter might thus be afforded to the angelic host for their contemplation, wonder and praise. And all this great salvation is completed, *according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*, who was ordained to be the great agent in redemption, as he had been in creation: *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him;* faith, of which he is both the great author and object, whereby we can now approach the throne of grace with humble confidence, regarding God as our Father and Friend, and admitted into the most endeared fellowship with him. *Wherefore*, considering these inestimable blessings and privileges, *I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you*, or be disheartened or desponding at these sufferings, *which are your glory*, and should minister to you continual matter of rejoicing in the honour thus conferred on me, and in the confirmation given thereby to the gospel which you have received. *Note*, (1.) None can make gospel ministers but God only; they who run unsent, must return unblessed. (2.) The grace of God should be the grand subject of our ministrations, for to preach this are we sent. (3.) If we know the power of the gospel, we shall not be ashamed of that cross, which, for the sake of it, we shall be called to bear. (4.) The greatest Christians have the most lowly thoughts of themselves: their eyes being most enlightened, they discover more of their own imperfections and corruptions than others do. (5.) None can truly preach the *unsearchable riches of Christ* to others, who have not first experienced something of them in their own souls. (6.) They who by faith in a Redeemer behold a reconciled God, will delight to approach him, and to maintain constant communion with him.

14. For this cause [t] I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15. Of whom the [u] whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16. That he would grant you, [x] according to the riches of his glory, [y] to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17. [z] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being [a] rooted and grounded in love, 18. May be able to [b] comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19. And to [c] know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with [d] all the fulness of God. 20. Now unto him that is [e] able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21. Unto him *be* [f] glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

t 2 Cor. 1. 3. 1 Thes. 5. 23. Col. 1. 9—11. Phil. 1. 8—11. ch. 1. 16—19.
u See ch. i. 10, 21. Col. 1. 16—20. Phil. 2. 9. Rev. 5. 8—14.
x Ch. 1. 7. & 2. 7. Rom. 9. 23. Phil. 4. 19. Col. 1. 27. John 1. 14, 16.
y 2 Cor. 4. 16. Zech. 10. 12. Is. 40. 29—31. Ps. 138. 3. ch. 6. 10. 1 Thes. 5. 23. 2 Thes. 3. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 1.
z Rom. 7. 22. Col. 2. 2. & 1. 11. See Ch. 2. 21, 22. John 14. 23. & 17. 23. & 15. 4. Gal. 2. 20. Col. 1. 27. Acts 20. 21. & 16. 31.
a 1 John 4. 19. Rom. 5. 5. Col. 2. 7. & 1. 23. 1 Cor. 13. 4—7. Gal. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5.
b Job 11. 7—9. ch. 1. 18, 23. 1 Tim. 3. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Col. 1. 19. & 2. 9, 10. ver. 3. Col. 1. 6, 23. Mat. 28. 19, 20. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Ps. 103. 17. & 86. 15. John 14. 3. Rev. 3. 21.
c Phil. 3. 8—12. 1 John 4. 8, 16. Gal. 2. 20. ch. 5. 2. John 10. 16, 11. Phil. 4. 7.
d John 1. 14, 16. ch. 1. 23. & 4. 10. Col. 1. 19. & 2. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Rom. 8. 32. 1 Cor. 15. 28. Ps. 16. 5, 6. & 43. 4.
e Gen. 17. 1. & 18. 14. Jer. 32. 17, 27. Mat. 18. 26. Rom. 16. 25. Jude 24. Col. 1. 29. 1 Kin. 3. 13. 2 Sam. 7. 19.
f Rom. 11. 36. & 16. 27. Heb. 13. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

Verses 14—21. The apostle informed us what was the subject of his preaching, and he failed not to water the seed sown with his fervent and importunate prayers. *For this cause*, that you may not faint, and that the gospel may be made effectual to you, *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and our Father in him, *of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*, both angels and men, saints on earth, and saints in heaven, who through their adored Saviour have obtained a more excellent title, as *children of God*, than that in which the carnal Jews boasted, *as children of Abraham*. Now the apostle prays for them,

1. *That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory* out of the abundance of his grace, and for his great name's sake, *to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man*, to oppose all your spiritual foes, to resist every temptation, to bear up under all persecution, to discharge every duty and service for God's glory, and the good of immortal souls; and steadily and perseveringly to hold on your heavenly course, till your warfare

shall end, and your victory be complete. *Note*, (1.) Spiritual blessings are the best of blessings, and most earnestly to be sought. (2.) All our strength cometh from above, and we may be confident, that the blessed Spirit who hath begun the good work, will perfect it even unto the end.

2. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith*, making your souls the place of his abode; blessing you with a sense of his nearness and special presence; and enabling you by faith to draw out of his fulness; *that ye being rooted and grounded in love*, fully persuaded of God's love in Christ towards you, experiencing the richest manifestations of it in your hearts, and cleaving to him with fixed attachment, as the tree that hath struck its roots deep into the earth, *may be able to comprehend with all saints*, to whom in bonds of fervent charity ye are united, *what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.* Its fulness none, not even angels, can comprehend; but larger and more extensive views of this love than we have yet attained to, we cannot but desire, to behold its vast extent, as reaching to all nations and sinners of every degree; its duration from everlasting to everlasting: the depths of wretchedness in which we lay, and of sufferings to which for our sakes the Son of God incarnate submitted; and the transcendent heights of glory to which he himself is now exalted, and to which he hath engaged to bring us, that we may reign with him for ever and ever.

3. *That ye may be filled with all the fulness of God;* completely made partakers of a divine nature, and to the utmost capacity of your souls may be enriched with all that light, grace, peace, joy, and holiness, which God, as your covenant God, hath promised to his dearest children in this world; and may you come to the eternal enjoyment of him in a better, to dwell in God, and God in you.

4. He concludes with a doxology. *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us*, who counts nothing too great or too good to bestow on the children of his grace, and hath already given us the most encouraging experience of his power and grace; *unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end;* eternal blessings, praise, and adoration be rendered unto him for this astonishing redemption; and let every member of the church, in heaven or in earth, with holy rapture and joy, cry, *Amen!*

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

Having laid down the glorious gospel privileges, the apostle proceeds to enforce the obligations thence resulting; for the doctrines of grace are the only powerful principles of true obedience. In this chapter we have divers exhortations to important duties. 1. *One that is more general*, ver. 1. 2. *An exhortation to mutual love, unity, and concord, with the proper means and motives to promote them*, ver. 2—16. 3. *An exhortation to Christian purity and holiness of life; and that both more general*, ver. 17—24. *and in several particular instances*, ver. 25. *to the end.*

1. I THERE-
FORE, the [a] prisoner * of
the Lord,) beseech you that ye [b] walk
worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are
called; 2. [c] With all lowliness and meek-
ness, with long-suffering, forbearing one
another in love: 3. [d] Endeavouring to
keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond
of peace. 4. *There is* [e] one body, and
one Spirit, even as ye are called in [f] one
hope of your calling; 5. [g] One Lord,
[h] one faith, [i] one baptism, 6. [h] One God
and Father of all, who *is* above all, and
through all, and in you all. 7. But unto
every one of us [l] is given grace according
to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8.
Wherefore he saith, [m] When he ascended
up on high, he led [n] captivity captive,
and gave gifts unto men. 9. (Now that
he ascended, what is it but that he also
[o] descended first into the lower parts of
the earth? 10. He that descended is
the same also that [p] ascended up far
above all heavens, that he might † fill all
things.) 11. [q] And he gave some,
apostles; and some, prophets; and some,
evangelists; and some, pastors and
teachers; 12. [r] For the perfecting of
the saints, for the work of the ministry,
for the edifying of the [s] body of Christ:
13. [t] Till we all come ‡ in the unity of the
faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of
God, unto a perfect man, unto the mea-
sure of the ‖ stature of the fulness of
Christ: 14. That we *henceforth* be no
more [u] children, tossed to and fro, and
carried about with every wind of doc-
trine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning
craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to de-
ceive; 15. But, [x] * speaking the truth in
love, [y] may grow up into him in all
things, which is [z] the head, *even* Christ:
16. [a] From whom the whole body fitly
joined together and compacted by that
which every joint supplieth, according to
the effectual working in the measure of
every part, maketh increase of the body
unto the edifying of itself in love.

a See ch. 3. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 20.
* Or *in the Lord.*
b Gen. 17. 1. & 5. 24. & 6. 9. 1 Cor. 7. 24. Phil. 1. 27. & 4. 8. Col. 1. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 12. & 4. 1, 2, 12. Tit. 2. 11—14. 1 Pet. 1. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 3—11.
c Acts 20. 19. 1 Cor. 13. 4, 7. 2 Cor. 6. 6. Gal. 5. 22. Phil. 2. 3. Col. 1. 11. & 3. 12—14. 1 Thes. 5. 14.
d 1 Cor. 1. 10, 11. & 12. 13. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 3. 3, 15. Col. 3. 14. Rom. 14. 17, 19.
e John 17. 21—23. Rom. 12. 5. ch. 12. 16, 22. 1 Cor. 12. 4, 11—13. 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11. & 11. 2, 4.
f Acts 15. 11. ch. 1. 18. Rom. 8. 23, 25. Gal. 5. 5. Tit. 2. 2. Heb. 6. 17—19. Rom. 5. 4, 5. 1 Pet. 1. 13. 1 John 3. 2, 3.
g 1 Cor. 1. 2, 13. & 8. 6. & 11. 5.
h 2 Cor. 11. 4. Gal. 1. 6, 7. Jude 3, 20. Rom. 3. 30. 2 Cor. 4. 13.
i Gal. 3. 27, 28. Mat. 28. 19.
k Mal. 2. 10. 1 Cor. 8. 6. & 12. 6. Ps. 83. 18. Dan. 4. 34, 35. Rom. 11. 36.
l Rom. 12. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 11. ver. 8—14. ch. 1. 3, 9.
m Ps. 8. 18. Col. 2. 15.
n Or *a multitude of captives.* Judg. 5. 12.
o John 3. 13, 31. & 6. 38. & 7. 29. & 13. 3. & 16. 28.
p 1 Tim. 1. 15. Ps. 139. 15. Mat. 12. 40. Acts 1. 11. & 2. 33. 2 Cor. 15. 24. ch. 1. 20, 23. Col. 1. 19. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Heb. 4. 14. & 17. 26. & 8. 1. & 9. 12, 24.
† Or *fulfil.*
q 1 Cor. 12. 28—30. Rom. 12. 6—8. 1 Cor. 9. 1, 2. & 4. 9. Acts 11. 27. 1 Cor. xiv. Acts 21. 8. 2 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 17.
r Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 7, 27. & 14. 26. Col. 1. 29. 1 Tim. 4. 16.
s Ch. 1. 23. & 5. 23, 30. Col. 1. 24. & 2. 19. ver. 16. 1 Cor. 12. 12.
t 1 Cor. 1. 10. John 10. 16. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Phil. 3. 9—14. ch. 2. 15. Col. 1. 22, 28. & 2. 2, 10.
‡ Or *into the unity.*
‖ Or *age.*
u Is. 28. 9. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Rom. 16. 18. Heb. 13. 9. 2 Tim. 3. 6. 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10. Acts 20. 29, 30. Mat. 24. 5, 11, 24. & 11. 7. 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 11. 13. Col. 2. 4, 7. Tit. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 3. Jude 4.
x Zech. 8. 16. 2 Cor. 4. 2. Gal. 2. 5, 14. & 3. 1. & 4. 16. & 5. 6.
* Or *being sincere.* 1 John 3. 18.
y Col. 1. 10, 18. & 2. 10, 19. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2. not as 2 Tim. 2. 18. & 3. 7. & 4. 4. Tit. 1. 14.
z Ch. 1. 10, 13, 22. & 2. 21. & 5. 23. Col. 1. 18.
a Col. 2. 19. Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 27. ch. 2. 21, 22. Zech. 10. 12.

Verses 1—16. The apostle addresses to them,

1. A general exhortation to walk worthy of their high vocation. *I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord,* suffering now for my fidelity to his gospel, *beseech you* by every endearing argument, *that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called*, adorning by your conversation the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

2. He particularly exhorts them, (1.) To behave *with all lowliness and meekness;* in humble thoughts of themselves, and the mildest deportment towards others, *with long-suffering*, passing by offences, and overlooking the infirmities of their brethren, *forbearing one another in love*, influenced by this divine principle, and patient towards all men. *Note*, True love, humility unfeigned, and approved meekness, are the most striking lineaments of the Christian's character. (2.) In this manner *endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, sweetly cemented together in holy fellowship, and the whole church being in perfect peace, no jarring discord should disturb the happy union.

3. He suggests the strongest motives to the practice which he

recommends. *There is one body*, of which we are all members; *and one Spirit*, which actuates the whole; and therefore we cannot, if this be the case, but have the tenderest concern for and closest union with each other; *even as ye are called in one hope of your calling*, looking for the same inheritance in glory, and expecting to spend a blessed eternity in your Father's house above. There is *one Lord*, the Saviour of his people, and to whom they all owe duty and allegiance; *one faith*, the same gospel, and to be apprehended in the same way; *one baptism*, the sacramental rite of admission into the kingdom of grace, wherein we are solemnly dedicated to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; *one God and Father of all*, who stands in this endeared relation to all that are the children of grace by faith in Jesus Christ; *who is above all*, exalted above all blessing and praise; *and through all*, dispensing his mighty influences through the whole mystical body, *and in you all*, making your hearts his temple; and therefore, being connected by ties so many and so engaging, we should be most closely united together in love, and appear as actuated by one soul.

4. The different gifts and graces bestowed on the members of the same body, far from producing any variance, should cement them the nearer, as they are given for the benefit of the whole. *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, each member hath his several office and endowment; and according as the Lord sees fit, he dispenses sovereignly to every man the grace suited to his place and station. *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive*, triumphant over all his foes, having spoiled principalities and powers, and led Satan, sin, death, and hell, as vanquished enemies, bound to his chariot-wheels; *and gave gifts unto men*, the richest and most amazing gifts of his Spirit. *Now that he ascended* in this glorious manner *what is it* that is herein intimated to us, *but that he also descended first* from heaven *into the lower parts of the earth*, humbling himself to take the human nature into personal union with himself, and then to lie down in the grave, making atonement for our sins. *He that descended is the same* divine person, the son of God, *who ascended above all heavens* to the state of most transcendent dignity, enthroned in majesty on high, *that he might fill all things*, and abundantly dispense to every member of his church the gifts and graces needful for them. *And he gave some apostles*, to fill the highest stations in his church; *and some prophets*, by inspiration to foretell future events, and to expound the prophetic word; *and some evangelists* who were generally employed in preaching the word; *and some pastors and teachers*, to take care of particular churches, and minister unto them in holy things: all which appointments to these several offices are designed *for the perfecting of the saints* (καταρτισμον) to join them in firm union together, and carry on the work of grace begun in them to its perfection in glory; *till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God*, by means of the same blessed gospel, and by happy experience of the power and grace of the same adored Jesus, *unto a perfect man*, growing up to higher spiritual attainments, *unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*, when we shall bear his image complete, and when all his elect members shall be collected into his eternal kingdom, and form that glorious body of which he is the head. *That we henceforth be no more children*, weak in faith and knowledge, and every grace, and consequently liable to be *tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive*, and by fair pretences seduce the simple and unwary into their pernicious heresies and destructive ways; *but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ;* which growth in grace the blessed gospel, through the power of Jesus, tends effectually to promote; *from whom the whole body, fitly joined together* as members to the living Head, *and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part*, by that divine energy that is communicated from the life-giving Spirit of the Lord, *maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love*, till it comes to perfect blessedness in the eternal world. *Note*, Truth from the heart should ever be spoken among Christians, and with that love that may gain it a more welcome reception.

17. [b] This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that [c] ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18. [d] Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the † blindness of their heart: 19. [e] Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20. [f] But ye have not so learned Christ; 21. If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, [g] as the truth is in Jesus: 22. That ye [h] put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23. And [i] be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and ‡ true holiness. 25. Wherefore, [k] putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for [l] we are members one of another. 26. [m] Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27. [n] Neither give place to the devil. 28. [o] Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him [p] labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have ‖ to give to him that needeth. 29. [q] Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good * to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30. And [r] grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are [s] sealed unto the day of redemption. 31. [t] Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32. And [u] be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

[b] See 1 Cor. 10. 12 Acts 20. 21. Rom 1. 9. 2 Cor. 6. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 12.
[c] Ch. 5. 3—8. Col. 3. 5—14. Rom. 13. 11—14. & 1. 21—32. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. ch. 2. 2, 3, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 3. ver. 18, 19.
[d] Acts 26. 18. Rom. 1. 21. Ga'. 4. 8. ch. 2. 12. & 5. 8. 1 Thes. 4. 5. Col. 1. 13.
† Or *hardness*.
[e] 1 Tim. 4. 2. Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. 1 Pet 4. 3.
[f] Rom. vi. & 7. 4, 6. & 8. 2, 13. & 13. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 30. & 6. 19, 20. ch. 5. 1—8. Col. 3. 1—14. Tit. 2. 10—14. & 3. 8. 2 Tim. 2. 14. Mat. v—viii. Luke vi.
[g] 2 Cor. 1. 20. Mat. 26. 28. John 1. 14, 16. & 14. 6. ch. 1. 13.
[h] Col. 2. 11. & 3. 8, 9. Rom. 6. 6. & 7. 14—24. & 8. 13. ch. 2. 2, 3. Mat. 15. 19. Heb. 12. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 1. & 4. 3. Gal. 5. 17—20. Ezek. 18. 31.
[i] Rom. 12. 2. & 6. 4. 2 Cor. 4. 16. & 5. 19. Gal. 6. 15. ch. 2. 10, 15. Col. 3. 10.
‡ Or *holiness of truth*.
[k] Zech. 8. 16. Is. 58. 7. Col. 3. 9. Rev. 21. 8, 27.
[l] Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 10. 17. & 12. 12, 27. ch. 5. 30. 1 Pet. 2. 5.
[m] Ps. 4. 4. & 37. 8. Mark 3. 5. Prov. 19. 11. Eccl. 7. 9. & 11. 10. Deut. 24. 15. & 21. 23. Prov. 14. 29. & 29. 8. Jam. 1. 19. Rom. 12. 19—21.
[n] Jam. 4. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9.
[o] Exod. 20. 15, 17. ch. 5. 5.
[p] Acts 20. 34, 35. 1 Thes. 4. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 11, 12.
‖ Or *to distribute*.
[q] Ch. 5. 3, 4 Col. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 33. Mat. 12. 36. Eccl. 10. 12. Prov. 10. 32. Ps. 45. 2. Luke 4. 4, 22. 1 Cor. 14. 5, 19. Col. 3. 16. 1 Thes. 5. 11. ch. 5. 19.
* Or *to edify profitably*.
[r] Is. 7. 13. & 63. 10. Ezek. 16. 43. Mic. 2. 7. Acts 7. 51. Rom. 8. 16, 23. 2 Cor. 1. 22. & 5. 5. ch. 1. 13, 14. Luke 21. 28. Rom. 13. 11.
[s] Rom. 4. 11. Col. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Tit. 3. 3. Ps. 37. 8. Jam. 4. 11. & 1. 21.
[t] Col. 3. 12, 13. Mat. 6. 14. & 18. 35. Mark 11. 25. 1 Pet. 3. 8, 9. & 4. 8. Rom. 12. 10, 15, 19—21.
[u] 2 Cor. 2. 10. Phil. 2. 1. Col. 3.

Verses 17—32. Having recommended to them close union, he proceeds to inculcate purity of heart and life.

1. He warns them against the practices of the unconverted heathen. *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord*, entreating

and solemnly in his name enjoining it upon you as members of his undefiled body, *that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk*, in their sinful, idolatrous, sensual courses, *in the vanity of their mind*, acting after the dictates of their vain and corrupted hearts: *having the understanding darkened* in all spiritual matters; *alienated from the life of God*, estranged from him who is the fountain of life, and averse to all his holy ways, *through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts*, rejecting every means of instruction, wilfully perverse and obstinate against the notices of his will, and resisting the convictions of their own consciences, not liking to retain God in all their knowledge, Rom. i. 28. *who being past feeling*, their hearts impenetrably hardened in sin, *have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness*, abandoning themselves to every vile affection without restraint, and pursuing their guilty pleasures with insatiable desire.

2. Far otherwise was the lesson the gospel had taught them. *But ye have not so learned Christ;* since ye have known his grace, you have been directed to a different spirit and conduct; *if so be* or *since that, ye have heard him*, speaking in his word to your hearts, *and have been taught by him* through the illumination and powerful energy of his Spirit, *as the truth is in Jesus*, even that pure unadulterated gospel which Jesus taught by his own ministry, and exemplified in his temper and conversation, whose bright example his living members delight to imitate: *that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man*, restraining and mortifying that body of sin which is born with you, and ever wars within you; *which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*, lusts which promise much gratification in the indulgence, but fatally deceive the soul into endless perdition: *and be renewed in the spirit of your mind* yet more and more in knowledge, grace, and holiness: *and that ye put on the new man*, made partakers of a divine nature, and in spirit, temper, and conduct, quite changed from your former selves as if you had been really different persons; *which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*, after his own image and by his own power. *Wherefore*, as those who are influenced by another spirit, beware of those sins to which ye were formerly addicted; particularly,

(1.) *Putting away lying* in every instance, *speak every man truth with his neighbour*, without deceit or prevarication, paying the strictest regard to your word at all times and in all circumstances, and preferring the endurance of the greatest evils to the suggestion of the least falsehood: *for we are members one of another*, and therefore bound to use all simplicity and fidelity in our conversation with each other. *Note*, An habitual liar is infallibly a child of wrath. All Christ's members desire ever to speak the truth from their heart.

(2.) *Be ye angry and sin not;* for all anger is not in its own nature evil: but as we are so prone, even where there is just cause to exceed in our resentments, we must check the rising displeasure, and repress its workings: therefore, whatever cause is given for it, *let not the sun go down upon your wrath:* but hasten to calm any tumult which may have arisen, that it fix not in hatred, or rankle into malice or revenge: *neither give place to the devil*, who ever seeks to irritate the irascible nature which is in us, and to blow our passions into a flame. *Note*, There is scarce a more besetting sin than anger, nor any against which we need be more habitually on our guard.

(3.) *Let him that stole steal no more*, utterly abhorring all such iniquitous practices; *but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth*, and not only be saved from the temptation to dishonesty, whereunto idleness is the most direct road, but also be enabled by his honest industry to afford a pittance from his gains for the relief of the necessitous.

(4.) *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*, nothing lewd, profane, opprobrious, light, which in its most distant tendency can lead to evil; *but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers*, and serve to promote their spiritual and eternal benefit. *Note*, Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; and a Christian spirit will appear in readiness to introduce and maintain such conversation as is profitable and edifying.

(5.) *And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God*, by these or any such like evils, lest you provoke him to withdraw his blessed influences from you: *whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*, that glorious day when you shall be delivered from the burdens of the flesh, or when you shall rise again in glory to appear for ever in the presence of God. Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from us!

(6.) *Let all bitterness*, all rancour of spirit and acrimony in discourse; *and wrath, and clamour, and evil speaking*, the fruits of a mind inflamed with passion and rage; *be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another*, gentle, courteous, affectionate; *tender hearted*, sympathizing and full of pity towards the afflicted and the tempted; *forgiving one another* every provocation and injury, however great or aggravated, *even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you*, freely, fully, and for ever. *Note*, (1.) A sense how much we are ourselves indebted to the pardoning love of God, will engage us to exercise the like forgiveness to our brethren. (2.) A tongue that is set on fire of hell, and full of bitterness, &c. hath never yet been brought under the restraints of a Redeemer's grace.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

We had several important exhortations *in the close of the foregoing chapter, and they are continued in this: particularly,* 1. *We have here an exhortation to mutual love and charity,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Against all manner of uncleanness,* ver. 3—20. 3. *The apostle directs to the conscientious discharge of relative duties, from* ver. 21. *throughout this, and in the beginning of the next chapter.*

1. BE [a] ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2. And [b] walk in love, as Christ also [c] hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. 3. But [d] fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4. [e] Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5. For this ye know, [f] that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 7. [g] Let no man deceive you with vain words: for [h] because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of * disobedience. 7. [i] Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8. [k] For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: [l] walk as children of light; 9. (For [m] the fruit of the Spirit is

a Ch. 4. 32. Mat. 5. 45, 48. Luke 6. 36. 1 John 3. 1—3. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.
b John 13. 34. & 15. 12. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 John 3. 11, 16, 18, 23. & 4. 20, 21.
c Gal. 2. 20. & 1. 4. Tit. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 32.
d 1 Cor. 5. 7. Heb. 8. 3. & 7. 27. & 9. 14, 26. & 10. 10, 12. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 9. with Gen. 8. 21. Lev. 1. 9. & 3. 16. Num. 28. 6, 13, 27. & 29. 2, 8, 36.
e Col. 3. 5. 1 Thes. 4. 3—8. Mark 7. 21, 22. Rom. 1. 24. & 6. 19. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 15. 2 Cor. 12. 21. Gal. 5. 17—21, 24—26. ch. 4. 19. with Exod. 23. 13. 1 Cor. 5. 1. ch. 4. 1.
f Ch. 4. 29. Col. 3. 8. Mat. 12. 35, 36. Rom. 1. 28. with Col. 1. 12. & 4. 2. ver. 20.
g Jer. 29. 8. Mat. 24. 4. Gal. 6. 7. Col. 2. 4, 8. 2 Thes. 2. 3. Jam. 1. 16. 1 John 4. 1. h Rom. 1, 18. & 2. 8, 9. Is. 3. 11. Ps. 75. 8. & 9. 17. ch. 2. 2, 3. Col. 3. 6. Rev. 21. 8. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Gal. 6. 7, 8. * Or *unbelief.* i Ver. 11. 1 Tim. 5. 22. Ps. 1. 1. & 50. 18. Prov. 9. 6. & 13. 20. k 1 Cor. 6. 11. ch. 2. 11, 12. Tit. 3. 3, 5, 7. Is. 9. 2. Acts 26. 18. Rom. 1. 21. & 13. 12. 1 Cor. 12. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 6. & 3. 18. Gal. 4. 8, 9. ch. 4. 18, & 2. 12. & 1. 18. Phil. 2. 1. Col. 1. 13. 1 Thes. 1. 9. & 4. 5. & 5. 4, 5. 1 Luke 16. 8. John 8. 12. & 12. 35, 36, 46. Tit. 2. 11—14. 2 John 8. see ch. 4. 1. Is. 60. 1. & 2. 5. m Gal. 5. 22, 23. Ezek. 36. 27.

in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth;) 10. [a] Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11. And [o] have no fellowship with the [p] unfruitful works of darkness, but [q] rather reprove *them*. 12. For [r] it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. 13. But all things that are † reproved [s] are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. 14. Wherefore he saith, [t] Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15. See then that ye [u] walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16. Redeeming the time, [x] because the days are evil. 17. Wherefore, [y] be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*. 18. And [z] be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be [a] filled with the Spirit; 19. [b] Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20. [c] Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

n Rom. 12. 2. Phil. 1. 10. 1 Thes. 5. 21.
o Ps. 1. 1. & 26. 4, 5. Prov. 4. 14, 15. & 22. 23, 25. 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11. 2 Cor. 6. 14. 2 Thes. 3. 6. Rev. 18. 4.
p Rom. 6. 21. & 13. 12. Gal. 6. 8. Acts 3. 17. John 3. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 7. Heb. 9. 14. ch. 4. 22. 1 Cor. 10. 20. 1 Tim. 5. 22.
q Lev. 19. 17. Mat. 18. 15. Luke 17. 3. 1 Tim. 5. 20.
r Rom. 1. 24—27. 1 Pet. 4. 3.
† Or *discovered*.
s John 3. 20, 21. Heb. 4. 13.
t Is. 26. 19. & 60. 1. Rom. 13. 11, 12. & 6. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 15. 54. John 5. 25. ch. 2. 5. Col. 3. 1. 1 Thes. 5. 6.
u Col. 4. 5. Mat. 10. 16. Eccl. 2. 13. Exod. 23. 13. John 12. 35, 36. Phil. 2. 12. & 1. 27. Gal. 6. 12.
x Eccl. 11. 2. & 12. 1. ch. 6. 13. Gal. 1. 4. Amos 5. 13. Ps. 49. 5. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5. John 9. 4.
y Ver. 15. Rom. 12. 2. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 1 Thes. 4. 3.
z Luke 21. 34. Prov. 20. 1. & 23. 29. Is. 5. 11, 12, 22.
a John 20. 22. 1 John 2. 20, 27. Ezek. 7. 27. Col. 1. 9. Acts 11. 24. Phil. 1. 9, 11. b Acts 16. 25. 1 Cor. 14. 26. Col. 3. 16. Jam. 5. 13. c Job 1. 21. Ps. 34. 1. & c, ciii—cv, cviii, cxxvi, cxlv—cl. Is. 63. 7. Col. 3. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 18. Heb. 13. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. & 4. 11.

Verses 1—20. Love is the divine principle through which alone the practice of all holiness can be made easy and natural to us. This therefore,

1. The apostle inculcates. *Be ye followers of God as dear children*, acting according to this high relation, and in your spirit and temper resembling your heavenly Father; *and walk in love*, which is his brightest attribute, and renders you most like the blessed Redeemer, *as Christ also hath loved us*, with a love so surpassing great, so free, so unchangeable; *and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour*, to make atonement for our sins, and to reconcile us to God by his own blood, his sacrifice being infinitely meritorious and acceptable. *Note*, (1.) Love is the characteristic mark of a child of God, and a disciple of Jesus. (2.) The sacrifice of the Lamb of God is fully efficacious: God is well pleased in the oblation of his Son; and all who draw near through him are sure of acceptance.

2. He warns them against all manner of uncleanness. *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness*, the lawless desires of fleshly concupiscence, *let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints*, but avoided with the utmost detestation, and never once so much as mentioned; *neither filthiness*, in gesture, habit, or discourse; *nor foolish talking*, in secret innuendos, or vain, light, and unprofitable conversation; *nor jesting*, with wantonness, about things sacred, or to the hurt of others; *which are not convenient, but* utterly unbecoming a Christian's profession, who should *rather* be employed in *giving thanks*, and use his tongue as an instrument to set forth God's glory.

3. He enforces his exhortation by the most weighty arguments:

(1.) These sins must necessarily exclude us from heaven, and lay us under the eternal wrath of God. *For this ye know*, according to the unchangeable word of God, *that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man*, whose heart is the sty of lewd desires, or *who* is inordinately eager after gain, and consequently *is an idolater*, loving and serving the creature more than the Creator, *hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God*, but must be for ever excluded from the divine favour. *Let no man deceive you with vain words*, as if these sins were not so dangerous; and with some soft names of *human infirmity*, or *venial transgressions*, endeavour to satisfy your consciences, and embolden you to hope for impunity; *for* know assuredly, *because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience* and unbelief, who, despising God's warnings, perish eternally under the deluge of his fiery wrath. *Be not ye therefore partakers with them*, by communion with them, or connivance at them, lest you become involved in their punishment. *Note*, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. We should often consider it, that we might tremble, and avoid the very distant approaches of evil, that hath consequences so dreadfully dangerous.

(2.) What God hath done for us should engage us to be faithful to him. *For ye were sometimes darkness*, and in this wretched state were blindly led on by vile affections to every abomination, ignorant of God and your own danger, and rushing headlong to ruin; *but now are ye light in the Lord*, since he hath shined into your hearts, and given you the knowledge of his will, and wrought effectually by his gospel to turn you to his blessed Self in the practice of true holiness; therefore *walk as children of the light*, agreeable to the obligations lying upon you, and the measure of knowledge and grace which you have received. *For the fruit of the Spirit*, which the Lord hath given you to illumine your darkness, and quicken your souls from the death of sin, *is in all goodness, and righteousness and truth;* it appears in every act of tenderness and beneficence towards the needy, in all purity of heart towards God, and uprightness in our dealings with men, and engages us to a holy simplicity and unimpeached fidelity in all our words and works; in which things, as children of light, you will therefore habitually walk; *proving what is acceptable unto the Lord*, desiring out of his word to learn his mind and will, and to approve yourselves to him in all holy conversation and godliness. *And*, for this end, *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*, neither by countenance nor connivance at them in others, any more than by practising them yourselves; they are *works of darkness*, the deeds of a fallen and corrupted heart, and that seek usually the covert of the night: *unfruitful* of every thing *but* misery, wrath, and wretchedness. Instead therefore of joining in them, *rather*, wherever they appear in any brother, bear an open testimony against them; and with zeal tempered with love, boldly *reprove them*. *Note*, (1.) The fallen mind is darkness itself: they who are under its influence take hold of the paths of death and hell, and know not whither they are going. (2.) Where God hath given us the light of his truth, every wilful sin is infinitely aggravated. (3.) They who are truly sensible of the evil and danger of sin, will not see it upon their brother, without a kind and faithful rebuke.

(3.) The very shocking and shameful nature of these sins should deter us from them. *For it is a shame even to speak of those things, which are done of them in secret;* the very mention of them must offend a modest ear, and how much more must the practice of them provoke a holy God? *But all things that are reproved*, as such evils must be, *are made manifest by the light* of God's word which hath shined into your hearts, and are thereby discovered in their native deformity, and hateful colours; *for whatsoever doth make manifest is light;* as the sun illumines the world that otherwise would be covered in darkness, so doth Christ in his gospel, arising as the Sun of Righteousness, shine into the hearts of his people, giving them light and discernment in spiritual things, which were before utterly hid from their eyes; and enabling them to see the evil and danger of those

tempers and practices, which before they never apprehended. *Wherefore he saith,* when calling the souls of sinners out of darkness into his marvellous light, *Awake thou that sleepest* in security, ignorance, and insensibility, *and arise from the dead,* from thy state of death in trespasses and sins, *and Christ shall give thee light,* the light of life and truth, to conduct thee in the paths of holiness to the regions of glory; and wherever this light is spoken into the soul, then it will be evident by an abhorrence of evil, and such a conversation as will bear the strictest scrutiny.

4. On what he had said, he grounds this farther exhortation: *See then that ye walk circumspectly,* narrowly examining every step you take, *not as fools, but as wise,* as those who have been taught the truth as it is in Jesus, *redeeming the time,* making the best improvement of the present moment, and desirous to retrieve, in a measure, the time and opportunity which hath been lost; *because the days are evil,* and require greater watchfulness when iniquity so abounds, when temptations so many and great beset you; and you know not how soon you may be cut off. *Wherefore, be not unwise,* as in the former days of folly and unregeneracy, *but understanding what the will of the Lord is,* that ye may know how to walk and please him, and be found faithful to the light which he is pleased to give you. *Note,* (1.) If we consider how much of our time we have abused and squandered, it will become us with peculiar diligence to improve the pittance which remains. (2.) Evil days require especial circumspection. (3.) The worst and most fatal folly is the ignorance of God's word and neglect of our souls.

How we must redeem our time, and walk according to the divine prescription, the apostle, in several particulars, proceeds to show,

1. *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess,* as the heathen, at their Bacchanalian feasts, and the dreadful consequences of drunkenness are numberless; for when the mind is once intoxicated, a wide door is opened to every act of extravagance, folly, riot, debauchery, uncleanness, and there remains no restraint from the greatest abominations.

2. *But,* on the contrary, *be filled with the Spirit;* seek to drink deeper into the sacred fountain of his divine light, grace, strength, and consolation, which will inspire the most exquisite and sacred pleasure and delight; not roaring round the board of riot, and joining the mad songs of the drunken, but *speaking to yourselves,* and each other, *in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,* uniting your voices in the Redeemer's praise, *singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord,* with inward exultation in God as your Saviour, and every outward expression that tends to exalt his great and glorious name, *giving thanks always for all things,* your hearts in every dispensation acknowledging a gracious God, and your tongue employed in thanksgiving *unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus,* through whom all our services are accepted, and by whom all the dispensations of providence and grace are made to work together for our good. *Note,* (1.) Psalmody is a gospel ordinance, and they who are happy in God will delight in his praises. (2.) Whatever our condition or circumstances may be, there is always room for thanksgiving. Afflictions, as well as mercies, demand a grateful acknowledgment; they are good for us, and we shall, in the issue, find the blessed effects of them.

21. [d] Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22. [e] Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, [f] as unto the Lord. 23. For [g] the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is [h] the head of the church: and he is [i] the Saviour of the [k] body. 24. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, [l] so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. 25. [m] Husbands, love your wives, even as [n] Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26. That [o] he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; 27. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, [p] not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28. So ought men to love their wives as [q] their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30. For we are [r] members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31. [s] For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32. This is a great mystery: but I speak [t] concerning Christ and the church. 33. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular [u] so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she [x] reverence *her* husband.

d Phil. 2. 3. Rom. 10. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Prov. 1. 7. Ps. 111. 10.
e Gen. 3. 16. Col. 3. 18. 1 Cor. 14. 34. Tit. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 1, 5, 6.
f 1 Cor. 11. 7. ch. 6. 5.
g 1 Cor. 11. 3, 7, & 14. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 7. 1 Tim. 2. 13. h See ch. 1. 22. & 15. Col. 1. 18, 2, 19.
i Ver. 25—27. Mat. 1. 21. Is. 45. 17, 22. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Rev. 5. 9.
k See ch. 1. 23. & 2. 16. & 3. 6. & 4. 12, 15. ver. 30—32. Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 12, 27. Col. 1. 18, 22, 24.
l Col. 3. 20. Tit. 2. 9.
m Ver. 28. Col. 3. 19. 1 Pet. 3. 7. Prov. 5. 19. Gen. 2. 24.
n Acts 20. 28. Mat. 20. 28. Gal. 1. 4. & 2. 20. ver. 2. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Tit. 2. 14. Rev. 5. 9.
o John 17. 17, 19. & 15. 3. & 3. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Tit. 3. 5. & 2. 14. Heb. 9. 14. & 10. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 23. & 3. 21. 1 John 5. 6.
p Deut. 23. 10. Song 4. 7. 2 Cor. 11. 2. ch. 4. 7. & 1. 4. Col. 1. 22. Tit. 2. 14. Jude 24. Rev. 21. 27. Col. 2. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 30.
q See ver. 31, 33. Gen. 2. 23, 24. Mat. 19. 5.
r Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 15. & 12. 12, 27. ch. 1. 23. & 4. 16. Col. 1. 18. & 2. 10, 19. ch. 2. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 30. John 1. 16. & 17. 22. with Gen. 2. 13.
s Gen. 2. 24. Mat. 19. 5. Mark 10. 7. 1 Cor. 6. 16.
t Ps. xlv. Song i—viii. Is. 5. 4. & 62. 4, 5. Mat. 22. 1—13. Hos. 2. 19, 20. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Rev. 19. 7, 8. & 21. 3.
u Ver. 28, 29, 31. Col. 3. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Prov. 5. 19.
x Esth. 1. 20. 1 Pet. 3. 2, 5, 6. see ver. 22, 24.

Verses 21—33. The apostle proceeds to exhort them to the discharge of those relative duties, which are the great ornament of Christianity.

In general a spirit of gentleness and mutual forbearing must reign in you, *submitting yourselves one to another,* in all natural and civil relations, in public and private, making conscience of discharging the duties of your several stations, and *in the fear of God,* willingly in subjection to those whom he hath placed as your superiors.

1. Your duty as *wives* is to *submit yourselves unto your own husbands,* in all reverence, honour, and dutiful obedience; consulting their will, and content to be in subjection, *as unto the Lord,* regarding him as the author of your subordination, and submitting, as the church doth to him. *For the husband is the head of the wife,* by divine appointment, *as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body,* having bought her even at the expense of his own blood, and with the most endearing tenderness and affection providing whatever is needful for her support and comfort. *Therefore as the church* is bound, by every tie of love and duty, to be *subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing,* not contradictory to their duty towards God. *Note,* The direction is clear and obvious, but the difficulty is for a fallen spirit to acquiesce. Let those therefore who enter into the marriage state seriously consider their obligations, before they lay themselves under the solemn vow of *obedience in all things.*

2. The duty of *husbands* is this, *Love your wives* with singleness of affection, which speaks in every word and look of tenderness, with gentleness desiring to rule, not tyrannize, and, by every endearing art of persuasion, winning obedience, rather than haughtily and imperiously demanding subjection, remem-

bering and imitating the love of Christ to his church, *who gave himself for it*, even to the death of the cross, *that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*, in his atoning blood opening a fountain for sin and uncleanness, to which, by faith, his people might come according to his word, and be effectually delivered from all their guilt, and defilement of body and soul; *that*, being thus cleansed, *he might present it to himself*, as a chaste virgin, adorned for her heavenly bridegroom, *a glorious church*, beautiful in his blood, and bright in the robes of his righteousness, *not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but* appearing in perfect comeliness and purity; *that*, as the sacrifices under the law, *it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives* according to this love of Christ, even *as their own bodies*, they being now a real part of themselves: *he that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it;* our own flesh is not nearer to us than our wives, and the same affectionate care is due to them, *even as the Lord* hath showed to *the church: for we are members of his body* mystical, *of his flesh, and of his bones*, like the woman formed from the first man's side. *For this cause*, seeing the union is so close, *shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife*, in peculiar singleness of affection, *and they two shall be one flesh*, as if they literally became one body. *This is a great mystery*, these words being figuratively of a more happy and excellent marriage than that of the first man and woman; and I mean, in their application, to lead you, not merely to consider the original law of marriage, *but I speak concerning Christ and the Church*, to whom they emphatically belong. *Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself*, as the members of his own body, *and* let *the wife see that she reverence her husband* with all conjugal love, and jealous fear of offending.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter, (1.) *The apostle proceeds in the exhortation to relative duties, which he began in the former: Particularly he insists on the duties of children and parents; and of servants and masters*, ver. 1—9. (2.) *He exhorts and directs Christians how to behave themselves in the spiritual warfare with the enemies of their souls; and to the exercise of several Christian graces, which he proposes to them as so many pieces of spiritual armour, to preserve and defend them in the conflict*, ver. 10—18. (3.) *We have here the conclusion of the epistle, in which he takes his leave of them, recommending himself to the prayers of the believing Ephesians, and praying for them*, ver. 19—24.

1. CHILDREN, [a] obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2. [b] Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) 3. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4. And, [c] ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. 5. [d] Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in [e] singleness of your heart, as unto Christ: 6. Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; 7. [f] With good-will doing service, [g] as to the Lord, and not to men: 8. Knowing, [h] that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free. 9. [i] And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, * forbearing threatening: knowing that [k] your Master also is in heaven; [l] neither is there respect of persons with him.

a Col. 3. 20. Prov. 23. 22. & 1. 8. & 6. 20. Gen. 22. 9. & 37. 13. 1 Kin. 2. 20.
b Exod. 20. 12. Deut. 5. 16. & 27. 16. Jer. 35. 18. Ezek. 22. 7, 15. Mat. 15. 4. Mark 7. 10.
c Col. 3. 21. Gen. 18. 19. Deut. 4. 9. & 6. 7, 20. & 11. 19. Ps. 78. 4—7. Prov. 4. 1—13. & 19. 18. & 22. 6, 15. & 29. 17. & 13. 4.
d Col. 3. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 1. Tit. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 18.
e 1 Chr. 29. 17. Ps. 25. 21. Mat. 6. 22. Acts 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 16. ver. 6, 7. Gal. 1. 10.
f Gen. 31. 6, 40. Col. 3. 23.
g Ver. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 10. 31. 1 Pet. 4. 11. & 2. 9.
h Rom. 2. 6, 7, 10. 1 Cor. 7. 19, 22, 24. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Col. 3. 24. Gal. 6. 9. with 3. 28. Col. 3. 11.
i Col. 4. 1. Lev. 25. 43. & 19. 13. Deut. 24. 14, 15. 1 Sam. 25. 17.
* Or *moderating*.
k Your and their master. Mat. 8. 19. & 10. 25. John 13. 13.
l Deut. 10. 17. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Job 34. 19. Acts 10. 34. Gal. 2. 6. Rom. 2. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 17.

Verses 1—9. The apostle proceeds with those relative duties which he had begun to enforce in the former chapter, beginning still with the inferior relation; for dutiful obedience will lay the strongest obligations on the superior to show all condescension and love in return. We have,

1. The duty of children to their parents. *Children obey your parents;* hear their counsels, and submit to their commands, this being the debt you owe them, both as the authors under God of your being, and for all the care they have shown you, and this *in the Lord*, as far as is agreeable to his word, and for his glory. *Honour thy father and mother*, saith the law; reverence them, speak respectfully to and of them, and if needful provide for them, (*which is the first commandment with* a particular *promise* annexed to it,) *that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*

2. The duty of parents. *And ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath* by unreasonable tasks, severities, or restraints, *but* with all lenity, tenderness, and affection, endeavour by love and kind persuasion to win upon them, and *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, instructing them in the knowledge of the scriptures, setting before them a gracious example, directing them to the means of grace, and watching over them with holy jealousy.

3. The duty of servants. *Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh*, in all their lawful commands, with becoming fear of their displeasure, *and trembling* lest at any time you should justly offend them; *in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ*, without flattery, deceit, or guile, with a regard to the Redeemer's glory, *not with eye-service as men-pleasers*, diligent only so long as they look over you, merely to curry favour with them, *but as the servants of Christ*, under his constant and all-seeing inspection, and therefore *doing the will of God from the heart*, and discharging the duties of the station in which he hath placed you with all fidelity and truth. *With good will doing service*, with cheerfulness and alacrity, from a principle of love to your masters and a real zeal for their honour and interest, and this *as to the Lord and not to men*, desiring, not so much human, as the divine approbation, and acting from a sense of duty to the great Lord of all. *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth*, however mean his station, and inconsiderable in itself the service may be, *the same shall he receive of the Lord*, who will suitably reward his fidelity, *whether he be bond or free.*

4. The duty of masters. *And ye masters, do the same things unto them*, show the same readiness conscientiously to discharge your relation to them, *forbearing threatening*, not tyrannizing over them, and terrifying them with sternness and menaces, but choosing to rule by love rather than fear, *knowing that your Master also is in heaven*, to whom you must give an account, *neither is there respect of persons with him;* all stand at his bar on a level, and must receive from his lips their eternal sentence for happiness or misery.

10. Finally, my brethren, [m] be strong in the Lord and in [n] the power of his

m Is. 45. 24. & 40. 29, 31. Zech. 10. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 16. 13.
2 Cor. 3. 5. & 12. 9, 10. Phil. 4. 3. Col. 1. 11. n Ch. 1. 19. & 3. 16. Heb. 7. 25.

might. 11. ° Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the [p] wiles of the devil. 12. For we wrestle not against [q] flesh and blood, but against [r] principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against † spiritual wickedness in ‡ high *places*. 13. Wherefore [s] take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the [t] evil day; and || having done all, to stand. 14. Stand therefore, [u] having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15. [x] And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: 16. [y] Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: 17. And take [z] the helmet of salvation, and [a] the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18. [b] Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and [c] watching thereunto with [d] all perseverance and supplication for [e] all saints; 19. [f] And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may [g] open my mouth boldly, to make known the [h] mystery of the gospel, 20. For which I am [i] an ambassador * in bonds: that † therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

° Rom. 13. 12. 2 Cor. 6. 7. Col. 3. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 10. 4.
p 2 Cor. 2. 11. & 11. 3, 13, 14. 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10. Rev. 2. 24. & 12. 9. 1 Pet. 5. 8.
q Mat. 16. 17. Gal. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 15. 50.
r Col. 2. 15. ch. 2. 2. John 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. Job 2. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 4. 4. & 12. 7.
† Or *wicked spirits.*
‡ Or *heavenly.*
s See ver. 11.
t Ch. 5. 16. Luke 8. 13. Gal. 1. 4. Eccl. 11. 2. & 12. 1.
|| Or *having overcome all.*
u Is. 11. 5. Luke 12. 35. & 17. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 13. 2 Cor. 6. 7. Is. 50. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 8.
x Song 7. 1. Is. 52. 7. Rom. 10. 15. 1 Thes. 1. 5.
y 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. 1 John 5. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Heb. xi. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Is. 7. 9. with Gen. 15. 1. Ps. 56. 4.
z Is. 59. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 8.
a Heb. 4. 12 Rev. 11. 16. & 2. 16. & 19 15. Is. 49. 2. Mat. 4. 4, 7, 10, 11.
b Luke 18. 1. Rom. 12. 12. Col. 4. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Mark 13. 33. ch. 1. 16. Phil. 1. 4. Rom. 8. 26, 27. Jude 20.
c Mark 13. 37. Mat. 24. 42. 44. & 25. 13. Rev. 16. 15.
d Luke 18. 1—8. 2 Cor. 12. 8. Mat. 15. 22—28.
e Gal. 6. 10. Jam 5. 16. 1 Tim. 2. 1.
f Rom. 15. 30. Col. 4. 3. 1 Thes. 5. 25. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
g Acts 4. 29. 2 Tim. 1. 7. Rom. 1. 16. 1 Tim. 5. 21. 2 Cor. 3. 12.
h Mat. 13. 1. & 16. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 16. ch. 3. 3, 4. Col. 1. 26, 27.
i 2 Cor. 5. 20. ch. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 3. 12. with Acts 26. 29. & 28. 20, 31. ch. 3. 1, 13. & 4. 1. Phil. 1. 7, 13, 20. Col. 4. 18. 2 Tim. 1. 8, 16. & 2. 9. Philem. 9, 10.
* Or *in a chain.*
† Or *thereof.*

Verses 10—20. Every Christian is enlisted under the banners of Jesus, to fight the Lord's battles, and to maintain unceasing war against sin, the world, and the devil. The apostle therefore warmly exhorts them to quit themselves as men under the glorious Captain of their salvation. *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, supported by those almighty influences of grace, which he supplies, in whom alone standeth our help, and from whom cometh our salvation. *Put on the whole armour of God*, as a soldier covered from head to foot, with armour proof against every weapon, *that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*, and neither be seduced by his ensnaring temptations, nor terrified by his suggestions, from the path of duty.

1. The enemies we have to conflict with are described. *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood*, not only against the corruptions implanted in our own nature, or the wicked men of this world, who oppose and persecute, *but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*, even against those legions of malignant spirits, who, under their hateful leader, have erected a kingdom of darkness, and enslaved the souls of men, and ever hover round us, watching for an opportunity to distress, harass, trouble, and, if they could, to destroy, those who have escaped from their hateful bondage.

2. Having such foes, we need be well armed against their assaults. *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God*, so absolutely necessary for this dangerous conflict, *that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day*, when this hour of temptation and danger comes, *and having done all, to stand;* faithfully acquitting yourselves as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, through every trial, however sharp or prolonged; and more than conquerors at last, through him that loved you, when in a resurrection day you shall tread sin, Satan, death, and hell, for ever under your feet. *Stand, therefore*, the enemy advances, be ready to receive him, looking up to your mighty support, and invulnerable in the divine panoply. The Christian's complete armour, both offensive and defensive, is here in military terms described; the back alone is left unguarded, for we must conquer or die. Flight is sure to be fatal to the coward soul.

1. Truth must be our military girdle. *Having our loins girt about with truth*, firm in the doctrines of the gospel, and sincere in the profession of it, in simplicity approving yourselves before the heart-searching God.

2. Righteousness is our breastplate. *Having on the breastplate of righteousness*, imputed and implanted, to guard the vital parts from the stroke of the envenomed foe.

3. Our sandals must be the gospel of peace. *Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*, that whatever rough ways we may walk in, and whatever difficulties we meet, we may stand fast in the gospel of Jesus, prepared for every conflict, established on the sure foundation, enjoying peace with God in our own souls, and following it with all men.

4. Faith is our shield. *Above all*, as the most necessary piece of armour, and that which covers the whole body, *taking the shield of faith*, having lively and realizing views of the divine promises of pardon, grace, righteousness, and glory, confidently resting upon them, *wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*, when with fury he hurls his envenomed temptations at the soul, to despair, blasphemy, lewdness, rage, even to self-murder, seeking to bring horror, guilt, anguish, and distress upon the conscience, though he may not be able to destroy; but divine faith repels them all, quenches them, and they fall harmless at our feet.

5. Salvation is our helmet. *And take the helmet of salvation*, that sure hope of life eternal, grounded upon the faithfulness of the unchangeable God, that guards from dejection, and raises us superior to every fear.

6. The mighty sword is the word of God. *And* take *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*, before which the legions of darkness cannot stand, when wielded by the faithful soldier, slaying every temptation, and opening a way through hosts of difficulties.

7. Prayer must be added. *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit*, looking upwards constantly for divine support, in every emergence casting your care upon God, in ejaculations, and, at stated solemn seasons, commending yourselves into the Lord's hands, *and watching thereunto with all perseverance*, never weary or giving over, though the conflict be hard and long, and no immediate answer received; and, as for yourselves, so also continue ceaseless in *supplication for all saints*, engaged in the same warfare, contending with the same enemies, and needing the same divine support. *And*, among others, *for me also*, under my trials, *that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly*, fearless of any consequences, *to make known the mystery of the gospel*, and publish the glad tidings with all zeal, openness, and freedom of speech, without concealing any of the glorious truths, however offensive they be to men's pride or love of sin; *for* which *fidelity I am an ambassador* of Christ *in bonds*, suffering cheerfully, and still desiring, even in a prison, to negotiate the great affair of reconciliation between God and sinners: and I entreat your prayers, *that therein*, under whatever difficulties I struggle, *I may speak boldly, as I ought*

to speak, undaunted in my spirit, and without molestation. *Note*, (1.) Prayer is the Christian's constant recourse and sure support in every exigence. (2.) Whilst we continue persevering in our supplications, we shall assuredly go on conquering and to conquer. (3.) We should mutually remember each other at a throne of grace; all saints need our prayers, and should have an interest in them.

k Col. 4. 7. Phil. 1. 12.
i Acts 20. 4. 2 Tim. 4. 12. Tit. 3. 12.
m Ver. 21. Col. 4. 8. 1 Thes. 3. 2. Phil. 2. 19. 1 Cor. 16. 10.
n See ch. 1. 2, 3. Ps. 122. 6—9. Phil. 1. 9—11. Col. 1. 10, 11. Jude 1, 2.
o See Gal. 6. 18. 2 Cor. 13. 14. 1 Cor. 16. 23. Rom. 16. 20, 24.
p Or *without corruption*. Tit. 2. 7. John 21. 15—17. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Ps. 25. 21. Ps. 18. 1. Mat. 22. 37.

21. [k] But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, [i] Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: 22. [m] Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts. 23. Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24. [o] Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ [p] in sincerity. Amen.

Verses 21—24. Having desired an interest in their prayers, he concludes his epistle,

1. With recommending Tychicus to them, the bearer of this epistle. *But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do* in my present confinement, *Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things* concerning my situation, labours, treatment, and success, even in bonds: *whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know my affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts*, amidst all the trials you meet, and encourage you, for my example, patiently and cheerfully to persevere in the good ways of the Lord.

2. He closes with his usual benediction and prayer. *Peace be to the brethren*; may you enjoy a sweet sense of God's favour, be blessed with all prosperity, temporal and spiritual, and live in the most uninterrupted harmony among yourselves; and may love to God and to each other abound, *with faith*, in the most lively and vigorous exercise; all which spiritual blessings flow *from God the Father*, as their source in the economy of redemption, *and from the Lord Jesus Christ*, as the purchaser and dispenser of them to his chosen people. *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity*, (εν αφθαρσια,) with unfeigned affection, or *with incorruption*, without adulterating the doctrines of truth, or admitting any earthly thing to rival him in their hearts; or *with immortality*, may his grace and your love be perfected in glory everlasting. Thus in faith he prays, and adds his joyful *Amen!* in confidence that the Lord will hear and answer his requests.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

PHILIPPIANS.

Introduction.

PHILIPPI was a chief city of the western part of Macedonia, πρωτη της μεριδος της Μακεδονιας πολις, Acts xvi. 12. It took its name from Philip, the famous king of Macedonia, who repaired and beautified it; and was afterwards made a Roman colony. Near this place were the *Campi Philippici*, remarkable for the famous battles between Julius Cesar and Pompey the Great; and that between Augustus and Antony on one side, and Brutus and Cassius on the other. But it is most remarkable among Christians for this epistle, which was written when Paul was prisoner at Rome, A. D. 64.

St Paul seems to have had a very particular kindness for the church at Philippi, which he himself had been instrumental in planting; and though he had *the care of all the churches*, he had, upon that account, a particular fatherly tender care of this. He looked upon them as his *children*, and having *begotten them by the gospel*, he was desirous by the same gospel to nourish and nurse them up.

From small beginnings they had arisen to a flourishing church; and in their liberality to the apostle were distinguished, of which he makes grateful and honourable mention; expressing his warm affection towards them; informing them of his success even in prison; encouraging them to bear up under all opposition; exhorting them to mutual love; warning them against deceivers, and stirring them up to all holy conversation and godliness.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

He begins with the inscription *and* benediction, ver. 1, 2. *He gives* thanks *for the saints at Philippi,* ver. 3—7. *His great* affection *and concern for their spiritual welfare,* ver. 7—9. *His* prayers *for them,* ver. 9—11. *His care to prevent their* offence *at his sufferings,* ver. 12—20. *His* readiness *to glorify Christ by life or death,* ver. 21—27. *He concludes with a double exhortation to* strictness *and* constancy, ver. 27—30.

a 2 Cor. 1. 1. Col. 1. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1. Philem. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 1. Rom. 1. 1, 9, 16.
b See Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Heb. 3. 1. John 15. 2.
c Acts 16. 12—40.
d Or *overseers.* Acts 20. 17, 28. 1 Tim. 3. 1—13. Tit. 1. 5—9. Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Pet. 5. 1—3. Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. 1 Cor. 12. 28. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Acts 6. 1—3.
e See Eph. 1. 2. Gal. 1. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. Rom. 1. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 2.

1. PAUL [a] and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to [b] all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at [c] Philippi, with the [d] bishops and deacons: 2. [e] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verses 1, 2. The apostolical inscription and benediction opens the epistle, *Paul and Timotheus,* who joins him in all cordial salutations, *the servants of Jesus Christ* in the gospel, *to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi,* chosen in him, and in the fulness of time brought into real union with him in faith and holiness, *with the bishops,* the superior officers in the church, and deacons their assistants; *Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Note,* (1.) There can be no true peace but what flows from divine grace and favour. (2.) Every covenant mercy we receive at God's hands comes to us as the fruit of our adored Redeemer's undertaking.

f Rom. 1. 8—10. j Cor. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 15, 16. & 6. 18. Col. 1. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 3—5. Philem. 4, 5.
* Or *mention.*
g Eph. 3. 6. 1 John 1. 3, 7. or Rom. 12. 13. & 15. 26. 2 Cor. 8. 4. & 9. 13. Gal. 6. 6. ch. 4. 14. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Heb. 13. 16.
h John 6. 44, 45. & 16. 9—13. & 6. 29. 1 Thes. 1. 3. Eph. 2. 4—10. j Cor. 3. 9. Ezek. 36. 25—29.
† Or *will finish it.*
i 1 Cor. 13. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 5. 1 Thes. 1. 5. Heb. 3. 1. & 6. 9, 10.
‡ Or *you have me in your heart.*
k 2 Cor. 3. 2. & 7. 3. 1 Thes. 2. 8. ver. 8.
l See Eph. 3. 1. & 4. 1. & 6. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 4. 16. Heb. 13. 3. ch. 4. 14. ver. 5.
m See ver. 17.
‖ Or *partakers with me of grace.*
n Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 23. & 11. 31. Gal. 1. 20. 2 Tim. 5. 21. & 4. 1.
o Ch. 2. 24, 26. & 4. 1. Rom. 1. 9—12. 1 Thes. 2. 5. 2 Cor. 10. 1. Gal. 4. 19.

3. [f] I thank my God upon every * remembrance of you, 4. Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, 5. For your [g] fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; 6. Being confident of this very thing, that he [h] which hath begun a good work in you † will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ: 7. Even [i] as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because ‡ I have you [k] in my heart, inasmuch as both [l] in my bonds, and in the [m] defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are ‖ partakers of my grace. 8. For [n] God is my record, how [o] greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. 9. And this I pray, [p] that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and *in* all * judgment; 10. [q] That ye may † approve things that ‡ are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the [r] day of Christ; 11. Being [s] filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

p 1 Thes. 3. 12. & 4. 9. & 5. 15. Prov. 4. 18. Eph. 1. 18. & 3. 17—19.
* Or *sense.*
q Rom. 2. 18. & 12. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 21—23. & 3. 13. Acts 24. 14, 16. 1 Cor. 10. 32. 2 Cor. 1. 12.
† Or *try.* ‡ Or *differ.*
r Ver. 6. Acts 17. 31. 2 Thes. 1. 7—10. 1 Thes. 4. 14—17.
s John 15. 4, 5, 8. Col. 1. 6, 9—11. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Eph. 5. 9. & 2. 10. & 1. 12. Phil. 4. 13. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Mat. 5. 16.

Verses 3—11. The apostle, after his gracious introduction, begins,

1. With thanksgivings to God on their behalf. *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,* and of the rich grace he hath bestowed upon you, (*always, in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy,* delighting in and over you,) *for your fellowship in the gospel,* thankful for all the inestimable privileges to which you have been admitted, for the love and union maintained among you, and for your liberality in contributing to the furtherance of the gospel, *from the first day until now,* with steadfastness and perseverance in the midst of all opposition, continuing to approve your fidelity. *Note,* (1.) It is a great joy to a minister's soul, when his people walk steadily in the fellowship of the gospel. (2.) Our grateful thanksgivings are ever due whilst we are mentioning the divine mercies.

2. He expresses his confidence concerning them. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you,* by his sovereign grace converting your souls, according to his unchangeable promises and love, *will perform* and finish *it until the day of Jesus Christ,* when your salvation shall be perfected for ever. *Note,* (1.) Whatever good is found in us, it comes from God, who worketh in us *to* will and to do of his good pleasure. (2.) He who is the author must also be the finisher of the work of grace, that in eternity he may have all the praise. (3.) Where God begins, we may be confident he will bring to a happy end. His work is perfect, and his gifts and callings without repentance.

3. He gives the reasons for that confidence in them which he entertained. *Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all,* bound in the judgment of charity to esteem the whole church and every member true to their profession. And I the more readily entertain such a persuasion of you, *because I have you in my heart,* embraced with my warmest affections, and sharing my constant remembrances, *inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye are all partakers of my grace,* enduring the like tribulations as I suffer, and by your sympathy with me, and your readiness to assist me, both in my bonds, and amidst all the opposition which I meet in defence of the gospel, ye manifestly appear to have received out of the same Redeemer's fulness. *Note,* We are bound to think well of those, who not only make a creditable profession, but dare to suffer for the truth themselves, or nobly own, even in bonds, those who do.

4. He appeals to God for the warm attachment of his heart unto them. *For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ,* with the truest spiritual affection, like that which Jesus himself feels for precious souls.

5. He tells them what were his prayers for them. *And this I pray,* (1.) *That your love may abound yet more and more* towards God and one another. (2.) That ye may advance *in knowledge and in all judgment,* grounded and settled in the true principles of the gospel, and that thus your love may be increased day by day. (3.) *That ye may approve the things that are excellent,* bringing every thing to the test of God's word, that their different excellences may be ascertained; and examining by this unerring rule the doctrines of seducers, that the purity of the gospel may be maintained in opposition to their errors. (4.) *That we may be sincere and without offence,* or allowed guile, before God and man, true to your principles and upright in your conduct, *till the day of Christ,* persevering in your fidelity, and walking as those who constantly eye a heart-searching God, and a judgment-day. (5.) *Being* thus found faithful, you will be *filled with the fruits of righteousness,* with every divine temper and gracious work which the Spirit of God produces in the redeemed, and *which are by Jesus Christ,* accepted through him as well as derived from him, *unto the praise and glory of God.* His own glory is the great end which he proposes in all his works, and which we therefore should ever regard as the great end of our being.

12. But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me [t] have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; 13. So that [u] my bonds ‖ in Christ are manifest in all [x] the palace, and * in all other *places;* 14. And many of the brethren in the Lord, [y] waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. 15. [z] Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also [a] of good-will: 16. [b] The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: 17. But the other [c] of love, knowing that [d] I am set for the defence of the gospel. 18. What then? notwithstanding, every way, [e] whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. 19. [f] For I know that this shall turn to my salvation [g] through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20. [h] According to my earnest expectation and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, [i] *so* now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life or by death.

t Ps. 76. 10. Exod. 18. 11. Rom. 8. 28. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
u Eph. 3. 1. & 4. 1. & 6. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 4. 17. & 2. 9. Acts xxviii.
‖ Or *for Christ.*
x Or *Cesar's court.* Ch. 4. 22.
* Or *to all others.*
y Eph. 3. 13. 1 Thes. 3. 3. Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 2. Eph. 6. 19, 20.
z Ch. 3. 2, 18, 19. Gal. 1. 7. & 2. 4. & 5. 8, 12. & 6. 12. Eccl. 4. 4. Jam. 4. 5. ver. 16.
a 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 1, 2. Ps. 40. 9, 10.
b Hos. 10. 1. Mic. 7. 2, 4. ver. 15.
c Is. 52. 8. Ps. 40. 9, 10. & xlv. Is. 5. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 14, 20.
d 1 Cor. 9. 16, 17. Rom. 1. 16, 17. 2 Tim. 4. 6, 7, 17. & 20. 9, 1.
e Ver. 14—17. Mat. 21. 16.
f Rom. 8. 28. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Ps. 76. 10. Job 13. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 9.
g 2 Cor. 1. 11, Rom. 8. 9, 26.
h 2 Tim. 1. 12. Rom. 5. 5. Gal. 6. 14.
i Acts 20. 24. & 21. 13. 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11.

Verses 12—20. Nothing could tend more gloriously to remove the ignominy of Paul's chain, or to comfort the hearts of his spiritual children, who might be much dejected at his reproaches and sufferings, than the account which he here gives.

1. Even in his bonds the gospel was not bound, but his sufferings tended to confirm and propagate the knowledge of the truth. *I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me,* dark and afflictive as the dispensation might appear to you, *have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the gospel;* for God can easily bring the greatest good out of what appeared the greatest evil. Thus the blood of the martyrs hath ever been the seed of the church. *So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace,* where my sufferings for the gospel, and patient fortitude under them, are known to all the great men of Nero's court, *and in all other places,* and are made the happy occasion of raising inquiries about the gospel in those who might not otherwise have heard it, and of bringing some under the joyful sound even out of Cesar's household. *And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds,* and fully satisfied of the goodness of the cause, and of the hand of the Lord visible in the support he gives me, *are much more bold* than *ever to speak the word without fear,* and to proclaim the salvation which is only to be found in a crucified Jesus. *Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife,* taking this opportunity of my imprisonment to pursue the base end of setting up themselves, even under the covert of zeal for the gospel, envying my reputation, and hoping to supplant me in the affection of the churches; *and some also of good will,* with hearty affection to the cause, and true regard for me. *The one preach Christ of contention,* out of mere pride and rivalship; *not sincerely,* from a right principle of love unfeigned: but from envy, *supposing to add affliction to my bonds,* by ingratiating themselves, to my prejudice, with the members of the churches, or hoping to incense the government more against me by the noise they make, and the divisions they seek to raise; *but the other* preach *Christ of love,* truly attached to the Saviour, and longing to promote the salvation of immortal souls: *knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel,* and suffered to bear these bonds on purpose to have an opportunity before the highest in this world, publicly to vindicate and defend the cause of Christ. *Note,* (1.) Strange as it may appear that any should preach Christ out of envy, so subtle is the tempter, and so corrupt the heart of man, that even the gospel may be turned into the gall of asps, and made the pedestal on which the proud heart would erect its reputation. (2.) Faithful souls are whetted by opposition, and made more bold by bonds and reproaches.

2. He expresses the joy he felt in his own soul, amidst all he suffered from open enemies and false friends. *What then?* though some act on principles so base, *notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice:* if his name is spread abroad, and his gospel propagated, that is matter of real joy; and the ministry may be blessed though the preacher perishes. *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation,* however different the designs of these men may be, and serve to procure my liberty the sooner, as well as to advance my soul's present and eternal benefit, *through your prayers* daily offered up for me, *and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,* which can enable me to improve under every dispensation, and make it to work for good. *According to my earnest expectation and hope* that I shall be supported and delivered, and *that in nothing I shall be ashamed* of that glorious cause for which I suffer; *but that with all boldness,* and unshaken fortitude of mind, as always hitherto I have been enabled to act, *so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death;* by longer patient suffering, if such be his will; by a faithful discharge of my trust, should I regain my liberty; or by sealing the testimony with my blood, if his glory so requires. *Note,* (1.) We are much indebted to our brethren's prayers. (2.) The supply of the Spirit of Christ can make up all other wants, and cause every providence to prove a blessing. (3.) If we are not a shame to the gospel, we need never be ashamed of it, though devoted, for the sake thereof, to the most ignominious death.

21. [k] For [l] to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. 22. But [m] if I live in the flesh, [n] this *is* the fruit of my labour; yet what I shall choose I wot not. 23. For I am in a strait betwixt two, [o] having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24. Nevertheless, [p] to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you. 25. And having this confidence, I know that [q] I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and [r] joy of faith; 26. [s] That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

k Gal. 2. 20. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Col. 2. 10. & 3. 11. Gal. 6. 14. Ps. 73. 26.
l Or to me living and dying Christ is gain. Ch. 3. 7—9.
m Gal. 2. 20. 2 Cor. 10. 3. not Rom. 8. 1, 4, 13.
n Ver. 21. Acts 20. 24. & 21. 13.
o 2 Cor. 5. 2, 4, 6, 8. Luke 23. 43. 1 Thes. 4. 17. John 17. 24.
p Acts 20. 29.
q Ch. 2. 24. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Rom. 1. 11, 12. & 15. 32. Philem. 22.
r 1 Pet. 1. 8. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Ps. 60. 6. Jer. 15. 16.
s 2 Cor. 1. 14. & 5. 12. ch. 2. 16—18. Rom. 1. 11, 12.

Verses 21—26. The apostle was happy to die, yet for their sakes content to live.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain; living or dying, he is to me all and in all; for his glory I only desire to live, and in whatever way I die in his cause and service, I know it shall prove my everlasting gain. *But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour,* to preach and suffer for the truth's sake, in order to advance my great Master's cause: *yet what I shall choose*

I wot not, whether life or death: *for I am in a strait betwixt two; having a desire to depart and to be with Christ*, longing for the heavenly blessedness in store, and to see him face to face, where sin, sorrow, and sighing, shall for ever flee away; *which is far better* than any possible situation which I can be in here below; *nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you;* and for your benefit I can gladly forego for a while my own happiness, and conflict still amidst the opposing powers of earth and hell. *And having this confidence*, that my abode below will be for your edification, *I know*, by divine intimations, *that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith*, to confirm and establish you yet more and more; *that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Christ Jesus for me, by my coming to you again*, restored to liberty, and enabled to resume my useful labours among you. *Note*, (1.) If we can say with truth, *to live is Christ*, that his glory is our single aim, we may confidently add, *to die is gain;* how great heaven can only tell. (2.) But for one thing can earth be truly desirable to the faithful, and that is the service which can be rendered to immortal souls, and the glory accruing thence to the Redeemer: for this therefore he lives.

27. Only [c] let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that [u] whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that [x] ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the [y] faith of the gospel; 28. And [z] in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an [a] evident token of perdition, but to you [b] of salvation, and that of God. 29. For unto you [c] it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; 30. Having the same conflict [d] which ye saw in me, *and* now hear *to be* in me.

t Eph. 4. 1, 3. Col. 1. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 11, 12. & 4. 1, 7. 1 Cor. 7. 19, 20, 24. Tit. 2. 11, 12, 14. & 3. 8, 14. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. 2 Cor. 7. 1.
u Ver. 19—26. & 2. 24. Philem. 22.
x Ps. 133. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 10. ch. 2. 2, 14, 16. & 3. 15—17. & 4. 1, 2. Jude 3. Eph. 4. 3. Prov. 23. 23.
y Acts 24. 24. Rom. 1. 5. & 10. 8. Gal. 3. 23, 25. & 1. 23. & 3. 2. Eph. 4. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 19. & 3. 9. & 4. 1, 6. & 5. 8, 12. & 6. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 7. Tit. 1. 1.
z Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 2. & 51. 7, 12. Mat. 10. 28. Heb. 13. 5, 6. with ch. 3. 2, 18.
a 2 Thes. 1. 5, 6.
b Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 1. 10.
c Is. 53. 10—12. Ps. 22. 27—30. Acts 5. 41. 1 Pet. 3. 14.
d Acts 16. 19—40. ver. 13. Acts 14. 22. & 20. 23. 2 Tim. 3. 11, 12.

Verses 27—30. The apostle closes with two exhortations.

1. *Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ*, (πολιτευεσθε.)

Behave as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, walk worthy of your high vocation, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and proving the solidity of your hope by the spirituality of your conduct; *that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs* with joy, *that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel*, united in truth and love; resisting, with the most vigorous efforts, every persecuting or seducing foe, holding fast the unadulterated principles of grace, and building up each other in your most holy faith. *Note*, (1.) The faith of the gospel will ever meet with opposition. (2.) Unanimity among Christians is the great means of their establishment; while dissension and schism render them an easy prey.

2. *In nothing terrified by your adversaries*, however many or mighty, whether from earth or hell; but defy their malice and rage, cleaving unshaken to the blessed gospel; *which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God;* such patient and faithful suffering for the truth proves your interest in it; whilst the opposition of your foes must end in their eternal ruin. *For unto you it is given*, as your distinguished honour, *in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him* to the saving of your souls, which is an eminent gift of God, *but also to suffer for his sake: having the same conflict which ye saw in me* when I was with you, and steadily sustained the shock; *and now hear to be in me. Note*, (1.) Faith is the gift of God. (2.) Sufferings and reproaches on the behalf of Christ are real honours. (3.) It is an encouragement to us patiently to endure the cross, when we see others cheerfully bearing it before us, and glorying in tribulation.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle proceeds to farther exhortations to several duties; to be like-minded, *and* lowly-minded, *which he presses from the example of Christ*, ver. 1—11. *And to diligence and seriousness in the Christian course*, ver. 12, 13. *And to adorn their Christian profession by several suitable graces*, ver. 14—18. *And concludes with particular notice and commendation of two good ministers, Timothy and Epaphroditus; whom he designed to send to them*, ver. 19—30.

1. IF [a] *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, 2. [b] Fulfil ye my joy, that ye [c] be like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. 3. [d] *Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4. [e] Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5. [f] Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6. Who, [g] being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7. But made himself of [h] no reputation, and took upon him [i] the form of a servant, and [k] was made in the * likeness of men: 8. And being found in fashion as a man, [l] he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9. Wherefore [g] God also [m] hath highly exalted him, and given him [n] a name which is above every name: 10. [o] That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; 11. And *that* every tongue should confess [p] that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

a Ch. 1. 30. Rom. 5. 1—5, 11. & 15. 9—13. 2 Cor. 1. 3—7. & 10. 1. & 2. 14. & 6. 10. Col 2. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 5, 6. 2 Thes. 1. 3. & 2. 16, 17. & 3. 5. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Col. 3. 12—14.
b 1 Thes. 3. 7—9. ch. 1. 26. John 3. 29.
c Acts 4. 32. Rom. 12. 16. & 15. 5, 6. 1 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 11. ch. 1. 27. & 3. 15, 16. & 4. 2. 1 Pet. 3. 8.
d Ver. 14. ch. 1. 15, 16. Gal. 5. 15, 26. Jam. 4. 1, 6, 16. & 3. 14—16. 2 Cor. 12. 20. Rom. 12. 16. 1 Cor. 15. 9. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 21. Luke 14. 10, 11. & 18. 14.
e Rom. 12. 15. & 15. 1, 23. 1 Cor. 10. 24, 33. & 13. 5. 2 Cor. 11. 28, 29. Heb. 13. 1—3.
f Mat. 11. 29. John 13. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 John 2. 6. 1 Cor. 6. 17. & 12. 13.
g Is. 9. 6. Zech. 13. 7. John 1. 1, 2. & 5. 18. & 10. 30, 33. & 17. 5. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 3. Rom. 9. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 3. 16. Tit. 2. 13. Heb. 7. 25, 26, 28.
h Ps. 22. 6. Is. 49. 7. & 53. 2, 3. Dan. 9. 24. Mark 9. 12. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Mat. 8. 20. Ps. 40. 17.
i Is. 42. 1. & 49. 3, 6, 7. & 52. 13. & 53. 11. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. Zech. 3. 8. Mat. 20. 28. Luke 22. 27. John 13. 14. Rom. 15. 3, 8. k Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 8. 3. & 1. 3. John 1. 14. Heb. 2. 14, 17. Mat. i. Luke ii. * Or *habit*. l Heb. 5. 7, 8. & 2. 9, 14, 17. & 4. 15. & 9. 14 & 10. 10, 14. & 12. 2. John 10. 18. & 18. 11. Mat. 26. 39, 42. & xxvii. Luke xxii. m Ps. viii, xviii, xxi, xlv, lxxiii, xcvi—c, cx, cxxii. John 17. 1, 2, 5. & 5. 27. & 10. 17. Rom. 14. 9. Heb. 2. 9. Rev. 5. 12. n Ps. 22. 27—31. & 72. 17. & 89. 27. Dan. 7. 14. Heb. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 21. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Col. 2. 10. Mat. 28. 18. o Is. 45. 23. & 53. 12. Rom. 14. 10, 11. Heb. 1. 6. Rev. 5. 13. p John 13. 13. Ps. 110. 5. Rom. 14. 9, 11. 1 Cor. 8. 6. & 12. 3. Acts 2. 36. & 5. 31. & 10. 36.

Verses 1—11. By every endearing argument the apostle exhorts his Philippian brethren,

1. To love, unity, and humility. *If there be any consolation in Christ*, (παρακλησις,) if my *exhortation* hath any weight, and you experience any joy in the Redeemer; if there be *any comfort of love*, from the sense of the love of God shed abroad in your hearts; *if* there be *any fellowship of the Spirit*, in mutual union and complacence in each other, or through the Holy Ghost, with

God the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ; *if* there be *any bowels and mercies*, in the gracious Saviour towards you; or if you have ever felt the like tender compassions one towards another; if it be most desirable to abound in all these things, and you have already known their value and excellence, *fulfil ye my joy*, and continue to give me this highest satisfaction in you, *that ye be like-minded*, animated as by one soul; *having the same love* one towards another, as the members of the same body; *being of one accord*, unanimous in desire and design to promote the Redeemer's glory, and the salvation of men's souls; and *of one mind*, holding the same principles and sentiments, according to the purity of the gospel. *Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory;* affect no pre-eminence, dispute not for applause, nor speak or act under a contentious spirit; *but in lowliness of mind*, the great ornament of the Christian character, *let each esteem other better than themselves;* entertaining lowly thoughts of their own attainments, conscious of their manifold infirmities, and entertaining the best opinion of their brethren. *Look not every man at his own things*, to admire himself, or pursue his own selfish ends, his ease, honour, or worldly advantage; *but every man also on the things of others;* not as busy bodies, to pry into them censoriously, but desiring to promote their real good, and from the view of their excellences to be humble in your own eyes.

2. He enforces his exhortation with the most powerful argument, the example of the blessed Jesus. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*, even that lowliness which in him was so eminently exemplified; *who being in the form of God*, possessing every essential perfection of the divine nature, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, *thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, and justly to claim a parity with the Father in uncreated glory: *But*, in infinite condescension and pity towards us, he *made himself of no reputation*, laying aside the splendour of his divine majesty, *and took upon himself the form of a servant*, assuming the human nature in the lowest condition; *and was made in the likeness of men*, having the same reasonable soul, and human flesh, the corruption of our nature only excepted. *And being found in fashion as a man*, in all things made like unto his brethren, *he humbled himself* before God and man, through a life of affliction, *and*, at last, *became obedient to death*, for us men, and for our salvation, *even the death of the cross*, that most painful, ignominious, and accursed death; submitting thereunto, that he might bear our sins in his own body on the tree. *Wherefore*, having finished the work which the Father had given him to do, to his fullest satisfaction, *God also hath highly exalted him* in his human nature to the mediatoral throne, as the reward of his sufferings, *and given him a name which is above every name*, all power, authority, and dominion being given to him over every creature; *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*, and divine honours be paid to the incarnate Son, *of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;* by angels and men, and every intelligent creature; yea, even devils must be compelled to own his glory: *and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord*, the universal Sovereign, *to the glory of God the Father*, who as man, hath thus exalted him to the throne of Majesty on high, for the purposes of his own glory. *Note*, (1.) The example of our Lord should be ever before us, and that, if any thing can, will suppress the workings of pride. (2.) The love of a crucified Jesus should warm our hearts, and knit them in closest union to each other.

12. Wherefore, my beloved, [q] as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, [r] work out your own salvation with [s] fear and trembling; 13. [t] For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do [u] of *his* good pleasure. 14. [x] Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15. [y] That ye may be blameless and † harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom [z] ye shine as lights in the world; 16. [a] Holding forth the [b] word of life; [c] that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I [d] have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. 17. [e] Yea, and if I be [f] offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. 18. For the same cause also [g] do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

q Ch. 1. 5, 27, 29.
r Rom. 13. 11—14. 2 Pet. 3. 18. & 1. 4—9. 1 Pet 1. 13—15. Tit. 2. 11—14. 1 Cor. 15. 58. & 9. 24, 25. Mat. 7. 7. John 6. 27, 40, 54, 57. ch. 3. 8—14.
s Ps. 2. 11. Is. 66. 2. 2 Cor. 7. 15. Heb. 4. 1. Eph. 6. 5.
t Rom. 6. 13, 14. Is. 26. 12. Zech. 10. 12. Ps. 73. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 12. 9. Heb. 13. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 23, 24.
u Rom. 9. 11, 16. Eph. 5. 6, 9, 11. & 2. 8. 2 Tim. 2. 1, 9.
x Rom. 12. 17. & 14. 1. 1 Tim. 2. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 12. & 4. 9. ver. 3.
y Eph. 5. 7, 8. Mat. 5. 14—16, 45. 1 Thes. 5. 5, 6. Luke 6. 35. Prov. 4. 18. with Deut. 32. 5, 6.
† Or *sincere.*
z Or *shine ye.* Mat. 5. 16. Prov. 4. 18. Eccl. 9. 1. Is. 60. 1, 2.
a Ch. 1. 27. & 4. 1. Heb. 4. 14. & 10. 23. Jude 3.
b John 6. 63, 68. & 5. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 23. Jam. 1. 18. Jer. 15. 16. Ps. 119. 50, 93. Acts 13. 26.
c Ch. 1. 26. 2 Cor. 1. 14. & 4. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 19, 20. d Gal. 2. 2. & 4. 11. 1 Thes. 3. 5. e 2 Cor. 12. 15. 1 Thes. 2. 8. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 4. 6. ch. 1. 20. Rom. 15. 16. 2 Cor. 7. 3, 4. f *Poured forth.* Num. 28. 7. g Ch. 3. 1. & 4. 4.

Verses 12—18. The apostle proceeds in his exhortations:

1. To Christian diligence. *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not in my presence only, but now much more in my absence*, and therefore I entertain the fullest confidence of your perseverance in the same good ways of our God, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*, giving all diligence to make your calling and election sure in the use of every appointed means, jealous over your deceitful hearts, and watchful against every thing that might offend the Father of mercies, whose love you have tasted, and by whose grace your stability can only be secured; *for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, and you may firmly depend upon him, that, amidst all opposition, he will perfect in you the work which he hath begun. *Note*, (1.) God, who ordains the end, appoints the means: these are inseparable: it were the height of folly and presumption to hope for salvation in the neglect of them. (2.) After all our diligence, our dependence must not be placed on ourselves, but on him who worketh in us to will and to do, not according to our desert, nor merely at our desire, but of his own good pleasure. (3.) It is the strongest motive to bestir ourselves, that we know our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord; for if he will work in us, for us, and with us, then shall we assuredly succeed.

2. To an exemplary conversation, such as may confound their enemies, and comfort him their faithful servant under all his sufferings. *Do all things without murmurings and disputings*, content under every providential dispensation, and studiously avoiding every occasion of contention among yourselves; *that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke*, and behave so irreproachably, that your most malignant accusers may have no evil thing justly to say of you: for ye dwell *in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation;* the keen eyes of your enemies are open, and they wait for your halting; gladly would they catch at any thing which might countenance them in their iniquities; *among whom ye shine as lights in the world;* your bright examples, like suns in your several spheres, darting unwelcome light upon the workers of wickedness, and shining to the glory of God: *holding forth the word of life*, even the blessed gospel, both in your lips and in your conduct, *holding it fast* in all fidelity, *holding it up* with all zeal and boldness, if under God it may be blessed to illumine the darkness of those around you, and bring them to the light of life; or at least to leave them inexcusable in their impenitence. And this will be a singular

satisfaction to me, when I find *that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain*, but behold in you such blessed effects of my ministry, and that all my conflicts shall at last be crowned with success. *Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith*, and should now be called as a victim to bleed in confirmation of the gospel which I preach, far from being intimidated with the prospect, *I joy and rejoice with you all*, congratulating you, and happy in myself that I am counted worthy of the crown of martyrdom, and enabled to leave so powerful a testimony behind me for the strengthening of your faith. *For the same cause also do ye joy and rejoice with me*, and, far from being grieved or disheartened, should exult that I am enabled to be thus faithful unto death. *Note*, (1.) Every Christian is a city set on a hill; he needs peculiar circumspection; a flaw in his conduct will be exaggerated into a fault of the first magnitude. (2.) We must hold up to the world, in our profession and examples, the word of life; not ostentatiously proclaiming our own goodness, but, for God's glory and the profit of men's souls, showing our light before men. (3.) Nothing can more revive a minister's heart, and make him so cheerfully content to suffer for the cause, even to death, as seeing his labours successful and his ministry blessed.

19. [h] ‡ But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send [i] Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20. For I have no man [k] like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. 21. For all [l] seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22. But ye know the proof of him, that [m] as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. 24. But [n] I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly. 25. Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you [o] Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. 26. For he [p] longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 27. For indeed he was [q] sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, [r] but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. 29. [s] Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and || hold such in reputation: 30. Because for [t] the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

h Ch. 1. 25. Philem. 22. Jam. 4. 15. ver. 2.

‡ Or *moreover.*

i Ch. 1. 1. Rom. 16. 21. 1 Thes. 3. 2. Eph. 6. 21, 22. Col. 4. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 16. 10.

k Or *so dear unto me.* Ps. 55. 13, 14. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2.

l 1 Cor. 10. 24, 33. 2 Tim 3. 2. & 4. 10, 16. & 1. 15. Hos. 10. 1. Zech. 7. 5. with Mat. 16. 24. Luke 14. 26. 1 Cor. 13. 5. Rom. 15. 1—3. ch. 3. 18, 19. ver. 4.

m Acts 16. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Rom. 16. 21.

n See ch. 1. 25. Philem. 22. ch. 1. 19, 25, 26.

o Ch. 4. 18. 2 Cor. 8. 23. Philem. 2. Col. 1. 7. & 4. 12.

p Ch. 1. 8. & 4. 1.

q Ps. 34. 19. John 11. 4. Job 5. 19. Ps. 41. 2, 3. & 103. 3, 4. & 107. 20.

r Rom. 12. 15. Heb. 13. 3. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

s Rom. 16. 2. & 15. 32. 1 Cor. 16. 10, 18. & 9. 14. 1 Thes. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Heb. 13. 17. Gal. 6. 6.

|| Or *honour such.*

t Mat. 25. 36—40. 1 Cor. 16. 17. ch. 4. 10, 18. Acts 20. 24.

Verses 19—30. Since he was now unable to visit them himself, he promises to send them two of his dearest friends to supply his absence, and speaks of them in the highest terms of regard and commendation.

1. He mentions Timothy. Though he had spoken of his readiness to die, he informs them for their comfort, that he apprehended no immediate danger, *But I trust*, says he, *in the Lord Jesus* that I shall be delivered, and, needful as his company is now to me, that I shall be able *to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state*, and hear of your prosperity. *For I have no man like-minded*, so perfectly united in sentiment with me, and so in affection knit to you; *who will* therefore *naturally care for your state*, and with genuine regard desire to advance your soul's good. *For all* here, too generally at least, *seek their own*, desirous of ease and earthly advantages; *not* with a single eye, as Timothy doth, pursuing *things which are Jesus Christ's*, for his glory, and the edification of his people. *But ye know the proof of him*, by past experience, with what zeal and fidelity he laboured among you; and *that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel;* willing to run all hazards, to share my fatigues and sufferings, and in all duty and affection obeying me as a child. *Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me*, after I have appeared, as I shortly expect to do, at Cesar's tribunal: *but I trust in the Lord, that I also myself shall come shortly*, when I have regained my liberty. *Note*, (1.) They who enter the ministry with selfish views, seeking *their own things*, not those of Jesus Christ, shall bear their burden, when the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls appears. (2.) A faithful pastor feels the same tender concern for the children he hath begotten in the gospel, as if they were the offspring of his own body.

2. He commends to them Epaphroditus, who brought this epistle to them. *But I suppose it necessary*, being unable to come myself, or to spare Timothy just at this critical juncture, *to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier*, who willingly served and suffered in the same blessed cause; *but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants;* delivering your kind benefactions, and giving me every assistance which lay in his power. *For he longed after you all*, and earnestly wished to be labouring again among you; *and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick;* knowing how deeply the sad news would affect you. *For indeed he was sick nigh unto death;* his disease, to human view, mortal and desperate: *but God had mercy on him*, and brought him back from the gates of the grave: *and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow*, anguish for his loss being added to my other burdens. *I sent him therefore the more carefully*, and with greater haste, *that when ye see him again ye may rejoice* in his recovery and return to you; *and that I may be the less sorrowful* at his departure, when I know what delight and advantage his company will be to you. *Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness*, with cordial regard, and as the ambassador of the Redeemer; *and hold such in reputation*, highly respecting them for their fidelity and zeal, *because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death*, having contracted his illness from the fatigues he underwent; *not regarding his life*, but readily hazarding his health, *to supply your lack of service towards me*, which the distance rendered you incapable of affording me. *Note*, (1.) Though we must not carelessly neglect our health, yet, when the cause of Christ demands it, a faithful minister will show a noble contempt of life, and be ready to expose himself to disease or death. (2.) They who know the value of a faithful minister, will count it a singular mercy that he *is* longer spared to labour, and will rejoice in him before God.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

1. *He cautions them against Judaizing seducers*, ver. 1—4. 2. *Proposes his own example, and enumerates the privileges of his Jewish state which he rejected*, ver. 4—8. 3. *He describes the*

matter of his own choice, ver. 9—14. *He closes with an exhortation to beware of wicked men, and to follow his example*, ver. 17—21.

a Ch. 4. 4. 1 Sam. 2. 1. Ps. 5. 11. & 32. 11. & 33. 1. & 37. 4. & 149. 2. & 4. 6. 7. & 47. 6. 7. Is. 61. 10. Joel 2. 23. Hab. 3. 18. Rom. 5. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 8. & 4. 13. Luke 10. 20.

1. FINALLY, my brethren, [a] rejoice in the Lord. [b] To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe. 2. [c] Beware of dogs, beware of evil-workers, beware of the concision. 3. For we are [d] the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

b 2 Pet. 1. 12. & 3. 1.

c Mat. 7. 15. & 24. 4. Is. 56. 10—12. 2 Cor. 11. 13. Gal. 5. 16. ver. 19. Gal 5. 2.

d Deut. 10. 16. & 30. 6. Jer. 4. 4. Col. 2. 11, 12. 1 Tim. 1. 4—7. Tit. 1. 10. Rev. 2. 9. & 3. 4. John 4. 23, 24. Rom. 1. 9. & 2. 29. & 4. 11, 12. Gal. 6. 14—16. ver. 7—10 Mat. 16. 24. ver. 7—9.

Verses 1—3. Into every church almost had the Judaizing teachers crept, and caused much trouble to the great apostle. The Philippians had been set at by them, and needed a caution against their seductions.

1. He exhorts them to rejoice in the Lord. *Finally, my brethren*, after what I have said for your comfort, *rejoice in the Lord*, as your Redeemer and Saviour, assured of your interest in all the inestimable blessings of his gospel.

2. He warns them against the false teachers. *To write the same things to you*, which I have often spoken, and Epaphroditus has now in charge to deliver, *to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe* to be reminded of your danger, and kept on your guard. *Beware of dogs;* those cringing zealots, who fawn to ingratiate themselves with you, but design to introduce divisions among you, to bite and devour you; greedy, impudent, and worthless. *Beware of evil workers*, whose practices declare the badness of their principles. *Beware*, again, I say, *of the concision*, no name being contemptible enough for them, who, urging this abolished rite, would rend the peace of the church, would introduce confusion, and cut off the Gentiles from the privileges of the gospel.

3. He describes true Christianity. *For we are the circumcision*, really in covenant with God, and entitled to all the spiritual blessings and privileges; *which worship God in the Spirit;* not with the outward pomp of ceremonial rites, but with the heart, according to the gospel institutions: *and rejoice* or *glory in Christ Jesus*, as our only hope towards God, placing our whole dependence upon him, happy in the perfection of the salvation which he hath wrought out for us, *and have no confidence in the flesh*, nor expect acceptance with God on account of any privileges of descent from Abraham, or any righteousness which we fallen creatures can perform. *Note*, (1.) All true Christians live in the constant worship of God, private and public; and that not formally, but in spirit and in truth. (2.) We must despair of ourselves, and renounce all dependence upon our own doings and duties, before we can exercise faith in Jesus, and know the joys of his salvation.

e 2 Cor. 11. 18—22.

f Gen. 17. 12. Acts 22. 3. & 23. 6. & 26. 4. 5. Rom. 11. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 18—22.

g Gal. 1. 13, 14. Acts 8. 3. & 9. 1. & 22. 3, 4. & 26. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 15. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 13. Acts 23. 1. 1 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Rom. 7. 9. & 9. 31, 32. & 10. 2, 3, 5.

h Mat. 13. 44 & 16. 24.

4. Though [e] I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5. [f] Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6. [g] Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7. But what things were [h] gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss [i] for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: [k] for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may [l] win Christ, 9. And be found in him, not having [m] mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but [n] that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10. That [o] I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11. If by any means [p] I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12. [q] Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but [r] I follow after, if that I may apprehend [s] that for which also [t] I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but [u] *this* one thing *I do;* forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14. I press toward the mark, for [x] the prize of the [y] high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

i Is. 53. 11. Jer. 9. 23, 24. John 17. 3, 8. Col. 2. 2. 1 Cor. 2. 2. Eph. 1. 17. & 3. 18, 19. 1 John 5. 20. Gal. 1. 16. Mat. 16. 17.

k 1 Cor. 4. 9—12. 2 Cor. 4. 8—10. & 11. 23—27. Mat. 19. 29. & 16. 24. Acts 20. 24. & 21. 13. 2 Tim. 3. 11.

l Heb. 3. 14. Mat. 13. 44.

m Rom. 9. 31, 32. & 10. 2, 3, 5. Gal. 3 10. Is. 64. 6. Ps. 143. 2.

n Rom. 1. 17. & 3. 21, 22. 24. & 5. 15—19. 21. & 8. 3. 4 & 9. 30. & 10. 4. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Is. 45. 24. & 46. 12, 13. & 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6. & 33. 16. Rev. 19. 8. Gal. 2. 16, 20. 2 Pet. 1. 1.

o Rom. 4. 25. & 6. 3—6. Gal. 2. 19, 20. Rom. 7. 4. & 8. 2, 11, 17. 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 13.

p Luke 20. 25. Acts 26. 7.

q 1 Tim. 6. 12. Heb. 12. 23.

r Ver. 13, 14. Hos. 6. 3. Ps. 63. 8. & 42. 1. & 84. 2. 7, Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18.

s Eph. 1. 7. Is. 45. 17.

t John 12. 32. Is. 49. 25. Hos. 2 19, 20. Ps. 110. 2, 3. & 45. 3—5.

u Ps. 27. 4. & 45. 10. Luke 9. 61, 62. Heb. 6. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 24, 26. 2 Cor. 5. 16. ch. 2. 12. Heb. 12 1, 2. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 11, 12. Prov. 4. 18. x Eph. 1. 4, 5. 1 Pet. 1. 4, 7, 9, 13. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Tit 2. 13. 2 Cor. 4. 17. & 5. 1. Is. 60. 19, 20. 1 John 3. 2. Col. 3. 4. 1 Thes. 4. 17. Rev. 3. 21. y Heb. 3. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 3.

Verses 4—14. None had more outward privileges than Paul; none more heartily renounced them, and fled to a better hope. His own example he proposes therefore for their imitation.

1. If any man might have confidence in outward privileges, he had as many, or more, than any of the Judaizing teachers: a native Israelite; a descendent from Benjamin the son of the beloved Rachel, the tribe that clave to the house of David and the temple, when the rest revolted; on father and mother's side a Hebrew of pure extraction; circumcised according to the law; brought up after the strictest sect a Pharisee, in the observance both of the rites of the law, and the traditions of the elders; a zealot for Judaism, even so far as to be a bitter pesecutor of Christianity; and in his outward conduct and conversation blameless and unexceptionable.

2. All this he renounced for Christ. *But what things* I then thought *were gain to me*, and raised me in excellence above other men, *those I counted loss for Christ*, renouncing them utterly, assured if I trusted upon them for acceptance I must be undone; and therefore resting on Christ, on his blood and righteousness alone. *Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss*, I remain in the same sentiments, disclaiming all dependence upon my present as well as past doings and duties, *for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord;* compared with this, all besides is refuse; since I have known him as my Saviour, I want nothing more; *for whom I have suffered the loss of all things*, which this world holds dear: *and do count them but dung*, contemptible offals, fit to be cast only on the dunghill; *that I may win Christ*, and become partaker of the great salvation which he hath wrought out for his redeemed, *and be found in him*, as my city of refuge, my divine Substitute and Surety, my availing plea at the bar of God; *not having mine own righteousness, which*

is of the law, nor daring in this to appear before the Judge, conscious how little it would bear the scrutiny; *but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith;* that divine, complete, and spotless righteousness which my Lord hath wrought out for me, which God imputes to me as my title to justification and life eternal, and which faith embraces as all my salvation. *Note,* (1.) Whatever we depend upon for justification, except on Christ alone, will assuredly prove to be our eternal loss. (2.) There is but one righteousness wherein a sinner can appear before God; and there never was, nor can be, another, besides that which Jesus of Nazareth completed when he died upon the cross.

3. The apostle desired to know Christ, not only as his justifying righteousness, but as the Author of all spiritual life, and eternal blessedness. *That I may know him, and* experience *the power of his resurrection,* as the glorious head of vital influence to all his redeemed people; *and the fellowship of his sufferings,* daily experiencing the crucifixion of the old man, and willingly taking up my cross, however painful; *being made conformable unto his death;* dying unto sin, as Christ died for it; or ready to lay down my life for the gospel, whenever I may be called thereto; *if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead;* raised to immortal life and glory in body as well as soul, and reaching the happy port of eternal rest; whither I steer my course. *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect* in holiness, as I desire to be; *but I follow after,* eager to be at the goal, *if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus;* holding fast by that blessed Jesus, who first laid hold on me in my way to Damascus, and trusting on his power and grace to bring me to the eternal life which he hath promised, and whereunto he hath appointed me. *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended,* or to be arrived at the summit of perfection; *but this one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind,* resting in no present attainments, *and reaching forth unto those things which are before,* after higher measures of grace, *I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus:* with heaven in my eye, I vigorously pursue my course, bending forwards eagerly as I run, and stretching out my arms to seize the crown of righteousness, which Jesus bestows, and is to be won only through the grace and strength which he supplies. *Note,* (1.) To know the power of Christ's resurrection, is to experience his quickening efficacy upon our souls, and to be raised from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, as his dead body was raised from the grave to the life of glory. (2.) The greatest saints are most sensible how short they come of perfection. They who think they have grace enough, evidently show they have none at all. (3.) Christ must apprehend us first, before we can apprehend him: his power must keep us, or we shall never reach the salvation to which he hath called us. (4.) Heaven is the prize in view: happy the soul which reaches that goal.

15. Let us therefore, [z] as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16. Nevertheless, [a] whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

z Rom. 15. 1. 1 Cor. 2. 6. & 14. 20. Heb. 5. 14. Gal. 5. 1, 10. & 6. 1.

a Rev. 3. 3, 11. Rom. 12. 16. & 15. 5—7. Gal. 6. 16. ch. 2. 2. & 1. 27. & 4. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 13. 11.

Verses 15, 16. The apostle exhorts them to be united in love, and like-minded with him. *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect,* and far advanced in the Christian state, *be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded,* and differ from me in sentiments, *God shall reveal even this unto you,* and clear up to your satisfaction whatever may yet be dark or doubtful. *Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule* of God's word; *let us mind the same thing,* wherein we are all agreed. *Note,* Lesser differences of opinion should make no disunion of heart: we must wait together on God, that he may instruct us in all his holy will.

17. Brethren, [b] be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample. 18. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you [c] even weeping, *that they are* [d] the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19. [e] Whose end *is* destruction, [f] whose God *is their* belly, and [g] *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who [h] mind earthly things.) 20. For [i] our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we [k] look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21. Who shall [l] change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, [m] according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

b 1 Cor. 4. 16. & 11. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 6. & 2. 10—14. 2 Thes. 3. 7, 9. ch. 4. 9. Heb. 13. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 5. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 12.

c Ezek. 9. 4. Jer. 9. 1—6. Mic. 7. 1—6. Acts 20. 19, 29, 31. Rom. 9. 2.

d Rom. 16. 17, 18. Gal. 2. 21. & 5. 2, 4, 11. & 6. 12. 1 Cor. 1. 18, 23.

e 2 Cor. 11. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 8. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 3, 12. Rev. 19. 20. & 20. 10. Mat. 24. 51. Luke 12. 46.

f Rom. 16. 18. Is. 56. 10—12. ch. 2. 21. Ezek. 13. 19. & 34. 3. Mic. 3. 5, 11.

g Hos. 6. 7. 2 Cor. 11. 12. Gal. 6. 13. Tit. 1. 10, 11. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 10, 13, 18. Jude 8, 12, 16. 1 Tim. 6. 4.

h Rom. 8. 5, 6. Ps. 17. 14. & 4. 6. 1 Tim. 6. 5, 9, 10. Tit. 1. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 3, 13, 14. Ezek. 33. 31. & 34. 3, 4. i Eph. 2. 6, 19. Col. 1. 5. & 3. 1, 3. 2 Cor. 4. 18. Prov. 15. 24. Heb. 10. 34, 35. k 1 Cor. 1. 7. 1 Thes. 1. 10. Tit. 2. 13. Heb. 13. 14. & 9. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 8. l 1 Cor. 15. 26, 42—44, 49, 51—54. Col. 3. 4. 1 John 3. 2. Mat. 17. 2 Acts. 6. 15. m Eph. 1. 19. 1 Cor. 15. 26, 27. Heb. 7. 25. Mat. 28. 18. Is. 63. 1.

Verses 17—21. With warnings and exhortations he closes the chapter.

1. He warns them against the false teachers, whose character he describes. *For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping,* concerned deeply for them, and jealous for you, *that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ,* both in their principles and their practice; their lives being as contrary to the spirit of purity, as their dependence on circumcision and the Mosaic rites is derogatory to the grace of the gospel; unwilling to profess, or suffer for, a crucified Jesus: *whose end is destruction;* their errors and immoralities bringing upon them eternal ruin: *whose god is their belly;* serving and indulging their sensual appetites, as their chief happiness: *and whose glory is in their shame;* boasting themselves in their evil ways, and proud of their privileges which only serve to cover them with confusion, whilst they behave so unsuitably thereunto: *who mind earthly things,* and have their grovelling minds ever fixed on the interests, pleasures, and honours of this miserable world. *Note,* (1.) They who make their belly their god, glory in their sins, and live after the fashion of the world, will infallibly find the end of their ways to be the destruction of both body and soul. (2.) It is a bitter grief to the faithful, when they behold any that bear the Christian name a dishonour to their holy profession.

2. He exhorts them to copy the good examples which he and others showed them. *Brethren, be followers together of me,* as I am of Christ, *and mark them who walk so, as ye have us for an ensample,* and adorn the gospel they profess. *For our conversation is in heaven;* our traffic and concerns all lie there, and we regard ourselves as strangers upon earth, and denizens of the celestial city; *from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,* to come at the last day, and bring us home to his blessed self; *who shall change our vile body,* that now bears the most humbling marks of weakness and infirmity, and will shortly be loathsome in the dust; *that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself;* when death, the last of his enemies, shall be swallowed up in victory, and we shall rise, and shine, and reign with our exalted head in glory everlasting.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

Exhortations to several Christian duties, as steadfastness, unanimity, joy, &c. ver. 1—9. *The apostle's grateful acknowledgment of the Philippians' kindness to him, with expressions of his own content, and desire of their good,* ver. 10—20. *He concludes the epistle with praise, salutations, and blessings,* ver. 21—23.

a Ch. 3. 20, 21. 2 Pet. 3. 11, 14.
b Ch. 1. 8, 25. & 2. 24, 26.
c Ch. 2. 16—18. 2 Cor. 1. 14, 24. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20.
d Ch. 1. 27. 1 Cor. 15. 1. & 16. 13. 1 Pet. 5. 9, 12. Heb. 4. 14. & 10. 23. Rev. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Luke 1. 74, 75. Ps. 125. 1.
e 1 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 11. see ch. 2. 2. & 3. 16.
f Ch. 2. 25. Col. 1. 7. & 4. 7, 11. 3 John 8. 2 Cor. 6. 9.
g Rom. 16. 2, 4. 9, 12, 21. Tit. 2. 3.
h Rev. 3. 5. & 13. 8 & 20. 12. & 21. 27. Ps. 69. 28. Is. 4. 3. Ps. 87. 6. Ezek. 13. 9. Dan. 12. 1. Exod. 32. 32.
i Ch. 3. 1, 3. & 2. 18. Rom. 12. 12. 1 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 16. Ps. 149. 2. Hab. 3. 18. Is. 61. 10.
k Luke 21. 34. Tit. 3. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 8—14. Mat. 24. 42, 44. Heb. 10. 25. Jam. 5. 8, 9. Rev. 1. 3. & 22. 10.
l Ps. 55. 22. Prov. 3. 5, 6. & 16. 3. Mat. 6, 25, 33. 34. Luke 12. 22. 1 Cor. 7. 32. 1 Tim. 6. 8, 17. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Ps. 37. 4, 5.
m John 14. 27. & 16. 33 Rom. 5. 1, 10. Eph. 2. 14. Col. 3. 15. Ps. 119. 165. Is. 26. 3. & 37. 5. & 54. 10.
n Jude 1. 1 Pet. 1. 5.
o Rom. 12. 17. & 13. 12.
p Or *venerable.* 2 Cor. 8. 21. 1 Thes. 4. 4, 5. & 5. 23. Eph. 4. 21—32. Col 3. 5—17. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 3—9. Mat. 5. 14—16. ch. 2. 14—16.
q Jam. 1, 22. ch. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 16. & 11. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 6. & 2. 10—14. 2 Thes. 3. 9.
r Rom. 15. 30. & 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Thes. 5, 23. Heb. 13. 5. 20, 21. 1 Pet. 4. 10. 2 Thes. 2. 16, 17. & 3. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Is. 46. 4.

1. THEREFORE,[a] my brethren,[b] dearly beloved and longed for, [c] my joy and crown, so [d] stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved. 2. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, [e] that they be of the same mind in the Lord. 3. And I entreat thee also, [f] true yoke-fellow, [g] help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellow-labourers, whose names *are* in [h] the book of life. 4. [i] Rejoice in the Lord alway; *and* again I say, Rejoice. 5. [k] Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand. 6. Be [l] careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7. And [m] the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds [n] through Christ Jesus. 8. Finally, brethren, [o] whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* [p] honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report: if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. 9. [q] Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and [r] the God of peace shall be with you.

Verses 1—9. The apostle,

1. With the most endearing appellations, exhorts them to stand fast in the truth. *Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for,* to whom my whole soul is drawn out in warmest affection, and whose salvation I so earnestly desire, longing to see you, *my joy,* in every remembrance of your fidelity, *and crown,* whom now I esteem my chief honour, and who will be my most distinguished glory in the day of Christ; *so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved;* cleaving to that divine Redeemer in whom ye have believed; unshaken by danger, unterrified by opposition, and looking up for that Almighty grace which can make you more than conquerors. *Note,* (1.) None can tell the fervent longings of a faithful minister's heart after the salvation of his people's souls, but those that feel them. (2.) They who have already approved themselves faithful, are especially bound to persevere in the same blessed course.

2. He entreats, that some individuals who were at variance, either with the church, or each other, might be happily reconciled. *I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord,* and lay aside their disputes, united in love and peace. *And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow,* who with me already hast heartily laboured in the cause of Christ, *help those women,* and endeavour to reconcile them to the church, and to each other, *which* have been so useful in former days, and *laboured with me in the gospel,* helping and assisting me; *with Clement also, and with other of my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life,* of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, registered among the elect of God, and heirs of salvation; and happy are they whose names shall be found written there.

3. He exhorts them to holy joy. *Rejoice in the Lord alway;* in all circumstances, and under every trial, maintain a holy delight in God, which will sweeten every affliction; *and again I say, Rejoice* in him as your Saviour, your refuge, help, and hope, in every time of need.

4. *Let your moderation be known unto all men* (το επιεικες) show a spirit of meekness and patience, that never is wearied out with provocations, and in affection, be weaned from every inordinate attachment to this present world. *The Lord is at hand,* and will soon confound your Jewish adversaries in the destruction of their city and temple, and shortly will put an end to all your trials in the great day of his appearing and glory.

6. *Be careful for nothing;* without perplexity or tormenting solicitude about the concerns of this world, and the difficulties in your way; *but in every thing,* at all times, and in all circumstances, *by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God;* casting all your care upon him, praising him for all the past mercies you have experienced, and trusting him for whatever may be yet to come. *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus;* in answer to your prayers, God will give you his blessed peace, preserving you sedate and calm amidst every storm, fortifying your minds against every foe, and keeping you in a happy serenity, neither discomposed, nor fainting under any of your troubles, till he brings you to the eternal rest which remaineth for his people in glory. *Note,* (1.) Though prudent forecast is not forbidden, all anxious fears, that imply distrust of God, and bring torment to the heart, are exceeding sinful. (2.) Prayer is the antidote to every ill; and whilst we have a throne of grace open, where we can pour all our complaints into the bosom of a compassionate God, however perplexed, we need never be in despair, but should quietly wait to see the salvation of God.

6. *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true,* agreeable to the word of God, and the dictates of sincerity and truth; *whatsoever things are honest,* venerable and becoming in dress, language, and deportment; *whatsoever things are just* and equitable in your dealings and transactions; *whatsoever things are pure,* in thought, word, and action; *whatsoever things are lovely,* and render you amiable in the sight of God and man; *whatsoever things are of good report,* among the truly religious; *if there be any virtue,* any thing truly noble, brave, and generous; *if there be any* thing that deserves *praise* and commendation, *think on these things,* and seriously desire to be found in the exercise of them. *Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do;* copy after my precepts and practice; *and* then *the God of peace shall be with you,* and bless you with his presence, and more abundant measures of his grace and love.

10. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your [s] care of me * hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. 11. [t] Not that I speak in respect of want:

s 2 Cor. 11. 9. Gal. 6. 6. Rom. 15. 27. 1 Cor. 9. 11, 14.
* Or *is revived.*
t Gen. 28. 20. Job 1. 21. Mat. 6. 31—34. 1 Tim. 6. 6, 8, 9. Heb. 13. 5. & 10. 34.

for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. 12. [u] I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth [x] me. 14. Notwithstanding, ye have well done [y] that ye did communicate with my affliction. 15. Now, ye Philippians, know also, that [z] in the beginning of the gospel, [a] when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16. For even in [b] Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17. [c] Not because I desire a gift: but I desire [d] fruit that may abound to your account. 18. But [e] I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, [f] an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. 19. But my God shall [g] supply all your need [h] according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

u 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. 2 Cor. 6. 4—10. & 11. 23—27. 2 Tim. 3. 10, 11. Acts 20. 23, 24.
x Is. 45. 24. & 40. 29—31. Zech. 10. 12. John 15. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 12. 9, 10.
y Ch. 1. 7. 2 Cor. 1. 7. Heb. 13 3. Rom. 15. 27.
z Mark. 1. 1. Acts 11. 15. 1 John 2. 7.
a Acts. 16. 12. & 17. 14. 2 Cor. 11. 8, 9.
b Acts 17. 1—9. 1 Thes. 2. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9.
c Ver. 11. 1 Cor. 9. 12—15. 2 Cor. 12. 14, 15. 1 Tim. 3. 3. Tit. 1. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 2. see ch. 3. 19.
d Rom. 15. 28. 1 Cor. 9. 14. 2 Cor. 9. 9—15. Tit. 3. 14.
e Or *I have received all.* Gen. 33. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 22.
f Ch. 2. 25. 2 Cor. 9. 12. Heb. 13. 16.
g Ps. 23. 1—6. & 84. 11. & 146. 7—9. & 68. 10. Prov. 8. 21. Jer. 31. 25. 2 Cor. 9. 8. Ps. 41. 1—3.
h Eph. 1. 7. & 2. 7. & 3. 16, 19. Ps. 69. 16. & 86. 5, 15. & 130. 7. Prov. 8. 18, 19. Eph. 3. 19. Col. 1. 19. John 1. 14, 16.

Verses 10—19. The Philippians had generously contributed to the apostle's support, and he gratefully mentions it to their honour.

1. He expresses his joy in the present fresh proof they had given of love to him, and regard for the cause of Christ. *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again,* and you have added to your former instances of generosity; *wherein ye were also careful,* and would ere this have sent to my relief, *but ye lacked opportunity.* Though it was a debt they justly owed him, he mentions it as a favour for which he esteemed himself much obliged.

2. He obviates an ill use which might be made of what he said. *Not that I speak in respect of want,* as though I was distrustful of a provision, or uneasy at my worldly circumstances; *for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content,* satisfied in all the will of God. *I know both how to be abased, and how to abound;* in the lowest circumstances composed, in the greatest affluence not elated. *Every where, and in all things I am instructed,* by my Divine Master, to accommodate my mind to my situation; *both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need;* to know the want of bread without repining, and to have abundance without abusing it to excess. *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me;* and enables me for all the services and sufferings to which in his providence he is pleased to call me; *notwithstanding, ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction,* in the seasonable relief you kindly sent. *Note,* (1.) Want is a great temptation to murmur, as abundance is to excess; but divine grace will enable us to accommodate our hearts to every circumstance. (2.) Though our strength is very weakness, the omnipotence of Jesus is engaged for us, and then nothing is impracticable.

3. He makes honourable mention of what they had formerly done. *Now ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia,* or was *ready to depart* to other parts, *no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only; for even in Thessalonica,* a city so much more wealthy than your own, where I was constrained to work hard for my bread, *ye sent once and again to my necessity,* when my circumstances were very strait, and my wants pressing. *Not* that I mention these things *because I desire a gift,* and want to worm myself into your favour: no such mercenary views influence my conduct; *but I desire fruit that may abound to your account* in the great day of recompense, when these labours of love shall be remembered and rewarded.

4. He acknowledges the receipt of what Epaphroditus brought, and how sufficient it was for his needs; assuring them that God would accept it as the most grateful sacrifice at their hands. *But I have all* I want, *and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God;* better than the fumes of incense, or the smoke of burnt-offerings. *But* though I cannot repay you in kind, *my God,* who is all-sufficient, *shall supply all your need,* giving you the earthly good things you want, and especially bestowing all spiritual blessings upon you, *according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus,* which inestimable treasures he hath laid up for you, and will, through Christ Jesus, minister unto you both in time and eternity. *Note,* None were ever losers by what they lent to the Lord, and employed in the service of his blessed cause.

20. Now [i] unto God and our Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen. 21. [k] Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you. 22. [l] All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cesar's household. 23. [m] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

¶ It was written to the Philippians from Rome by Epaphroditus.

i Rom. 16. 27. Eph. 3. 21. Jude 25. Ps. 72. 19.
k Rom. xvi. 1 Cor. 16. 19—21. 2 Cor. 13. 12, 13.
l Gal. 1. 2. ch. 1. 13.
m See Rom. 16. 20. 24. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Col. 4. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 28. 2 Thes. 3. 18. 2. Tim. 4. 22. Tit. 3. 15. Philem. 25. Heb. 13. 25.

Verses 20—23. We have here,

1. An ascription of praise to God. *Now unto God our Father, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* He is our Father to love us, our God abundantly to provide for us. We have long experienced his love and grace; with confidence let us trust him, and ascribe to him the praise we owe for all his past kindness and everlasting promises. *Note,* If God be our Father, we can want no manner of thing that is good.

2. Salutations to the brethren. *Salute every saint in Christ Jesus;* let every member of the church be assured of my most cordial regard, and kindest wishes. *The brethren which are with me, greet you* with best remembrances. *All the saints salute you,* and join in Christian respects towards you; *chiefly they that are of Cesar's household,* the domestics of his family, now converted to the faith, and one in affection with you. *Note,* It is a comfort to a real Christian to consider, that multitudes, whom he never saw or knew, bear him upon their hearts, and remember him in their prayers.

3. His closing benediction. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,* in all its incomprehensible extent, and inconceivable fulness, *be with you all;* may the whole church, and every member, share it in the richest abundance. *Amen!*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

COLOSSIANS.

Introduction.

COLOSSE was a considerable city of Phrygia, and probably not far from Laodicea and Hierapolis; we find these three mentioned together, chap. iv. 13. It is now buried in ruins, and the memory of it chiefly preserved in this epistle. The design of the epistle is to warn them of their danger from the Jewish zealots, who pressed the necessity of observing the ceremonial law; and to fortify them against the mixture of the Gentile philosophy with their Christian principles. He professes a great satisfaction in their *steadfastness* and constancy, and encourages them to *perseverance*. It was written about the same time with the epistle to the Ephesians and Philippians, Anno Domini, 64, and in the same place, while he was now prisoner at Rome. He was not idle in his confinement, and the word of God *was not bound*.

Who planted this church is not said; perhaps Epaphras, (chap. i. 6, 7.) Paul himself appears not yet to have seen them; but what he had heard of them engaged him, as the apostle of the Gentiles, to contribute to their edification.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The inscription as usual, ver. 1, 2. *His thanksgiving to God for what he had heard concerning them; their faith, love, and hope*, ver. 3—8. *He prays for their knowledge, fruitfulness, and strength*, ver. 9—11. *Gives them an admirable summary of the Christian doctrine concerning the operation of the Spirit, the person of the Redeemer, the work of redemption, and the preaching of it in the gospel*, ver. 12—28.

1. [a] PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timotheus *our* brother. 2. [b] To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: [c] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

a Acts 22. 14, 18, 21. & 26. 16—18. Rom. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 1. Phil. 1. 1 2 Thes. 1. 1.

b Rom. 1. 7. Eph. 1. 1. & 6. 21. 1 Cor. 1. 2. & 4. 17. Phil. 1. 1. Heb. 3. 1. John 15. 1—5. Is. 62. 12. & 60. 2. & 26. 2.

c Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1, 2. Tit. 1. 4. Philem. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 2.

Verses 1, 2. With his usual introduction the apostle opens his epistle. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God*, appointed to that eminent honour and office by an immediate commission from heaven, *and Timotheus our brother*, who joins with me in this epistle, *to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse*, who are the living members of his body mystical, and in practice correspond with their holy profession; *Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;* may every blessing of pardon, adoption, comfort, strength, perseverance, glory, be your happy portion!

3. [d] We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4. Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints, 5. For [e] the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the [f] word of the truth of the gospel; 6. [g] Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and [h] bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and [i] knew the grace of God in truth: 7. As ye also learned of [k] Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; 8. Who also declared unto us your [l] love in the Spirit. 9. [m] For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10. That ye [n] might walk

d See Rom. 1. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 4, 5. Eph. 1. 15—17. Phil. 1. 3—5. 1 Thes. 1. 2, 3. 2 Thes. 1. 3, 4. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Philem. 4, 5.

e Phil. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 2. 1. Heb. 6. 10. Ver. 23. Rom. 8. 24. Gal. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 18. & 4. 4. Tit. 2. 13. & 3. 7. Heb. 6. 18, 19. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 13.

f Acts 13. 26. 2 Cor. 6. 7. Rom. 10. 8. Tit. 1. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Eph. 1. 13. Mark 16. 15.

g Is. 11. 9, 10. Ps. 98. 3. Mat. 28. 19. & 24. 14. & 26. 13. Rom. 10. 18. & 15. 19. ver 23. Acts i—xx. Mark 16. 15.

h Mark 4. 8. John 15. 16. Eph. 5. 9. Phil. 1. 11. Acts 6. 7. & 12. 24. & 19. 20. Tit. 2. 11—14.

i Ps. 110. 3. Ezek. 16. 8. & 36. 26, 27. Acts 16. 14. & 13. 48. & 11. 18. & 26. 18. Phil. 1. 29. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3, 23. & 2. 1—3.

k Ch. 4. 12. Philem. 23. Eph. 4. 11, 12. Heb. 13. 17. 2 Cor. 11. 23. 1 Tim. 4. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 2, 3, 15. l Ver. 4. Rom. 15. 30. & 5. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 7. m Eph. 1. 15—20. & 3. 15—19. Phil. 1. 9—11. Rom. 12. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 5. Eph. 5. 10, 17. n Eph. 4. 1. Phil. 1. 11, 27. 1 Thes. 2. 11. & 4. 1. ch. 4. 12. Gen. 17. 1. John 15. 16. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Pet. 1. 3—9. & 3. 18. 1 Cor. 10, 31, 32.

o Eph. 3. 16. & 6. 10. & 1. 19. Is. 40. 29—31. Zech. 10. 12. Phil. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 12. 9.
p Rom. 5. 3—5. 2 Cor. 6. 4, 6. Gal. 5. 22. Eph. 4. 2. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Acts 5. 41. Heb. 10. 34. Phil. 2. 17, 18. & 3. 1, 3. & 4. 4. Jam. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Mat. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 1. 5.

o worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11. o Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, p unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;

Verses 3—11. Though unknown to them in person, yet in heart and affection warmly attached to them, the blessed Paul,

1. Thanks God for the pleasing account which he had heard of them. *We give thanks to God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, our reconciled and covenant God in him; *praying always for you*, that you may abide and abound in every thing that is excellent, and blessing God for what he hath already done on your behalf: *since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus*, and how cordially you embraced his glorious gospel, and rested firm on him alone for acceptance and salvation: *and of the love which ye have to all the saints*, the genuine fruit of your faith, and the proof of your unfeigned love to him, whose image they bear; *for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven*, even the eternal blessedness which God hath prepared and promised, *whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel: which is come unto you;* through the Divine providence it hath been preached among you, *as it is in all the world*, throughout the Roman empire, *and bringeth forth fruit*, made effectual by the Divine power to the conversion of men's souls, *as it doth also in you* produce the most blessed effects, *since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth*, experimentally made acquainted therewith, receiving the gospel both in the light and in the love of it. *As ye also learned of Epaphras, our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ*, for to his labours you are singularly indebted; *who also declared to us your love in the Spirit*, testifying his warm affection toward you, in the report he made of your unfeigned love to Christ and his people, the evidence of the effectual work of God's Spirit in your souls. *Note*, (1.) The mercies of which others, who are near and dear to us, partake, call for our thankfulness, as well as those which we receive from God ourselves. (2.) It is a mercy, through Divine Providence, to hear *the word of the truth of the gospel* preached; but the grand matter is to receive it into our hearts, *and to know the grace of God in truth.* (3.) Wherever divine grace operates effectually, it will be seen in the blessed fruits which are produced thereby. (4.) A *faithful minister* is an invaluable blessing to any people, and highly are they bound to love and honour him.

2. To his thanksgivings he adds his hearty prayers. *For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you*, (1.) That ye may be made wise unto salvation, *and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will*, your minds more clearly discerning the riches of his grace, your privileges, and the practice of holiness which thence results, advancing *in all wisdom and spiritual understanding:* and (2.) Disposed to follow in simplicity the light which God bestows, *that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing*, adorning your holy profession by a suitable conversation, and desiring to approve yourselves to the great Master, *being fruitful*, as trees of righteousness, *in every good work* that is for the glory of God, and the benefit of your brethren; *and* thus *increasing in the knowledge of God. Note*, As knowledge is essential to all acceptable service, so the more faithfully we improve the grace given unto us, the more fully shall we be let into the secrets of wisdom. *For if any man doeth his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God*, John vii. 17. (3.) We pray that ye may be *strengthened with all might*, in the inner man, for the discharge of every duty, and to resist every enemy of your souls, *according to his glorious power*, which can support you abundantly, *unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;* bearing up with cheerfulness under all persecutions or afflictions which may befall you, neither weary nor desponding, but with holy triumph exulting in the grace you have experienced, and the promises of continual help in every time of need. *Note*, (1.) All our strength must come from above, and is to be obtained in the way of prayer. (2.) Every believer, conflicting with sin and Satan, is a living monument of God's glorious power, and, like the burning bush, though compassed with temptations, is not consumed. (3.) However multiplied, prolonged, or afflictive, our trials may be, we are called to exercise *all patience*, and neither to murmur nor faint under them; and hard as the work is, God can enable us for that which he doth command, yea, not only to be resigned, but to rejoice in the midst of tribulations.

q See Eph. 5. 4, 20. Ps. 115. 1. & cvii, xxxvi. ch. 3. 15.
r 1 Kin. 6. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 3—11. 1 Pet. 1. 4. 1 John 3. 1. Jude 1. 1 Thes. 5. 23.
s Luke 12. 32. Jer. 3. 19. Acts 26. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 4. Rom. 8. 17. Mat. 25. 34.
t Is. 49. 25. Acts 26. 18. Heb. 2. 15, 15. Eph. 6. 12. & 4. 18. & 5. 8. 1 Thes. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Tit. 2. 14. Eph. 2. 4—10. Ps. 2. 8. Is. 58. 10—12.
u Is. 42. 1. Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 17. Eph. 1. 6.
* Gr. *the son of his love.*
x Eph. 1. 7. Rom. 3. 24—26. & 24. 25. Acts 13. 38, 39. & 20. 28. Mat. 20. 28. Heb. 9. 12, 14, 15. 1 Pet. 1. 19. & 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9.
y John 14. 9. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Phil. 2. 6. Heb. 1. 3.
z Ps. 89. 27. & 110. 1, 5. Heb. 1. 2. Rev. 3. 14.
a John 1. 2, 3. Heb. 1. 2. & 3. 3—6. Eph. 3. 9. Rom. 11. 36. & 8. 38. 1 Cor. 8. 6. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Eph. 1. 21. & 6. 12. ch. 2. 15. with Heb. 2. 10.
b Prov. 8. 3—31. John 1. 1—3. & 17. 5. Heb. 13. 8. & 1. 3. 1 Cor. 8. 6.
c 1 Cor. 11. 3. & 12. 12, 27. Eph. 1. 10, 22, 23. & 4. 12, 15, 16. & 5. 23, 30. ch. 2. 19. ver. 24.
d Ver. 15. John 11. 25. Acts 26. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 20—23. Rev. 1. 5. & 3. 14. Is. 26. 19. John 14. 19.
† Or *among all.*
e John 1. 14, 16. & 3. 34, 35. Eph. 1. 23. & 4. 10. ch. 3. 11. with 2. 3, 9. Mat. 11. 27. & 28. 18. Eph. 1. 3.
‡ Or *making peace.*
f Acts 10. 36. Rom. 3. 24—26. & 5. 10. Eph. 2. 14—16. & 1. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 18—21. 1 John 4. 9, 10. Luke 2. 14. & 19. 38.
g 1 Cor. 6. 9—11. Tit. 3. 3—7. Eph. 2. 2, 5. & 4. 17—19, 32. & 5. 8. Rom. 5. 1, 6—11. & 8. 2—8. & 3. 10—22. & 1. 30. & 8. 2, 33. 34.
‡ Or *by your mind, in wicked works.*
h Eph. 2. 15. & 1. 4—7. & 5. 25—27. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Thes. 4. 7. Luke 1. 75. Jude 24.
i Phil. 1. 27. & 4. 1. Heb. 3. 6, 14. & 4. 14. & 10. 23, 39. Eph. 3. 17, 18. ch. 2. 7. John 15. 4—7. Gal. 6. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 58.
k Ver. 5. Rom. 5. 5. & 15. 4, 13. Eph. 1. 18. 2 Thes. 2. 16. Heb. 6. 11, 18, 19. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Tit. 1. 2. & 2. 13. Gal. 5. 5.
l Mark 16. 15 Mat. 28. 19. Rom. 10. 18. see ver. 6.
m 2 Cor. 3. 6. & 4. 1. & 5. 18—20. & 6. 1. Eph. 3. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. & 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 11. Ver. 1, 25.

12. q Giving thanks unto the Father, which r hath made us meet to be partakers of the s inheritance of the saints in light: 13. t Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of u * his dear Son: 14. x In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: 15. y Who is the image of the invisible God, z the first-born of every creature: 16. For a by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17. b And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18. And he is c the head of the body, the church: who is d the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that † in all *things* he might have the pre-eminence. 19. For it pleased *the Father* that in him e should all fulness dwell; 20. And, ‡ f having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven. 21. And g you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies ‖ in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22. h In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight: 23. If ye i continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from k the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which l was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul m am

made a minister: 24. Who now [n] rejoice in my sufferings for you, [o] and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his [p] body's sake, which is the church; 25. [q] Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, [r] to fulfil the word of God; 26. *Even* [s] the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27. To whom God would [t] make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is [u] Christ * in you, the hope of glory: 28. [x] Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that [y] we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: 29. Whereunto I also [z] labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

n Rom. 5. 3. 2 Cor. 7. 4. Phil. 2. 17. Eph. 3. 13. Jam. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 2. 14. Gal. 6. 14.
o 2 Cor. 1. 5—8. & 4. 8—12. & 11. 23—27. 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 10. & 3. 11.
p See ver. 18.
q See ver. 23. Acts 9. 15. & 20. 16—18. Eph. 3. 2, 7, 8. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Rom. 11. 13.
r Or *fully to preach the word of God.* Rom. 15. 19. 1 Cor. 4. 1. & 9. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 2, 5.
s Rom. 16. 25, 26. Eph. 3. 9. & 1. 9. Mat. 13. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. Tit. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 10, 20.
t 2 Cor. 2. 14. Gal. 1. 16. Eph. 1. 7, 18—20. & 2. 7. & 3. 8, 10. Rom 9. 23. Prov. 8. 18, 19. ch. 2. 3.
u 1 Cor. 2. 2. ch. 3. 11. Luke 17. 21. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Gal. 4. 19. & 2. 20. Eph. 3. 17. Rom. 6. 4. & 8. 26. Col. 3. 1, 4. Eph. 2. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 1. * Or *among.*
x 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. & 2. 2. Acts 20. 20, 27. 2 Tim. 4. 2.
y 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 4. 13. & 5. 27. ver. 22. ch. 4. 12. Heb. 5. 14. Dan. 12. 3. Jam. 5. 20. Heb. 13. 21. Jude 24.
z 1 Cor. 15. 10. Phil. 1. 30. ch. 2. 16. & 2. 1. Gal. 4. 19. Rom. 15. 19.

Verses 12—29. The apostle returns again to thanksgiving.

1. In the view of the inestimable blessings to which they had been admitted. *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,* by his Spirit renewing our hearts, raising up our affections to high and heavenly things, and preparing us for that glory which he hath prepared for us. *Note,* (1.) Our inheritance is secured to us in Christ, and comes to us by grace, not by desert; he adopts us as children, and then we become heirs of consequence. (2.) All who have this title are educated as becomes the sons of God; and though the inheritance is sure to them in a covenant of promise, they are made meet for the enjoyment of it: and it would be folly and delusion to expect our lot among the saints in light, if we have not our conversation among them here below.

2. He gives thanks to God, *who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,* plucking us as brands from the burning, rescuing us from the slavery of sin and Satan, *and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son,* admitting us to the inestimable privileges and blessings of that kingdom of light and grace which Jesus came to erect, that we might be brought under his happy government. *Note,* (1.) We are by nature slaves of sin and Satan, walking in darkness, and liable each moment to rush into eternal darkness. (2.) It is an act of sovereign and amazing grace, when God is pleased to pluck the sinner from this miserable state. (3.) They who are brought into the kingdom of the Son of God's love, will share that love with him, and be made eternally happy thereby.

3. He blesses God for the salvation obtained through Christ; *in whom we have redemption through his blood,* including not only deliverance from wrath, but the purchased possession in glory; and, as the present earnest thereof, *the forgiveness of sins,* freely, fully, for ever: so that we stand without fault before the throne of God.

4. He describes the glorious personage to whom we are indebted for pardon, grace, glory, and every blessing; *who is the image of the invisible God,* one with the Father in essence and perfections, and, as incarnate, appears his visible representative, *the first-born of every creature,* begotten before the worlds were, or *the first-begotten* (πρωτοτοκος) *of every creature. For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible,* from the lowest rank of beings to the highest archangel, *whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers,* by whatever names or titles distinguished, whether in heaven or in earth: *all things were created by him, and for him,* by his power, and for his glory. *And he is before all things,* in eternal pre-existence, *and by him all things consist,* preserved and upheld by his providence and care, as they were spoken into being at his word, *And he is the head of the body,* in his peculiar character as Mediator, not only as having the dominion over all things, but also as communicating vital influence to the several members, of which *the church* universal is composed: *who is the beginning,* the principle of spiritual and eternal life to his people, *the first-born from the dead,* who rose by his own power, and is the pledge, cause, and first-fruits of our resurrection, *that in all things he might have the pre-eminence,* exalted far above all creatures, the object of adoration to men and angels, and possessing the first place in their affection and regard. *For it pleased the Father,* in consequence of the complete redemption which he hath obtained, *that in him should all fulness dwell* for the use of his church, all fulness of merit, righteousness, graces, gifts, according to their wants, to be freely dispensed to every member of his body mystical. *And (having made peace through the blood of his cross)* receiving full satisfaction to his justice, by the oblation of the body of Jesus once for all, and now, consistent with his own glory being able to extend mercy to the guilty sinner, it pleased the Father *to reconcile all things unto himself,* restoring them from their state of enmity to his forfeited regard, in a way as honourable to him, as happy and safe for them; *by him, I say, whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven,* the members of the church militant here below, or those already entered into rest above. How glorious is the cross of Christ beheld in this delightful view! How justly worthy to be the grand object ever in our view, since to it we are indebted for all we possess here, and all we hope for hereafter!

5. He mentions with delight the particular interest which they, to whom he wrote, possessed in all the blessings of this glorious redemption. *And you, that were sometimes* utterly *alienated* from God, *and enemies in your mind by wicked works,* by nature, by practice, rebels against the divine government, *yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death,* receiving you into the arms of his mercy, when drawn near to him by faith, through that new and living way which he hath consecrated through the veil of his crucified body, *to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight,* because accepted in the beloved: and being found in him, complete in the righteousness which he hath provided, the piercing eye of justice can discern no spot nor wrinkle in you: and this will infallibly be your happy case, both now and for ever, *if ye continue in the faith,* and really possess what you profess; or, *since ye continue in the faith,* and have given the strongest proofs of your union with the Lord, *grounded and settled* on him the true foundation, *and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel,* even that substantial hope, *which* springs from the perfect atonement, complete righteousness, and all-sufficient grace secured to you in the great Redeemer, *which* blessed gospel *ye have,* through peculiar mercy, *heard; and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven,* as a common salvation, alike free for Gentiles as for Jews, and extending to sinners of every rank and condition. *Note,* The gospel is grace abounding; none perish because of the greatness of their guilt, but because they reject the only remedy through pride and unbelief, and will not come to Christ, that they might have life.

6. Having mentioned the gospel which was preached unto them, among others who were honoured with the dispensation of it, he humbly inserts his own name: *Whereof I, Paul, am made a minister,* by special commission on behalf of the Gentiles. *Who now rejoice in my sufferings* for the glorious truths which I have

preached unto them, *and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church*; not that the sufferings of Christ were incomplete, and needed any addition to them in order to obtain the redemption of his people, and make satisfaction to Divine Justice: but as the members of his body are all to go through tribulation to glory, I, who was the instrument of their sufferings formerly, now in turn receive my measure of afflictions, and with holy joy triumph under them, when I have cause to hope his church and people shall be profited thereby: *whereof I am made a minister*, by a call immediately from heaven, *according to the dispensation of God*, in settling the economy of his peculiar family, *which is given to me for you* Gentiles, *to fulfil the word of God*, which was commanded me, or in correspondence with the prophecies which had foretold your call and conversion; *even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations*, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, *but now is made manifest to his saints*, his prophets, and apostles, and by them to all the faithful: *to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles*, who should be admitted to the participation of all the invaluable privileges of the gospel, the author, purchaser, and dispenser of *which is Christ in you*, formed in your hearts, by faith, *the hope of glory: whom we preach* as the only Saviour of the miserable and desperate, *warning every man* of the mortal danger of sin, and his inevitable ruin out of Christ, *and teaching every man in all wisdom* concerning the only method of safety, even faith in a crucified Saviour, *that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*, complete in him as their head, and growing up to the perfection of knowledge, grace, and holiness, in the day of his appearing and glory: *whereunto I also labour, striving* with every nerve, in the midst of opposing enemies, *according to his working which worketh in me mightily*, who enables me for the conflict, and crowns my labours with success.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle's concern for the Colossians, ver. 1—4. *Repeated again*, ver. 5. *He cautions them against false teachers among the Jews*, ver. 6—8. *And against the Gentile philosophy*, ver. 9—13. *Represents the privileges of Christians*, ver. 14—16. *And concludes with a caution against the Judaizing teachers, and those who would introduce the worship of angels*, ver. 17—22.

a 1 Thes. 2. 2. 2 Cor. 12. 28. Phil. 1. 30. ch. 4. 12. & 1. 24, 29. Gal. 4. 19.
* Or *fear*, or *care*.
b 2 Cor. 1. 6. Rom. 5. 5. 2 Thes. 3. 5. 1 Thes. 4. 9. ch. 3. 14.
c Phil. 3. 8—10. 2 Pet. 3. 18. & 1. 3. Is. 53. 11. John 17. 3. ch. 1. 9. Jer. 9. 23.
d 1 John 5. 7. Mat. 28. 19 Exod. 34. 6, 7. John 3. 16. Is. 7. 14. 1 Tim. 3. 16.
e Mat. 11. 25, 27. 1 Cor. 1. 24. & 2. 6. Eph. 1. 8. & 3. 10. ch. 1. 9, 19. & 3. 16.
† Or *wherein*.

1. FOR I would that ye knew what [a] great * conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; 2. [b] That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto [c] all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the [d] mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; 3. [e] † In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Verses 1—3. Though the apostle had no personal knowledge of the Colossians, the report he had heard engaged his warmest affections towards them. *For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you*, how solicitous I am for your welfare, and wrestle earnestly with God in prayer on your behalf, *and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh:* and this especially I ask of the Lord, *that their hearts might be comforted* under every trial, with those consolations which he bestows on his chosen, *being knit together in love* to Christ, and one another, *and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding*, seeking to attain the most distinct and comprehensive knowledge of the gospel, with all its invaluable privileges, *to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ*, testifying the fullest approbation of that glorious scheme of salvation, which, though unknown before, is now revealed to the Gentiles, wherein God appears as their reconciled God and Father in Christ, the covenant-head of his redeemed. *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, for the use of his people, that he might so order all the dispensations of his providence and grace, as most effectually to conduct them safe amidst all their difficulties to his eternal kingdom. *Note*, (1.) It is God's will that his people should be comforted, and for this his ministers should labour. (2.) Nothing tends more to cause our consolations to abound than the union of our hearts to Jesus, and to our brethren, in love unfeigned. (3.) Whatever remaining ignorance be in us, or darkness surround our steps, he who hath all the treasures of wisdom is our guide, and he will lead us by the right way.

4. And this I say, lest any man should [f] beguile you with enticing words. 5. [g] For, though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ. 6. As ye have therefore [h] received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* [i] walk ye in him: 7. [k] Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8. [l] Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the ‡ rudiments of the world, and not after Christ: 9. For [m] in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10. And ye are [n] complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11. [o] In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12. [p] Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13. [q] And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having [r] forgiven you all trespasses; 14. [s] Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross: 15. [t] And, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of

f Gen. 29. 25. Rom. 16. 18. 2 Cor. 11. 3, 13. Eph. 4. 14. & 5. 6. Mat. 24. 4, 24. 2 Tim. 2. 18. & 3. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 3, 18, 19. ver. 18. Tit. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 20.
g Ver. 1. 1 Thes. 2. 17. 1 Cor. 5. 3, 4. & 14. 40. 1 Pet. 5. 9. Rev. 2. 2, 13, 19. & 3. 8, 10. 1 Thes. 3. 8.
h John 1. 12. Acts 16. 31. 1 Cor. 1. 2, 30. Eph. 3. 17.
i John 14. 6. & 10. 9. 1 Jo. 35. 8—10. 1 Pet. 3. 16. ch. 3. 17. Heb. 10. 19—23. & 4. 14—16. Jude 3. 1 Thes. 4. 1.
k Eph. 2. 21, 22. & 3. 47. Rev. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. & 3. 18. Eph. 5. 20. ch. 3. 17.
l Jer. 29. 8. Rom. 16. 17. Mat. 15. 2. Gal. 1. 14. & 3. 1. & 4. 3, 9. Eph. 4. 14. & 5. 6. Heb. 13. 9. ver. 16—23.
‡ Or *elements*.
m Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. 1 John 1. 14. 1 Cor. 11. 3. Rom. 8. 3. & 9. 5. Gal. 4. 4. Phil. 2. 6—8. John 10. 30. & 14. 9. 1 John 5. 7. Tit. 2. 13.
n Eph. 1. 23. & 3. 19. & 4. 10. Col. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 30. John 1. 16.
o Eph. 2. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Deut. 30. 6. & 10. 16. Jer. 4. 4. Phil. 3. 3. Rom. 6. 6. & 2. 29. Gal. 3. 27. Eph. 4. 22. ch. 3. 8, 9.
p Rom. 6. 3—5. Eph. 1. 19, 20. & 2. 5, 6. & 3. 17. & 2. 8. with Acts 2. 24. Rom. 4. 24. 1 Pet. 1. 21.
q Eph. 2. 1, 5, 11. Rom. 5. 10. & 6. 4—6, 8, 11. & 7. 4, 6. & 8. 2.
r Heb. 8. 10, 12. Ps. 32. 1, 2. & 103. 3. Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. & 55. 7. Jer. 31. 34. & 33. 8. s Eph. 2. 15, 16. Heb. 7. 18. & 8. 13. & 9. 10. & 10. 9. Rom. 6. 14. & 7. 4. & 8. 1—4. & 10. 4. Gal. 2. 20. & 3. 13. t Gen. 3. 15. Ps. 68. 18. Is. 53. 12. Mat. 12. 29. Luke 11. 22. John 12. 31. & 16. 11. Eph. 4. 8. & 6. 12. Heb. 2. 14.

|| Or *in himself.*

them openly, triumphing over them || in it.

Verses 4—15. The apostle felt the tenderest concern for them, and he testifies it by his jealousy over them.

1. He warns them against the seducing, Judaizing teachers. *And this I say*, concerning my affection for you, and the all-sufficient wisdom of Jesus to direct you, *lest*, as Satan beguiled Eve through his subtilty, *any man should beguile you with enticing words*, perverting you from the simplicity of the gospel, under pretence of leading you to higher attainments. *For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit;* not only united to them in affection, but probably having some extraordinary discernment of their state from the Lord; *joying and beholding your order* and strict discipline, *and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ*, notwithstanding all the shocks of persecution or the wiles of deceivers. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord*, and made profession of your entire dependence upon him as your Prophet, Priest, and King, *so walk ye in him*, depending on the teachings of his word and Spirit, trusting on his atonement and righteousness, and desirous to obey his holy will in all things: *rooted* as the tree, which no winds can blow down, *and built up in him, and stablished in the faith*, fixed immoveably on the rock of ages, and by faith growing up into him in all things who is the head, even Christ, *as ye have been taught* in the gospel preached to you; *abounding therein with thanksgiving*, enriched with all the fulness of divine grace, and ceaseless in praise to the great author of all your hopes and happiness. *Beware*, therefore, since ye have received the truth as it is in Jesus, *lest any man spoil you* of the inestimable treasure *through philosophy and vain deceit*, according to the corrupt systems of heathenism, misleading you from the purity of the gospel, *after the tradition of men*, whether of Judaizing teachers or Gentile sages, *after the rudiments of the world*, those first elements, (στοιχεια) contained in the Mosaical economy, and suited only to the infant state of the church, *and* which are *not after Christ*, but tend to seduce the heart from him, to direct the soul to rest on something else for salvation, besides his finished work, *in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, all the divine perfections being, in their utmost fulness, perpetually resident in the person of the incarnate Jesus. *Note*, (1.) The discourse set off with the most enticing words, must be brought to the test of God's revealed will, and if it correspond not therewith, whatever appearances of wisdom there may be, it is to be rejected with abhorrence. (2.) They who cleave to Christ shall be preserved from delusion. (3.) He who is God as well as man in one Christ, must needs be able to save to the uttermost, and be the worthy object of our entire faith and dependence.

2. He mentions the complete salvation, of which in Christ, they had been made partakers. *And ye are complete in him*, in virtue of your union with him, who is made of God unto you wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, and *who is*, in his mediatorial character, *the head of all principality and power*, all in heaven, earth, and hell, from the highest creature to the lowest, being made subject unto him. *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision*, not that which is outward in the flesh, and now of no avail, but that *made without hands*, even the circumcision of the heart, evident *in* the *putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*, and mortifying the old man, which is corrupt, with the affections and lusts, *by the circumcision of Christ*, which he is the author of, and by his Spirit effects in the hearts of his people. *Buried with him by baptism*, the ordinance which he hath instituted, superseding circumcision, and signifying to us our death unto sin, and new birth unto righteousness, *wherein also ye are risen with him*, quickened to newness of life, *through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.* The same divine power being needful to produce faith in the heart of the sinner, as to communicate life to the dead body of Jesus. *And you being dead in your sins*, under the sentence of God's wrath, and separated from his favour, which is the true life of the soul, *and* in *the uncircumcision of your flesh*, serving divers lusts and pleasures, under the dominion of a corrupted nature, *hath he quickened together with him*, to a life of grace here, as the earnest and beginning of a life of glory in eternity, *having forgiven you all trespasses*, in virtue of the redemption of Jesus. *Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us*, by his blood cancelling the debt, and obliterating the bond, discharging us from the condemnation of the *moral* law, and abolishing the *ceremonial*, which separated Jews and Gentiles, and was the cause of enmity between them, *and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross*, and rending it in pieces; *and having spoiled principalities and powers*, the apostate spirits of darkness, *he made a show of them openly*, as their conqueror, on the tree, *triumphing over them in it*, and redeeming all his people thereby from their hateful dominion.

How invaluable are the Christian's privileges! How precious should he be to us, who is the blessed author of them! (1.) We are quickened by him from the death of sin. (2.) We have the free and full remission of all our iniquities. (3.) The curse of the law is satisfied, and there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. (4.) Our spiritual enemies are vanquished; we need fear nothing from them; our Jesus is triumphant, and he will shortly make us, with himself, more than conquerors.

16. [u] Let no man therefore judge you * in meat, or in drink, or † in respect of an holy-day, or of the new-moon, or of the sabbath-*days:* 17. [x] Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ. 18. [y] Let no man ‡ beguile you of your reward || in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, [z] intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19. And not holding the [a] head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20. Wherefore, if ye be [b] dead with Christ from the [c] rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21. ([d] Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22. [e] Which all are to perish with the using;) [f] after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23. Which things have indeed [g] a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and * neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

[u] Rom. 14. 3, 10, 13. Gal. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 16. with Lev. xi, xxiii.
* Or *for eating and drinking.*
† Or *in part.*
[x] Heb. 8. 5. & 9. 9, 10, 20. & 10. 1, 11, 23. John 1. 17.
[y] Ver. 4, 8, 22. 2 John 8. 1 John 4. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 3. Eph. 5. 6. Mat. 24. 4. Jer. 29. 8.
‡ Or *judge against you.*
|| Gr. *being a voluntary humility.*
[z] Ps. 131. 1, 2. Ezek. 13. 3. 1 Tim. 1. 7. Deut. 29. 29.
[a] See ch. 1. 18. 1 Cor. 11. 3. & 12. 12, 13, 27. Eph. 4. 12, 15, 16. & 1. 22, 23. & 5. 23, 30. John 1. 16. ver. 10.
[b] Rom. 6. 3—8, 11. & 7. 4, 6. Gal. 2. 19, 20. ch. 3. 3. Rom. 4. 25.
[c] Or *elements.* Ver. 8, 14. Gal. 4. 3, 9. Eph. 2. 15. Heb. 7. 16, 18. & 9. 9, 10.
[d] Lev. xi. Deut. xiv. Num. xix.
[e] Rom. 14. 17. 1 Cor. 6. 13. Mark 7. 18, 19. 1 Cor. 8. 8. Heb. 13. 9.
[f] Is. 29. 13. Mat. 15. 9, 17. Tit. 1. 14. ver. 8.
[g] Ver. 18. 1 Tim. 4. 3, 8. & 5 23. Eccl. 7. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 18. & 4. 6.
* Or *punishing*, or *not sparing.*

Verses 16—23. The apostle, from the foregoing considerations of the complete redemption which in Christ Jesus they had obtained, warns them against the Judaizing zealots.

Let no man therefore judge or *condemn you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy-day, or of the new-moon, or of the sabbath-*

days, inculcating the necessity of observing these Jewish ceremonies, in order to salvation: *which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ;* since he who is the substance of them hath appeared, they are now abolished, and no longer obligatory. *Let no man beguile you of your reward*, or cheat you of the prize of your high calling in Christ Jesus, *in a voluntary humility*, leading you to a kind of abasement which the gospel never prescribed, *and worshipping of angels*, to the great dishonour of the one Mediator between God and man; *intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind*, falsely pretending to what he is ignorant of, and following the delusions of a heart eaten up with pride, *and not holding the head*, Christ Jesus, from *whom* alone *the whole body* of his church, *by joints and bonds having nourishment ministered, and knit together*, spiritually as the members of the natural body are united to their common head, *increaseth with the increase of God*, in light, and love, and comfort, and holiness. *Wherefore if*, or seeing, *ye be dead with Christ*, as your baptism intimated, *from the rudiments of the world*, and discharged from all obligation to the Mosaic economy, *why as though living in the world*, and still under the legal dispensation, *are ye subject to ordinances*, and obey the dogmatical decisions of Judaizing teachers, who cry, *Touch not, taste not, handle not*, as if the Levitical law was still in force, and the distinction of meats and drinks to be scrupulously observed by Christians; *which* meats *all perish with the using*, passing through the body, and cannot defile the soul; and are now no longer enjoined of divine authority, but merely after *the commandments and doctrines of men*, by these Jewish zealots? *Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom*, and pass under the specious pretence of paying to God service, even of supererogation, *in will-worship, and* voluntary *humility*, which his word hath never enjoined, *and neglecting of the body*, by affected austerities, *not in any honour;* these things are *not of any value* in the sight of God, but are *to the satisfying of the flesh*, serving only to foster man's pride, and to flatter him in a vain conceit of his own superior goodness. *Note*, They who affect to be wise above what is written, will only in the issue expose their own absurd pride and egregious folly.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle exhorts us to set our hearts upon heaven, and take them off from this world, ver. 1—4. *He exhorts to the mortification of sin, in the various instances of it*, ver. 5—12. *and earnestly presses to mutual love and compassion*, ver. 12—17. *And concludes with exhortations to relative duties; of wives and husbands, parents and children, masters and servants*, ver. 18—25.

1. IF [a] ye then be risen with Christ, [b] seek those things which are above, where [c] Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2. [d] Set your * affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3. For [e] ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4. When Christ, *who* [f] *is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also [g] appear with him in glory.

a Rom. 6. 4, 5. Eph. 2. 6. Col. 2. 19, 20. ch. 2. 12, 13.
b Mat. 6. 33. & 13. 44—46. 2 Cor. 4. 18. Heb. 11. 13—16. Ps. 73. 25, 26. ver. 2.
c Ps. 110. 1. Acts 2. 34. Eph. 1. 20. & 4. 10. John 14. 3. & 17. 24. Heb. 1. 3. & 8. 1.
d See ver. 1. Phil. 1. 23. & 3. 20. with Phil. 2. 21. & 3. 18, 19. Ps. 17. 14. & 119. 36, 37. Rom. 8. 5, 6. Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 16, 17. * Or *mind*.
e Rom. 6. 2—8, 11, 13. & 7. 4, 6. & 8. 2. Gal. 2. 19, 20. & 6. 14 ch. 2. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 30. ch. 2. 10—13. ver. 4. ch. 1. 5. Jude 1. John 10. 28—30.
f John 11. 25. Gal. 2. 20. John 10. 10, 28. 1 John 4. 9. & 5. 11, 12. John 17. 2, 3. & 14. 6.
g Is. 26. 19. Ps. 17. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 22, 42—54. Phil. 3. 21. 1 John 3. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Mat. 13. 43. Dan. 12. 2, 3. Job 19. 25—27.

Verses 1—4. The apostle having, in the former chapter, laid down the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and the invaluable privileges of true believers, proceeds here to exhort the Colossians to those tempers and practices which became their holy profession.

1. He exhorts them to heavenly-mindedness. *If ye then be risen with Christ*, in virtue of his resurrection, and of your union with him, *seek those things which are above*, even the eternal blessedness provided for you in heaven, *where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*, gone before to prepare a place for you, and ever living to make intercession for you. Therefore *set your affection on things above*, with faith, hope, and love, aspire after them, realizing them to your mind by frequent meditation and fervent prayer, seeking those influences of grace which may conduct you to the glory which shall be revealed; *and not on things on the earth*, whether Jewish ordinances, or earthly advantages and allurements; keep these under your feet, be weaned from them and daily dying to them. *Note*, A worldly mind and a heavenly hope are utterly inconsistent; no man can serve two masters.

2. He supports his exhortation by the most powerful arguments. *For ye are dead*, by your profession in baptism, and your obligations to a crucified Jesus; *and your life is hid with Christ*, both *your spiritual life*, with all its joys, is hid from the natural man, and by secret communications from your exalted head is still maintained till it shall be perfected above; *and your eternal life* is secured in him according to the secret purposes of God from the beginning; therefore, having such glorious expectations, look up, and live continually under the influence of them. And then, *when Christ, who is our life*, the author, support, and finisher of it, *shall appear* in the great day of his second coming, *then shall ye also appear with him in glory;* and how much then does it behove us to have our affections placed there, where we hope to spend an eternity with Christ in blessedness inconceivable?

5. [n] Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6. [i] For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the [k] children of disobedience: 7. [l] In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them. 8. But now ye also [m] put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9. [n] Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10. And [o] have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: [n] 11. [p] Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but [q] Christ *is* all, and in all.

h Rom. 6. 12, 13. & 8. 13. & 13. 12—14. 2 Cor. 7. 1, 11. Gal. 5. 19—21, 24. Eph. 4. 22. & 5. 3—5. 1 Thes. 4. 5, 6. Mark 7. 21, 22. 1 Pet. 2. 11.
i Is. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 5. 5, 6. & 2. 2, 3. Rev. 22. 15. & 21. 8. Rom. 1. 18.
k Eph. 2. 2. Tit. 3. 3. Deut. 32. 5, 20. Rom. 2. 8. & 8. 7, 8.
l Rom. 6. 19, 20. & 7. 5. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Eph. 2. 1—3, 12. ch. 2. 13. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3.
m See ver. 5. Rom. 6. 4, 6, 12, 13. Heb. 12. 1. Jam. 1. 21. Eph. 4. 22, 29, 31. & 5. 4.
n Lev. 19. 11. Zech. 8. 16. John 8. 44. Rev. 21. 8, 27. & 22. 15. Eph. 4. 22, 28, 29. Rom. 6. 6. & 8. 13. Gal. 5. 24.
o 2 Cor. 5. 17. Gal. 6. 15. Rom. 12. 2. John 3. 3, 5, 6. Eph. 2. 10. & 4. 23, 24. with Gen. 1. 26, 27. 1 Pet. 1. 14—16. Rom. 8. 29. & 9. 24. & 3. 22. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. & 5. 6. & 6. 15. 1 Cor. 7. 19, 21, 22. Acts 10. 34, 35. John 8. 32, 36.
p Rom. 10. 12. 2 John 3. 3, 5, 6.
q 1 Cor. 1. 29—31. & 2. 2. Gal. 1. 16. & 2. 20. & 6. 14. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 1. 21, 23. & 3. 7—10. ver. 4. ch. 2. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 22.

Verses 5—11. If we would set our affections on things in heaven, our sensual and earthly affections must be mortified; and hereunto the apostle earnestly exhorts them. *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth*, the remaining corruptions that still war against you; such as *fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence*, with every thought, word, or action, that hath the remotest tendency to excite impure desire, *and covetousness*, with every worldly lust, *which is idolatry*, as it engages the heart to the creature, drawing it off from the love and service of the Creator; *for which things' sake*

the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience, and the consequences of these sins will infallibly be eternal death. *In the which ye also*, as other Gentiles, *walked sometime, when ye lived in them. But now*, since the light and grace of the blessed gospel hath reached you, *ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy*, speaking reproachfully of God or things sacred, or whatever would blast the reputation of others: and let no *filthy communication*, or immodest expression, proceed *out of your mouth. Lie not one to another*, but ever, in all your conversation, speak the truth from your heart, and be faithful to every promise and engagement, *seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds*, the native corruption which came with you into the world, and works to bring forth fruit unto death, till subdued by the power of divine grace; *and ye have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him*, the heart, by the powerful operations of the Spirit, being renewed after the likeness of Jesus the Creator, in light and holiness, and his image defaced by the fall being now restored by efficacious grace. *Where*, in this new creation, *there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free*, all distinction of nations, names, conditions, and external privileges, is now abolished: *but Christ is all in all*; in him, all who believe, are *complete*; he is all to them in *wisdom*; they need no other teacher; all in *righteousness*; they want no commendation to God's favour but being found in him; all in *sanctification*, their whole sufficiency being derived from him, as the fountain of grace; all in *redemption*, as he hath by one oblation perfected for ever his people, and obtained, purely on account of what he hath done for them, all blessings in time and eternity. *Note*, (1.) We must mortify sin, or sin will eternally destroy us. (2.) Nothing is more dangerous than fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, unless it be the corroding canker of covetousness, which, though it may less shock the conscience, is as fatally ruinous to the soul. (3.) The longer we have lived in sin, the more urgently are we called to awake to newness of life: the time past may surely suffice to have wrought the will of the flesh. (4.) Anger, malice, slander, and lies, are the strongest lineaments of him who was a liar and murderer from the beginning. (5.) If we belong to Christ, we must prove it by the conformity of our temper and conduct to his; he that abideth in him, ought himself to walk as Christ also walked. (6.) If Christ be to us *all in all*, then are we bound to ascribe to him the glory of all our salvation.

12. [r] Put on therefore, as the [s] elect of God, holy and beloved, [t] bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; 13. [u] Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a † quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. 14. And [x] above all these things, *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. 15. And let [y] the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. 16. [z] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; [a] teaching and admonishing one another in [b] psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17. And [c] whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

r Rom. 13. 14. Eph. 4. 24. & 6. 11. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. & 3. 18.
s 1 Thes. 1. 4. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 3—11. Rom. 8. 28—34. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Rev. 17. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 10.
t Eph. 4. 32. & 5. 2. Phil. 2. 3. Gal. 5. 22, 23.
u Mat. 6. 14. Mark 11. 25. 1 Cor. 4. 12. Eph. 4. 2, 32. & 5. 2. 1 Pet. 3. 9. & 2. 23.
† Or *complaint*.
x 1 Pet. 4. 8. & 3. 8. John 13. 34. & 15. 12. Rom. 13. 8. 1 Cor. xiii. Eph. 4. 3. & 5. 2. ch. 2. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 1 John 3. 23. & 4. 21.
y Phil. 4. 6, 7. John 14. 27. & 16. 33. Prov. 16. 32. 1 Cor. 7. 15. Eph. 4. 3, 15, 16. & 5. 2, 4, 20. ch. 1. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 16, 18.
z Is. 8. 20. & 34. 16. John 5. 39. Acts 17. 11. Job 23. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 15—17. Ps. 119. 11. Jer. 15. 16. ch. 2. 3.
a Ch. 1. 28. 1 Thes. 5. 11, 14.
b Eph. 5. 19. ch. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 14. 15—26. Ps. cxiv—cl.
c 1 Cor. 10. 31. Eph. 5. 20. Rom. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 18. 2 Thes. 1. 3. Heb. 13. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. & 4. 11.

Verses 12—17. The apostle proceeds to enforce the practice of all godliness upon them, as those who were chosen in Christ Jesus, *as the elect of God*, ordained to be *holy, and* being *beloved* by him, should approve themselves before him.

1. *Put on therefore bowels of mercies*, such as were in Jesus Christ, towards the miserable and afflicted; *kindness* in every word and deed; *humbleness of mind*, lowly in your own thoughts of yourselves, and condescending to others; *meekness*, quietly submitting to the dispensations of Providence, and enduring patiently every reproach and indignity; *long-suffering* under repeated and aggravated provocations; *forbearing one another* under your several infirmities, *and forgiving one another* every offence or injury, *if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye*, whose amazing grace to us should powerfully engage our hearts to pass by each other's transgressions, and not only to forgive, but to blot out of our remembrance every past offence. *And*,

2. *Above all these things*, as that which is most singularly necessary, or *over all these things*, as what sets them off in their brightest lustre, *put on charity*, that divine principle of all that is excellent, *which is the bond of perfectness*, uniting the whole body of the church together, and most effectual to preserve them until they arrive at the perfection of holiness and happiness.

3. *And let the God of peace rule in your hearts*; being at peace with him, carefully cultivate peace with each other, and let a sense of his reconciliation to you sway your hearts to mutual love and forbearance, *to the which also ye are called in one body* as together united to Christ your common head: *and be ye thankful* for this invaluable blessing.

4. *Let the word of Christ*, his blessed gospel, *dwell in you richly*, abiding in your hearts, the subject of your constant meditations, and delightful converse; esteem it as your most invaluable treasure, and store up the knowledge of it in your hearts, *in all wisdom*, ready for use on every proper occasion.

5. As united in love, be *teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord*, building up each other thus in our most holy faith, and helping forward your mutual joy in God, and his blessed service. *Note*, It is not the music of the voice, but the singing with grace in the heart which is the acceptable praise.

6. *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*, under the influence of his grace, with a regard to his will, and a single eye to his glory, expecting the acceptance of every service for his sake alone, *giving thanks to God, even the Father by him*, in whom our praises and prayers come up before the throne as sacrifices of a sweet smell. *Note*, A Christian can never want matter of praise, whenever he turns his thoughts toward the Lord Jesus.

18. [d] Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. 19. [e] Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them. 20. [f] Children, obey *your* parents in [g] all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. 21. [h] Fathers, provoke not your children to *anger*, lest they be discouraged. 22. [i] Servants, obey in all things

d Eph. 5. 22, 24, 33. Tit. 2. 4, 5. Gen. 3. 16. 1 Tim. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 1—6. 1 Cor. 11. 3. & 14. 34. Acts 5. 29.
e Eph. 5. 25, 28, 33. 1 Pet. 3. 7. Prov. 5. 19. Mal. 2. 11—16. Eph. 4. 31. ver. 8.
f Eph. 6. 1—3. Exod. 20. 12. Lev. 19. 3. Prov. 1. 8. & 6. 20. Mal. 1. 6.
g Tit. 2. 9. Eph. 5. 24. Acts 5. 29.
h Eph. 6. 4. Gen. 18. 19. Josh. 24. 15. Prov. 22. 6. & 4. 1—13.
i Eph. 6. 5—7. Tit. 2. 9, 10. 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 2. 18—20. Philem. 16. with Gal. 1. 10. 1 Thes. 2. 4. Gen. 42. 18. Prov. 1. 7.

your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: 23. [k] And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24. [l] Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for [m] ye serve the Lord Christ. 25. [n] But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and [o] there is no respect of persons.

k See Eph. 6. 7.
l See Eph. 6. 8.
m See Eph. 6. 6. 1 Cor. 7. 22.
n Is. 3. 11. Rom. 2. 8, 9.
o Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. & 10. 17. & 16. 19. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Job 34. 19. Prov. 24. 23. Acts 10. 34. Col. 3. 6. Eph. 6. 9. Rom. 2. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Jude 16.

Verses 18—25. The apostle passes on to inculcate the due discharge of the great relative duties, and he begins, as before, (Eph. v. 22.) with the inferior relation, as subjection is peculiarly hard for creatures, who are naturally under the power of a spirit of pride and independence. We have,

1. The duty of *wives*. *Submit yourselves unto your own husbands;* be under their government, *as it is fit in the Lord,* according to the law of creation, and the divine constitution; obedient in all things which are not immediately inconsistent with your duty to the Lord Jesus.

2. The duty of *husbands*. *Love your wives* with all tenderness and singleness of affection, delighting in their company, and studying to make them happy in their relation to you; *and be not bitter against them,* cross, hasty, arbitrary, severe, with frowns or wrath, or ill usage, making their yoke heavy.

3. The duty of *children*. *Obey your parents in all things* that are lawful, neither murmuring nor disputing against their commands, or disposals: *for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord,* and a happy proof of your relation to the Father of Mercies.

4. The duty of *parents*. *Fathers, provoke not your children to anger,* by needless severities, arbitrary restraints, harsh commands, and unreasonable impositions, *lest they be discouraged,* their spirits broken with such treatment, and, through despair of pleasing, they should desist even from the attempt.

5. The duty of *servants*. *Obey in all things your masters according to the flesh,* whether Gentile or Christian, diligent to observe all their just commands, *not with eye-service, as men-pleasers,* merely whilst they are looking on you, *but in singleness of heart, fearing God,* and equally faithful in the discharge of your duty when no eye seeth you but His, to whom it is your special care to approve yourselves: *and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily,* working with all willingness and assiduity, *as to the Lord,* for his glory, *and not unto men,* merely with a view to their applause; *knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance,* when the great Master shall appear to recompense the fidelity of his servants, in whatever condition or rank they have been placed by him: *for ye serve the Lord Christ,* and whatsoever service ye do to them, with a view to his honour, he will regard it as immediately rendered to himself, and reward it accordingly. *But he that doeth wrong* to his master, by fraud, connivance, sloth, or negligence, *shall receive for the wrong which he hath done* the punishment due to his injustice; *and there is no respect of persons* with God; the meanest, at his bar, being accountable as well as the greatest, and shall receive sentence according to their deeds.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

He continues his account of the duty of masters, from the close of the former chapter, ver. 1. *Exhorts to the duty of prayer,* ver. 2—4. *And to a prudent and decent carriage towards those with whom we converse,* ver. 5, 6. *Closes the epistle with the mention of several of his friends, of whom he gives an honourable testimony,* ver. 7—18.

1. MASTERS,[a] give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a master [b] in heaven.

a Eph. 6. 9. Lev. 25. 43. & 19. 13. Deut. 24. 14, 15. Job 24. 10, 11. Mal. 3. 5. Jam. 5. 4. 1 Cor. 7. 22.
b Is. 57. 15, 16. & 66. 1, 2. Ps. 115. 3, 16. & 123. 1.

Verse 1. This verse should most properly have closed the foregoing chapter, as it contains the duty of *masters. Give unto your servants that which is just and equal,* not treating them tyrannically, nor laying on them unreasonable burdens, but using them kindly, giving them proper provisions, paying them their wages punctually, according to agreement, and as much as they really deserve, *knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven,* to whom you are responsible, and who regardeth the person of the rich no more than the poor.

2. [c] Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, 3. [d] Withal, praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the [e] mystery of Christ, [f] for which I am also in bonds: 4. That I may make it manifest, [g] as I ought to speak. 5. [h] Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. 6. [i] Let your speech *be* alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

c See Eph. 6. 18—20. & 5. 4, 20. Rom. 12. 12. & 8. 26, 27. & 15. 30. Luke 18. 1—7. & 11. 8, 9. Mark 13. 33. & 14. 38. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Phil. 4. 6. ch. 3. 15, 17. Jude 20. Heb. 5. 7. Jam. 4. 8. & 5. 14—16. 1 John 5. 14, 15. Ps. 50. 15.
d 2 Cor. 1. 11. Eph. 6. 19. Heb. 13. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 26. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Rom. 15. 30. 1 Cor. 16. 9. 2 Cor. 2. 12.
e See ch. ii. & 1. 22, 26. Eph. 3. 3, 7. 1 Cor. 4. 1. Mat. 13. 11.
1 Tim. 3. 16. f Ch. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 1. 8. Phil. 1. 7, 13. Eph. 3. 1, 13. & 6. 19, 20. g Mat. 10. 27, 28. 1 Cor. 9. 16. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Rom. 1. 9, 16. 1 Cor. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 2. 14. & 3. 12. & 4. 2. h Mat. 10. 16. 1 Thes. 5. 12. Eph. 5. 15, 16. i Ch. 3. 16. Eph. 4. 29. Eccl. 10. 12. Luke 4. 22. Ps. 45. 2. Prov. 10. 32. Mark 9. 50. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

Verses 2—6. The apostle, having laid down the particular duties of each station, proceeds to those that more generally belong to all the members of Christ's church. He exhorts them,

1. To unceasing prayer. *Continue in prayer* daily, at stated seasons, and habitually in your mind disposed to look up to God, *and watch in the same with thanksgiving,* engaged in the service with warm affections, and intenseness of mind, blessing and praising God for his goodness continually: *withal, praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance,* and give us both opportunity and ability *to speak the mystery of Christ,* his rich, free, and boundless grace, revealed to Gentiles as well as Jews, *for* maintaining *which I am also* now *in bonds: that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak,* plainly and without reserve, maintaining the equality of the Gentiles respecting all the privileges of the gospel, and keeping back nothing of all the counsel of God, as becomes a faithful ambassador of Christ. *Note,* Ministers need their people's prayers, and should be constantly remembered by them in the view of their arduous work.

2. To a becoming carriage towards those who are as yet out of the pale of the church. *Walk in wisdom towards them that are without,* with all prudence and circumspection, giving them no just occasion of offence, guarding against all fellowship with them in what is evil, whilst ready to every good word and work to do them service; *redeeming the time,* desiring to improve every opportunity of converse with them for their benefit, and careful to avoid whatever might unnecessarily provoke their malice and persecution, and be the means to cut you off from life and usefulness.

3. *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt,* edifying, discreet, and savoury, the proof of true grace in your own hearts, and the means of communicating it to others, *that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man,* whether the serious inquiries of those who desire instruction, the doubts of the scrupulous, or the cavils of adversaries.

7. [k] All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, *who is* [l] a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord. 8. Whom [m] I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; 9. With [n] Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here. 10. [o] Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, saluteth you; and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, [p] receive him;) 11. And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only *are my* [q] fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. 12. [r] Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, [s] always * labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand [t] perfect and † complete in all the will of God. 13. [u] For I bear him record that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in [x] Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis. 14. [y] Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you. 15. Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and [z] the church which *is* in his house. 16. And when this epistle is read among you, [a] cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read *the epistle* from Laodicea. 17. And say to [b] Archippus, [c] Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. 18. The salutation [d] by the hand of me Paul. [e] Remember my bonds. [f] Grace *be* with you. Amen.

k See Eph. 6. 21, 22. Acts 20. 4. 2 Tim. 4. 12.
l Heb. 13. 1. Rom. 12. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 9. & 4. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 3. 5, 6. & 4. 5, 7. & 6. 1—10, 20.
m See Eph. 6. 22. 1 Thes. 3. 2. Rom. 12. 15. & 15. 1—3. Gal. 4. 19. & 6. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 2, 28, 29.
n Philem. 10—19. Eph. 6. 21. Heb. 3. 1.
o Acts 19. 29. & 20. 4. & 27. 2. Philem. 24. Acts 12. 12, 25. & 15. 37, 39. 2 Tim. 4. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 13.
p Rom. 15. 7. & 16. 2. 1 Cor. 16. 10, 11.
q Ver. 7. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 9. & 4. 12. 2 Cor. 3. 6. & 5. 20. Phil. 1. 14, 17.
r Ch. 1. 7. Philem. 23. ver. 7.
s Rom. 15. 30. Jam. 4. 16. Gal. 4. 19. Eph. 6. 18.
* Or *striving*.
t Mat. 5. 48. 1 Cor. 2. 6, 15. & 14. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 2. 15. & 3. 15. ch. 1. 22, 28. Heb. 5. 14.
† Or *filled*.
u Not Rom. 10. 2. but ver. 12. ch. 1. 28, 29.
x Rev. 1. 11. & 3. 14—17. ver. 15, 16.
y Luke 1. 3. Acts 1. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 10, 11. Philem. 24.
z Rom. 16. 5. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Philem. 2.
a 1 Thes. 5. 27.
b Philem. 2.
c 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. 1 Tim. 4. 6, 12—16. & 6. 20. 2 Tim. 2. 2, 3, 15, 22—26. & 4. 2, 5. ch. 1. 25, 28, 29. Rom. 15. 27. Acts 20. 18—35. & 14. 26. Luke 9. 62.
d 1 Cor. 16. 21. 2 Thes. 3. 17.
e Heb. 13. 3. Rom. 12. 15. & 15. 30. 2 Tim. 1. 8.
f Rom. 16. 20, 24. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Phil. 4. 23. 1 Thes. 5. 28. 2 Thes. 3. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 22. Tit. 3. 15. Philem. 25. Hab. 13. 25. Rev. 20. 21.

Verses 7—18. The apostle closes his epistle with the commendation and respectful mention of several of his brethren, who joined in salutations with him.

1. Tychicus. *All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you,* the bearer of this epistle, *who* will give you a faithful account of my affairs, sufferings, success, and *is a beloved brother* in the gospel, *and a faithful minister,* proved by long experience, *and fellow-servant* with me *in the Lord,* to promote the interests of his cause and kingdom: *whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate,* and bring me word how you fare and prosper, *and comfort your hearts* under all your trials and sufferings for the sake of Christ and his gospel.

2. Onesimus. *With Onesimus,* Tychicus' companion, *a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you,* and now far different from the man who formerly fled his master's service. (See the epistle to Philemon.) *They shall make known unto you all things which are done here,* for your comfort and encouragement, who cannot but rejoice to hear what supports I receive, and what a blessing is on my bonds.

3. *Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him.)* It appears hereby that though Mark was once under the apostle's displeasure, he was now restored to his good graces; and, having acknowledged his fault, had been heartily forgiven, and cordially received again. *And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision, these* only of the Jewish brethren *are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me* under my sufferings.

4. *Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Jesus Christ* in the gospel, *saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers,* as in an agony wrestling with God for a blessing upon your souls, *that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God,* enlightened with the clearest discoveries of divine truth, and steadfast in the practice of all holiness. *For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.* Probably this faithful servant of Jesus had been chiefly instrumental in planting these churches, and therefore bore them a very particular affection. *Note,* (1.) Those whom we have begotten in the gospel, we shall not fail earnestly to commend to God's keeping and care; zeal for them will make our prayers importunate. (2.) Though we come however short of the mark at which we aim, perfection complete and entire is that which the Christian seeks as the summit of his felicity.

5. *Luke, the beloved physician,* by profession a physician for the body, but who now dispenses in the gospel healing for the soul, *and Demas greet you,* wishing you the richest mercies of our God.

6. *Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.* Probably there the faithful assembled for their stated worship; or his family, remarkable for their regularity, exemplariness, and daily worship of God, appeared a little church within themselves. *And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the churches of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea,* either that which was written from thence by the apostle, as some suggest, to Timothy, or rather an epistle from the church of the Laodiceans to the Colossians, which might contain matter of great edification. *Note,* Religious letters are often singularly useful.

7. *And say to Archippus,* their bishop probably, who had need be peculiarly watchful over the flock, when seducers so abounded, *Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, to fulfil it* with all zeal and fidelity, maintaining the doctrines of grace against all opposers, and adorning them in his conversation, building up the souls committed to his care in the true faith of the gospel, labouring earnestly for the edification of the saints, and for the conversion of sinners. *Note,* They who are put in trust with the ministry, have a peculiarly important charge committed to them; and, if they grow cold and careless, their people may and ought, with becoming respect, to admonish them of their negligence.

8. He concludes with his benediction and subscription. *The salutation by the hand of me Paul,* the mark of his genuine epistles. *Remember my bonds,* which I now suffer for the sake of the Gentiles, and which should especially engage your prayers for me, and your affection towards me. *Grace be with you;* may the sovereign and rich favour of God, with all its blessed consequences, be your present and everlasting portion. *Amen!*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

Introduction.

THESSALONICA was formerly the metropolis of Macedonia; it is now called Salonichi, and is the best peopled, and one of the best towns for commerce in the Levant. The apostle Paul, being diverted from his design of going into the provinces of Asia, properly so called, and directed after an extraordinary manner to preach the gospel in Macedonia, Acts xvi. 9, 10. in obedience to the call of God went from Tarsus to Samothracia, and from thence to Neapolis, and from thence to Philippi, where he had good success in his ministry; but met with hard usage, being cast into prison, with Silas his companion in travel and labour; from whence being wonderfully delivered, they comforted the brethren there and departed. Passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where the apostle planted a church that consisted of some believing Jews, and many converted Gentiles, Acts xvii. 1—4. But a tumult being raised in the city by the unbelieving Jews, and the lewd and baser sort of the inhabitants, Paul and Silas, for their safety, were sent away by night into Berea: and afterwards Paul was conducted to Athens, leaving Silas and Timotheus behind him, but sent directions that they should come to him with all speed.

When they were come, Timotheus was sent to Thessalonica to inquire after their welfare, and to establish them in the faith, 1 Thes. iii. 2. who returned to Paul while he tarried at Athens, and was sent again, together with Silas, to visit the churches in Macedonia. So that Paul, being left at Athens alone, 1 Thes. iii. 2. departed from thence to Corinth, where he continued a year and a half; in which time Silas and Timotheus returned to him from Macedonia, Acts xiii. 5. and then he wrote this epistle to the church of Christ at Thessalonica; which, though it is placed after the other epistles of this apostle, is supposed to be *first* in time of all Paul's epistles, and to be written about A. D. 54.

The main scope whereof is to express the thankfulness of this apostle for the good success his preaching had among them, and to establish them in the faith, and persuade them to a holy conversation.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

After the introduction, ver. 1. *the apostle begins with a thanksgiving to God for the saving benefits bestowed on them,* ver. 2—5. *And then mentions the sure evidences of the good success of the gospel among them, which was notorious and famous in several other places,* ver. 6—10.

1. [a] PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the [b] Thessalonians *which is* in [c] God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: [d] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[a] Acts ix, xiii—xxviii, & 13. 6. & 15. 22, 23, 40. 2 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Thes. 1. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 12. Acts 16. 1—3. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 1. Col. 1. 1.

[b] Acts 17. 1—10. Phil. 4. 15, 16. 2 Tim. 4. 10

[c] Gal. 1. 2. 1 John 1. 3. John 14. 23. & 17. 21, 23. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 2 Thes. 1. 2.

[d] Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 2. Phil 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 2 Thes. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 2. Num. 6. 24—26.

Verse 1. The apostle begins with his usual address, joining two of his brethren with himself. *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ,* called to the worship of the true God, chosen in Christ Jesus, and united to him by faith as living members of his body: *grace be unto you, and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;* may all the blessings of the everlasting covenant of redemption be your portion, partaking of the boundless grace of God, and enjoying that sweetest peace of conscience which results from a sense of his unchangeable love!

2. [e] We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; 3. Remembering without ceasing [f] your work of faith, and labour of

[e] See Rom. 1. 8—10. 1 Cor. 1. 4—8. Eph. 1. 15, 16. Phil. 1. 3—11. Col. 1. 3—6. 2 Thes. 1. 3, 4.

[f] Acts 17. 7, 10. ch. 2. 13, 14. & 3. 6. & 4. 9. 2 Thes. 1. 3, 4. John 6. 27, 29. Gal. 5. 6. Jam. 2. 17. Heb. 6. 10, 12. Rom. 16. 6. & 3. 25. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Jam. 1. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 1. 6. Rev. 1. 9. & 2. 2, 3.

love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, [g] in the sight of God and our Father; 4. [h] Knowing, brethren * beloved, your election of God. 5. For [i] our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know [k] what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

[g] Gen. 5. 24. & 17. 1. Ps. 16. 8. 2 Cor. 2. 17. 1 Pet. 3. 4.
[h] Ch. 2. 13. ver. 5, 9, 10. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 10. Col. 3. 12. Eph. 1. 3—11. Rom. 8. 28—30. & 9. 6—23. & 11. 2—7. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10, 15—17.
* Or *beloved of God, your election.*
[i] 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 1. 24. & 2. 2—4. & 4. 20. 2 Cor. 6. 6. Gal. 3. 2, 5. Col. 2. 2. ch. 2. 1, 13. Heb. 6. 11. Tit. 3. 3—7.
[k] Ch. 2. 1—11. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. Acts 20. 18—35. 1 Cor. 2. 2—5. & 4. 9—13. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 2. 14, 17. & 3. 12. & 4. 1, 2. & 6. 3—10. 1 Tim. 4. 12—16. 2 Tim. 3. 10. 1 Cor. 9. 19—22. 2 Cor. 12. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 10.

Verses 2—5. With thanksgiving and prayer the apostle on their behalf approached a throne of grace. *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.*

1. *Remembering, without ceasing,* (1.) *your work of faith,* which is proved to be unfeigned by the blessed effects it produces on your hearts and lives. *And,* (2.) Your *labour of love,* love to Jesus and one another engaging you to every good word and work, and making you willing to submit to any hardships, for his glory and the advantage of your brethren. *And* also, (3.) Your *patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ,* even that lively hope which faith in him inspires, and which strengthens you with patient perseverance to endure under every cross, *in the sight of God and our Father,* to whom we can appeal for our constant and thankful remembrance of you, and trust that in all fidelity you approve yourselves to him: *knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God,* the objects of his eternal regard, and of his mere sovereign pleasure chosen to grace here and glory hereafter. *Note,* (1.) All our blessings flow from God's election. We have not chosen him, but he hath chosen us. (2.) Those whom God chooses for his own he sanctifies, and prepares for the inheritance which he hath prepared for them.

2. He thanks God for the success of his preaching among them. *For our gospel came not unto you in word only,* to your ear, *but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost,* who bore his attestation to the truth by miracles, accompanied it with divine evidence to the conscience, *and* caused it to enter into your hearts *with much assurance* of your personal interest in the promised blessings: *as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake,* with what patience and perseverance, in the midst of much persecution, we delivered our message, zealous for your souls; and how God was pleased graciously to own our labours. *Note,* (1.) Nothing fills a faithful minister's heart with deeper gratitude, than the beholding the success of his labours. (2.) Wherever the gospel is made effectual to the heart by the Holy Ghost, it comes with such evidence as bears down all objections, and powerfully bends the soul to the obedience of the faith.

6. And ye [l] became followers of us, and of the Lord, [m] having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: 7. So that ye were [n] ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. 8. For from you [o] sounded out the word of the Lord [p] not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing. 9. For they themselves shew of us [q] what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how [r] ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God. 10. And [s] to wait for his Son from heaven, [t] whom he raised from the dead, *even* [u] Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

[l] 1 Cor. 11. 1. & 4. 16. Phil. 3. 17. 2 Thes. 3. 9.
[m] Ver. 5. ch. 2. 13, 14. & 3. 3. 2 Thes. 1. 4, 5. Acts 17. 5. & 5. 41. Heb. 10. 34. Hos. 2. 15.
[n] 2 Cor. 9. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 12.
[o] Rom. 10. 18. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Ps. 2. 3. & 11. 9. & 52. 7, 15. & 66. 19, 20.
[p] Ch. 4. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 4. Rom. 1. 18.
[q] Ver. 5, 6. ch. 2. 1, 13.
[r] Acts 14. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 2. Gal. 4. 8. Is. 2. 3, 18—20. & xxxv, xlii, xlix, liv, lx.
[s] Mark 15. 43. Luke 2. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 7. 2 Thes. 3. 5. & 1. 7. Acts 1. 11. & 3. 21. Phil. 3. 20. Rev. 1. 7. Heb. 9. 28. Tit. 2. 13.
[t] Acts 2. 24. Rom. 4. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 21. 1 Cor. xv. ch. 5. 9. Is. 45. 17, 22—25.
[u] Mat. 1. 21. Rom. 5. 9, 10. 2 Thes. 1. 10, 11. Rev. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. Gal. 3. 13.

Verses 6—10. The apostle describes the happy effects which the gospel produced among them.

1. *Ye became followers of us* in faith, patience, and sufferings, *and of the Lord* Jesus, the perfect pattern which we desire to imitate; *having received the word in much affliction:* far from being stumbled at the persecution which was raised against us, or being discouraged, ye were filled *with joy in the Holy Ghost:* and, as your tribulations abounded, your consolations by Jesus Christ abounded also.

2. Ye were eminently distinguished by your conduct on that occasion, *so that ye were ensamples* of courage, constancy, and zeal, *to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia; for from you sounded out the word of the Lord,* the fame of your faith and the remarkable success of the gospel among you went forth; *not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith God-ward is spread abroad* and much spoken of, *so that we need not to speak any thing* in your commendation; *for they themselves,* among whom this good report of you is spread, *show of us, what manner of entering in we had unto you,* and need not our information, having been already made acquainted with all the circumstances; *and how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God,* who alone hath life in himself, and is the author thereof to all his creatures, and besides whom there is no God; *and to wait for his Son from heaven,* in faith and hope, *whom he raised from the dead* for our justification, *even Jesus,* the complete Saviour of his people, *which delivered us from the wrath to come,* and but for him we must all have perished eternally. *Note,* (1.) Good examples are mightily influential. (2.) Wherever the true grace of God comes, it will turn the heart from all its sinful pursuits, and from idols, to cleave to him in faith and love alone. (3.) We owe it to the Son of God that we are rescued from everlasting burnings. Had he not interposed on our behalf, our estate had been desperate as that of the devils themselves. (4.) They who are partakers of the gospel salvation, constantly keep in mind the second coming of the Lord, waiting with desire his appearing, and making it their labour and prayer to be ready to meet him in the clouds.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

In this chapter the apostle puts the Thessalonians in mind of the manner of his preaching among them, ver. 1—6. *Then of the manner of his conversation among them,* ver. 7—12. *Afterwards of the success of his ministry, with the effects both on himself and themselves,* ver. 13—16. *And then apologizeth for his absence,* ver. 17—20.

1. FOR yourselves, brethren, know [a] our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: 2. [b] But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we [c] were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention. 3. [d] For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: 4. But [e] as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel,

[a] See ch. 1. 3—1 ver. 13. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
[b] 2 Tim. 3. 11. Acts 16. 22—24, 37.
[c] 2 Cor. 3. 5, 6. Acts 17. 2—10. Phil. 1. 30. Col. 2. 1. & 1. 24, 28, 29. ch. 3. 3, 7. Eph. 6. 19.
[d] 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2, 5. & 7. 2. & 11. 13. 2 Pet. 1. 16.
[e] Gal. 2. 7. Eph. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. Tit. 1. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 2. & 9. 17. Gal. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5, 13. 2 Cor. 4. 1, 2. & 5. 11, 20.

even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, [f] which trieth our hearts. 5. For [g] neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; [h] God *is* witness: 6. [i] Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when [k] we might have * been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. 7. But we were [l] gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: 8. So, [m] being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. 9. For ye remember, brethren, [n] our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. 10. [o] Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: 11. As ye know [p] how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his children, 12. [q] That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath [r] called you unto his kingdom and glory.

f See Jer. 17. 10. Rev. 2. 23.
g Acts 20. 33. 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 2. & 7. 2. & 12. 17. Mat. 23. 14. Rom. 16. 18. 2 Pet. 2. 3. 1s. 30. 10. Jer. 6. 13, 14. Ezek. 13. 10, 19.
h Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 18. & 11. 31. Gal. 1. 20. Phil. 1. 8. 1 Tim. 5. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 1.
i John 5. 41, 44. & 12. 43. Gal. 5. 26.
k 2 Cor. 2. 10, 11. Philem. 8, 9. ver. 9. 1 Cor 1, 2, 6, 14. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. ver. 9.
* Or *used authority.*
l 1 Cor. 2. 3. & 9. 1—22. 2 Cor. 10. 1, 2, 10, 11. & 13. 4. 2 Thes. 3. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 10, 24, 25.
m Rom. 1. 11. 2 Cor. 12. 14, 15. Gal. 4. 19. Col. 1. 28. & 4. 12. Heb. 13. 17.
n Acts 18. 3. & 20. 34. 1 Cor. 4. 12. & 9. 12, 15. 2 Cor. 10. 15. & 11. 9, 12, 23. & 12. 11, 13—15. 2 Thes. 3. 8, 9. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 10.
o 1 Sam. 12. 3. Acts 20. 18, 33—35. 2 Cor. 7. 2. 2 Thes. 3. 7. 1 Tim. 4. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 10.
p Ver. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Gal. 4. 19. Gen. 18. 19. Prov. 4. 1—13.
q Eph. 4. 1. Col. 1. 10. Phil. 1. 27. Gen. 17. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 1 Cor. 7. 24.
r 1 Cor. 1. 9. & 7. 20. Gal. 1. 6. & 5. 8. Eph. 4. 1. ch. 5. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 9. & 5. 10. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 10.

Verses 1—12. The apostle reminds the Thessalonians,

1. Of his manner of preaching among them. *For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain,* with great swelling words of vanity, or empty ineffectual harangues, but with the power of the gospel, and the mighty word of truth. *But even after we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi,* undismayed at the persecutions that we had endured, *we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention,* as in an agony, labouring after your conversion amidst all the opposition which we had to encounter. *For our exhortation was not of deceit,* we broached no false doctrine, nor had any intention to deceive; *nor of uncleanness,* but tending to discourage all manner of impurity; *nor of guile,* for we spoke the truth from the heart; *but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel,* and had this honour conferred upon us to be appointed his ambassadors, *even so we speak,* under a sense of the weighty charge committed to us; *not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts,* to whom we study to approve ourselves in simplicity and godly sincerity: *for neither at any time used we flattering words,* in order to insinuate and ingratiate ourselves into your confidence, or to encourage you with the least imagination of impunity in your sins; *as ye know; nor* did we put on *a cloak* of religion to conceal our designs *of covetousness,* in order to make an advantage of you; *God is witness* to the uprightness of our hearts respecting you. *Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others,* desiring human applause or esteem, *when we might have been burdensome,* and demanded our maintenance of you, *as the apostles of Christ.*

2. Of his conduct and conversation among them. *But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children,* with the greatest tenderness; *so being affectionately desirous of you,* of your happiness and salvation, *we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls,* ready to spend and be spent in the service of your faith, *because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labours and travail: for labouring night and day,* with our own hands, to earn our maintenance, *because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God* freely. *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe,* conscientiously discharging every duty of religion towards God, and righteousness towards men: *as ye know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,* with the affection and authority of the kindest parent, *that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory,* to the blessings of his grace in time, and of his glory in eternity. *Note,* (1.) They can speak boldly, who can appeal to their own conduct for the example of what they teach. (2.) The more love and tenderness accompanies our exhortations, the more effectual are they likely to prove. (3.) They who are called to God's kingdom are bound to walk worthy their high vocation, and to adorn the doctrine of Christ which they profess in all things.

13. For this cause also [s] thank we God without ceasing; because, when [t] ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which [u] effectually worketh also in you that believe. 14. For ye, brethren, [x] became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews: 15. [y] Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have † persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: 16. [z] Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, [a] to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

s See ch. 1. 3, 5.
t Mat. 10. 40. Gal. 4. 14. 2 Pet. 3. 2. ch. 4. 8.
u Ch. 1. 5, 10. Acts 16. 14. 1 Cor. 3. 5, 6. Heb. 4. 12. John 6. 63, 68. & 15. 3. & 17. 17. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Jer 15. 16.
x Ch. 1. 6. Acts 17. 5, 13. Heb. 10. 32—34. Acts viii, xii.
y Mat. 5. 12. & 23. 34, 37. Luke 6. 23. & 12. 53. Acts 2. 23, 36. & 3. 15. & 5. 30. & 7. 52. & 8. 4. & 11. 19.
† Or *chased us out*
z Acts 13. 50. & 14. 5, 19. & 17. 5, 13. & 18. 12. & 19. 9. & 22. 21, 22.
a Gen. 15. 16. Mat. 23. 32. & 24. 21. Mark 1 15. Mat. 3. 12. & 8. 12. & 11. 21—24. & 12. 45. & 21. 41—44. & 22. 7. Luke 13. 3, 5, 9, 17, 22—37. & 19. 27, 41—45. & 21. 20—24. Heb. 6. 8. 1 Pet. 4. 3.

Verses 13—16. The apostle proceeds,

1. To thank God for their ready reception of the gospel word. *For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man,* which may be fallacious, or at best of uncertain authority, *but, as it is in truth, the word of God,* and as such, deserving the deepest reverence, attention, and obedience; *which effectually worketh also in you that believe,* producing the most blessed consequences, in carrying with it the evidences of its divine original. *Note,* (1.) Though the treasure of God's word is committed to earthen vessels, its excellence is not therefore the less; and we must remember not who dispenses it, but whose word it is, that with reverence and godly fear we may hear and obey. (2.) Wherever the gospel is received into the heart, it works effectually to the salvation of the soul, casting the whole man into its blessed mould.

2. They were honoured with the cross, and bore it most exemplary. *For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus; for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews,*

and sustained the shock of persecution with the same unshaken fortitude and unwearied patience.

3. He mentions with horror the dreadful guilt and rooted enmity of the Jewish zealots; his and their chief opponents, *who both killed the Lord Jesus*, with most atrocious wickedness imbruing their hands in his sacred blood, *and* murdered *their own prophets, and have*, with the utmost virulence, *persecuted us*, his apostles; *and they please not God*, though they flatter themselves they are his only favourites; they act in direct opposition to his will, *and are contrary to all men*, abhorring both Gentiles and Christians, and filled with implacable malice against those who use any means for the conversion of the heathen to Christ; *forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles* the gospel of God's grace *that they might be saved, to fill up* the measure of *their sins alway*, and to hasten the full vials of God's vengeance upon their devoted heads; *for the wrath is come upon them*, and hath begun to seize them in their rejection of God, and will be poured out *to the uttermost* or *to the end*, in the entire destruction of their city, nation, and temple, and in the eternal perdition of the impenitent. *Note*, When the sinner's iniquities are at the full, then wrath cometh to the uttermost.

17. But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time [b] in presence, not in heart, [c] endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. 18. Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again; but [d] Satan hindered us. 19. For what *is* [e] our hope, or joy, or crown of ‡ rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? 20. For ye are our glory and joy.

b 1 Cor. 5. 3. Col. 2. 5. 2 Kin. 5. 26.

c Ch. 3. 10. Rom. 1. 13. & 15. 22.

d As Acts 23. 12. or 14. 12.

e Prov. 16. 31. Ezek. 16. 12. & 23. 42. 2 Cor. 1. 14. Phil. 2. 16. & 4. 1.

‡ Or *glorying*.

Verses 17—20. The apostle,

1. Excuses his absence, which was not voluntary, but through unavoidable hindrances. *But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart*, and compelled reluctantly to leave you as helpless orphans, *endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire*, longing to converse with you, and build up your souls on the true foundation. *Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again*, and made efforts for that purpose: *but Satan hindered us*, sowing such dissensions and raising such difficulties as made our abode in these parts, where we now are, absolutely necessary. *Note*, We have a busy enemy, who is ever seeking to lay obstacles in our way. We need therefore to watch against his devices and to resist his wiles.

2. He assures them of his high affection and regard for them. *For what is our hope* in our labours, *or joy, or crown of rejoicing?* what revives, animates, and comforts our souls under all our work and sufferings? *are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?* Yes, verily. *For ye are our glory and joy*, whilst, looking forward to the great day of Christ's appearing, we confidently hope to present you before him as the happy fruits of our labour, to your eternal blessedness, and to our own immortal honour.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

In this chapter the apostle giveth further evidence of his love to the Thessalonians, reminding them of his sending Timothy to them, with the mention of his design therein, and his inducements so to do, ver. 1—5. *By acquainting them of his great satisfaction at the return of Timothy, with good tidings concerning them*, ver. 6—10. *And concludeth with fervent prayer for them*, ver. 11. to the end.

1. WHEREFORE, [a] when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; 2. And sent [b] Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: 3. [c] That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that [d] we are appointed thereunto. 4. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; [e] even as it came to pass, and ye know. 5. For this cause, [f] when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, [g] lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

a Ver. 5. Acts 17. 15.

b Acts 16. 1. & 17. 14. Rom. 16. 21. 1 Cor. 16. 10. Phil. 2. 19, 25. Eph. 6. 21, 22. Col. 4. 7, 8. Acts 14. 22. Rom. 1. 22.

c Acts 5. 41. & 20. 24. & 21. 13. Rom. 5. 3. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 1. 8. Jam. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 14. Eph. 3. 13.

d John 16. 33. Acts 14. 22. & 20. 23. & 17. 5. & 21. 11. ch. 2. 14, 15. Rom. 8. 29. 2 Tim. 3. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 21. ver. 4. Rev. 3. 19. Heb. 12. 5—11.

e Acts 17. 5—9. ch. 2. 2, 14. & 1. 6. 2 Thes. 1. 4—6.

f Ver. 1. 2 Cor. 7. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 3.

g 1 Cor. 7. 5. 2 Cor. 11. 3. Gal. 2. 2. & 4. 11. Phil. 2. 16. with ch. 2. 1—12.

Verses 1—5. The solicitude which the apostle felt towards them engaged him to send Timothy and be left alone at Athens, however useful or comfortable such a friend at that time might be to him. *Wherefore, when we could no longer forbear*, so anxious I was to hear of your affairs, *we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; and sent Timotheus our brother and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ;* and this in order *to establish you* in the truth, to build you up in the glorious doctrines of the gospel of Jesus, *and to comfort you concerning your faith*, exhorting you to abide unshaken in your profession, and suggesting the most encouraging motives thereto; *that no man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto*, according to God's eternal counsels, for wise and holy purposes of his own glory. *For verily, when we were with you, we* concealed nothing from you, but *told you* plainly *before* the persecutions came, *that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause when I could no longer forbear*, reflecting upon your very critical and trying circumstances, *I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter* should *have tempted you* to turn back from the profession of Christ, *and our labour be in vain*, notwithstanding all the promising appearances which emboldened my confident hope in your fidelity. *Note*, (1.) We must count the cost, before we enlist under Christ's banner. All that will live godly in him shall suffer persecution. (2.) The devil usually seeks to discourage new converts by the violent opposition which he raises against them. (3.) Faithful ministers labour to confirm the faith and comfort the hearts of those who are suffering for righteousness' sake. In this way only can we hope to enter into the kingdom of God.

6. But now, when [h] Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also *to see* you: 7. Therefore, brethren, [i] we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: 8. For [k] now we live, if ye stand fast in the

h Acts 18. 5. 2 Cor. 7. 4, 6, 7. Phil. 1. 8. Rom. 12. 9—21. ch. 5. 12. 13. & 2. 17, 18. ver. 9, 10.

i Ch. 2. 2, 15. ver. 5. Acts 17. 1—18. 2 Cor. 7. 4. 2 John 4. ver. 8, 9.

k Ver. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 58. &. 16. 13. Heb. 10. 23. & 4. 14. 2 John 4. 3 John 3, 4. Rev. 3. 3, 11.

Lord. 9. For what [l] thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; 10. [m] Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might [n] perfect that which is lacking in your faith? 11. [o] Now God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, * direct our way unto you. 12. [p] And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you: 13. To the end he may [q] stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the [r] coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

l Eph. 5. 20. Phil. 4. 6. ch. 5. 18. see ch. 1. 2, 3. Acts 26. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Rom. 1. 9—12. & 15. 23. Luke 22. 44. ch. 2. 17.

m Acts 26. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Rom. 1. 9—12. & 15. 23. Luke 24. 44. ch. 2. 17.

n Col. 1. 28. Eph. 4. 12. Phil. 1. 6, 29. 2 Thes. 1. 11. & 2. 17.

o Ezra 8. 21. Ps. 5. 3. & 32. 8. & 73. 24. Prov. 3. 5, 6. Jer. 10. 23.

* Or *guide*.

p Jam. 1. 17. ch. 4. 9, 10. & 5. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 7. Rom. 13. 8. Mat. 7. 12. & 22. 39. 1 John 3. 14, 23. & 4. 12, 20. & 2. 10.

q 1 Cor. 1. 8. Phil. 1. 10. ch. 5. 23. 2 Thes. 2. 17. Col. 1. 22. Jude 24. r Zech. 14. 5. ch. 14. 16, 17. 1 Thes. 1. 7—10. Jude 14. Mat. 24. 30, 31. & 25. 31. Rev. 1. 7. & 20. 11, 12.

Verses 6—13. The apostle,

1. Expresses the vast satisfaction which he felt at Timothy's report. *But now, when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your* unshaken *faith* in Christ, *and* fervent *charity* towards each other; *and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you; therefore, brethren, we are comforted,* and all my anxious fears gave place to holy joy in and *over you, in all our affliction and distress,* which we were here suffering when Timotheus arrived: but which were now made light and easy, *by* the knowledge of *your faith* in Jesus, and fidelity to his cause; *for now we live,* and are happy in the midst of all our persecutions and dangers, *if,* or *seeing ye stand fast in the Lord,* and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel. *Note,* Nothing is such an encouragement to suffer for Christ and his gospel, as seeing the happy effects of our labours upon those among whom we minister.

2. The glad news filled him with thankfulness to God, and opened his heart and lips in prayer. *For what thanks can we render to God again for you,* or how sufficiently express our gratitude, *for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God, night and day praying exceedingly,* with unusual fervour and vehemence, *that,* if the Lord so pleased, *we might see your face again, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?* helping you to farther and clearer discoveries of the gospel, and leading you to fuller and more assured confidence in the Lord. *Note,* (1.) The strongest believers need still to have their faith increased. (2.) The ministry of the word is the great means which God usually blesses for that happy purpose.

3. He tells them what was the constant subject of his prayers for them. *Now God himself and our Father,* who as *God* hath all power to supply every want of his people, and, as our *reconciled* God and *Father,* is in the fulness of his love and grace disposed most tenderly towards us; *and our Lord Jesus Christ,* who is equally with the Father the object of our prayers, and through whose mediation we receive an answer of peace, *direct our way unto you,* and in his providence enable us to accomplish the purposes we have formed. *And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love towards one another, and towards all men, even as we do towards you,* advancing to higher attainments in this godlike temper; *to the end that he may stablish your hearts* in faith and love, *unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father,* approving yourselves to him in all simplicity and godly sincerity, and acknowledged by him as his chosen *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ* to judgment, *with all his saints,* who in that day shall stand before his throne and share his triumphs.

Note, (1.) Though we may purpose our goings, the Lord alone directeth our steps. (2.) An increase in love is the best symptom of the flourishing state of the Christian's soul. (3.) All God's people desire to be found unblameable in holiness before him, and so to walk as to please him well in all things. (4.) It is God alone by his grace who can make us such as he would have us to be: therefore to him must we, without ceasing, direct our prayer. (5.) The Lord Jesus shall quickly come in glory with all his saints. Happy the soul that shall then have boldness in his presence.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

In this chapter the apostle gives earnest exhortations to abound in holiness, with a caution against uncleanness, enforced with several arguments, ver. 1—8. *He then mentions the great duties of brotherly love, and quietness, with industry, in our callings,* ver. 9—12. *and concludeth with comforting them that mourned for their relations and friends that died in the Lord,* ver. 13—18.

1. FURTHERMORE then [a] we * beseech you, brethren, and † exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that [b] as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, [c] *so* ye would abound more and more. 2. For ye know [d] what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. 3. [e] For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4. That every one of you should know how to [f] possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5. [g] Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles who know not God; 6. That no *man* [h] go beyond and ‡defraud his brother || in *any* matter: because that [i] the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 7. For [k] God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. 8. He therefore that * despiseth, [l] despiseth not man, but God, who [m] hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.

a 2 Cor. 10. 1. & 5. 20. Rom. 12. 1. Eph. 4. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 11, 14. ch. 2. 11.

* Or *request*.

† Or *beseech*.

b Mat. 28. 20. 1 Cor. 11. 2. ch. 2. 18. Col. 2. 6, 7. & 1. 10 Phil. 12. 7, 29. Tit. 2. 11—13. & 3. 8, 14.

c 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Pet. 1. 4—9. & 3. 18. Job. 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. Ps. 92. 13, 14.

d Ch. 2. 11, 12. Mat. 28. 20. Ezek. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 11. 3, 23.

e Exod. 20. 14. Mat. 5. 27. Rom. 6. 19, 22. & 12. 2. 1 Cor. 5. 11. & 6. 9, 15. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 4. 26. & 5. 3, 17, 27. Phil. 4. 8. Col. 3. 5.

f 1 Cor. 6. 18, 19. Rom. 1. 24, 26. with 1 Cor. 11. 7.

g 1 Cor. 7. 9. & 15. 31. Eph. 4. 17—19. 2 Thes. 1. 8. Gal. 4. 8. Rom. 1. 24—28.

h 1 Cor. 6. 7, 8. Lev. 19. 11, 13. Exod. 20. 14—17.

† Or *oppress*, or *over-reach*. || Or *in the matter*. ‡ Rom. 1. 18. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 3. 6. Heb. 13. 4. k 1 Cor. 6. 18. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 15. John 17. 19. Eph. 1. 4. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Mat. 5. 48. Lev. 11. 44. & 19. 2. * Or *rejecteth*. l 1 Sam. 8. 7. Luke 10. 16. m 1 Cor. 4. 7. 2 Pet. 1. 21. Rom. 8. 9, 14. 1 John 3. 24.

Verses 1—8. We have here,

1. An exhortation to all holy obedience. *Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus,* in his name and by his authority, *that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more,* with greater watchfulness, diligence, and zeal, according to God's holy word. *For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus,* so clearly that none can plead ignorance, and urged upon your consciences with those most powerful arguments which should engage your obedience thereunto. *Note,* (1.) The more clearly the path of duty is marked out to us, the more steadily are we bound to walk in it. (2.) The best come very short of perfection, and have need to be exhorted to greater diligence and exemplariness in their walk and conversation.

2. A caution against all impurity, as most opposite to the Christian character. *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification,* that you should be in heart and conduct obedient to

all his commands; particularly, *that ye should abstain from fornication*, that common sin among the Gentiles, and to which in the days of your unregeneracy you may have been addicted; *that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel*, his body, *in sanctification and honour*, with such purity and chastity as never to be guilty of an action unworthy those who are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that would defile and disgrace you in the sight of God and every real Christian; *not in the lust of concupiscence*, indulging the vile affections of the natural heart, *even as the Gentiles do, who know not God; that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter*, not only abstaining from every act of injustice, but especially by robbing them of that which is dearer to them than any earthly goods, the affections or the person of their wife; or drawing them into any horrid and unnatural acts of lewdness: *because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified*, and will execute condign punishment on such workers of iniquity. *For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness*, in his gospel enjoining all purity of heart and conversation on his people. *He therefore that despiseth* our admonitions, *despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit*, by whose inspiration I now speak, and whose office it is to sanctify our bodies, souls, and spirits, and prepare us for the glory which is promised. *Note*, Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge; and into his kingdom shall nothing enter which defileth or maketh unclean.

9. [n] But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are [o] taught of God to love one another. 10. And indeed ye do [p] it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye [q] increase more and more; 11. And that [r] ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; 12. That [s] ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack † of nothing.

n Ch. 5. 1. John 13. 34. & 14. 26. & 15. 12. Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Eph. 5. 2. ch. 3. 12. & 5. 8, 15. 1 Pet. 3. 8. & 4. 8. 1 John 3. 11, 23. & 4. 21. & 2. 10.
o Jer. 31. 34. John 6. 45. Heb. 8. 11. 1 John 2. 20, 27. John 4. 26.
p Ch. xvii. Rom. 1. 8.
q Ver. 1. ch. 3. 12.
r 1 Cor. 7. 20, 24. 1 Pet. 4. 15. Acts 20. 34. Eph. 4. 28. 1 Tim. 5. 13. 2 Thes. 3. 7. & 10. 12.
s Rom. 12. 17. & 13. 13. 1 Cor. 14. 40. Col. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 8. 21. & 13. 7. Phil. 4. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 12. 1 Tim. 2. 2. Heb. 13. 18. ch. 2. 10.
† Or *of no man.*

Verses 9—12. The apostle here inculcates,

1. The great duty of brotherly love. *But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another*, and are already exemplary for your fervent and enlarged charity: *and indeed ye do it*, not only towards the members of your own church, but *towards all the brethren which are in all Macedonia. But*, as there is still room for much higher advancement, *we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more. Note*, (1.) We are never so high in grace, but we have summits of holiness yet to climb, and shall continue to have, till we reach the heavenly Zion, and come to join the spirits of the just there made perfect. (2.) All good comes from God: unless we are taught of him, no human lessons can lead us into the spirit of Christianity.

2. Of quietness and industry in our callings. *And that ye study to be quiet*, make it your holy ambition to live in peace with all men, not officiously intruding into other people's affairs; *and to do your own business*, minding the concerns of your own family and calling; *and to work with your own hands*, as many as by your station must earn your bread by daily labour, *as we commanded you*, idleness and Christianity being utterly inconsistent: *that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without*, paying every man his due; *and that ye may have lack of nothing*, but be furnished with all that yourselves and families may need, and not be burdensome to any.

13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are [t] asleep, that [u] ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14. For [x] if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which [y] sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15. For this we say unto you [z] by the word of the Lord, that [a] we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16. [b] For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: [c] and the dead in Christ shall rise first; 17. Then we [d] which are alive *and* remain [e] shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so [f] shall we ever be with the Lord. 18. Wherefore [g] ‡comfort one another with these words.

t Ver. 15. Acts 7. 60. 2 Pet. 3. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 6, 18. see 1 Kin. 2. 10.
u Lev. 19. 28 Deut. 14. 1. 2 Sam. 12. 20.
x 1 Cor. 15. 4, 12, 13, 20—23, 45, 49. Rom. 8. 11. Is. 26. 19. John 14. 19. & 11. 25. ch. 3. 13.
y 1 Cor. 15. 18. Heb. 11. 13. Rev. 14. 13. Ps. 23. 4.
z 1 Kin. 13. 17, 18. & 20. 35. & 22. 14. Ezek. 3. 17.
a 1 Cor. 15. 51—53.
b Mat. 24. 31. & 25. 31. 2 Thes. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 52. Acts 1. 11. Ps. 47. 5. Rev. 20. 11, 12.
c 1 Cor. 15. 23, 57. ver. 15.
d Ver. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52.
e Rev. 11. 12. John 12. 32. Is. 35. 10. & 51. 11. 2 Kin. 2. 11. Acts 1. 9.
f John 12. 26. & 14. 3. & 17. 24. Rev. 22. 3—5. & 31. 3, 4. Is. 60. 19, 20.
g Is. 40. 1, 2. Luke 21. 28. ch. 5. 11, 14. Heb. 12. 12. 2 Thes. 1. 10. & 2. 16, 17.
‡ Or *exhort.*

Verses 13—18. The apostle here suggests the most encouraging arguments to support the Thessalonians under the loss of their near and dear relatives. *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep*, and departed in the faith of Christ, *that ye sorrow not as others who have no hope*, as the heathen, who make such howling and lamentation for the dead; since we have a hope full of immortality: *for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*, raising their bodies from the dust at the last day, as his was raised from the tomb. *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord*, even those members of his church who shall be numbered among the living in the great day of his appearing and glory, *shall not prevent them who are asleep*, so as to anticipate their resurrection; *for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout* of triumph and exultation, *with the voice of the archangel* that shall attend his orders, *and with the trump of God*, like that tremendous sound which once issued from Sinai's top; *and the dead in Christ*, those who departed in his faith and fear, shall rise first, in virtue of their union with their exalted head: *then we who are alive and remain*, as many as shall then be found among the living, *shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord*, enjoying that eternal blessedness in his immediate presence, which is the summit of our felicity. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words*, under all your present trials and discouragements, and in the prospect of your own approaching dissolution. *Note*, (1.) They who die in the faith of Christ return to his bosom, and their dust sleeps sweetly under his care, waiting a resurrection day. (2.) The faithful shall shortly meet together in bliss around the Redeemer's throne, and spend a happy eternity in his unceasing praises. (3.) This reviving hope is the comfort and support of the Christian, living and dying.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

The apostle having spoken in the end of the foregoing chapter concerning the resurrection, and the second coming of Christ, he

proceeds to speak concerning the uselessness of inquiring after the particular time of Christ's coming, which would be sudden and terrible to the wicked, but comfortable to the saints, ver. 1—5. *He then exhorts them to the duties of watchfulness, sobriety, and the exercise of faith, hope, and love,* ver. 6—10. *In the next words he exhorts them to several duties they owed to others, or to one another,* ver. 11—15. *And afterwards to several other Christian duties of great importance,* ver. 16—22. *And then concludes this epistle,* ver. 23—28.

1. BUT [a] of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2. For yourselves know perfectly that [b] the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3. [c] For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5. [d] Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

a Mat. 24. 3, 36. Acts 1. 7. ch. 4. 9.

b Luke 12. 39. & 21. 34. Mark 13. 34. Mat. 24. 42—44. & 25. 13. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 3. 3. & 16. 15.

c Is. 13. 8. & 21. 4. Jer. 13. 21. Hos. 13. 13. Rev. 18. 7, 8 Luke 17. 27. & 21. 34, 35. 2 Thes. 1. 9.

d Acts 26. 18. Eph. 1. 18. & 3. 17—19. & 5. 8. Col. 1. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Luke 16. 8. Phil. 1. 7. & 2. 15. Rom. 13. 12, 14.

Verses 1—5. Having mentioned the second advent of the Lord Jesus, he bids them prepare for it.

1. Respecting the precise time of his coming, it is left in an awful uncertainty, that we might be always ready. *But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you: for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night,* so suddenly and unexpectedly. *Note,* It is a needless curiosity to desire precisely to know the hour of Christ's coming; but a most needful piece of wisdom to be always ready for his appearing.

2. His coming will be the terror and surprise of an ungodly world. *For when they,* who are secure in their sins, *shall say, Peace and safety,* promising themselves long years of sinful pleasures and indulgences, *then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. Note,* When the day of the Lord comes, it will spread a terrible alarm through a world that lieth in wickedness, and then the ungodly and the sinner will in vain cry to rocks and mountains to cover their guilty heads.

3. This will be a day of light and triumph to the people of God. *But ye, brethren, are not in darkness,* sleeping in sinful and sensual security, but brought into the marvellous light of the gospel; and therefore need not fear *that the day should overtake you as a thief,* and find you unprepared. *Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day,* walking under the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness towards the kingdom of eternal glory: *we are not of the night nor of darkness,* in heathen ignorance, and under the blindness of the natural mind; but tread the shining path of truth, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the Son of man. *Note,* It is an unspeakable blessing to be delivered from the darkness of the fallen heart, and walking in the light of life, to have ever in our view the bright crown of righteousness which fadeth not away. Then we can say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

6. [e] Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober. 7. For [f] they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, [g] putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet [h] the hope of salvation. 9. For [i] God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10. [k] Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 11. [l] Wherefore * comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

e Mat 25. 5, 13. & 24. 42. 44. Luke 21. 34, 36. 1 Cor. 14. 34. Rom. 13. 11—14. Eph. 5. 14—17. Tit. 2. 11—14. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28. Phil. 4. 5. Jam. 5. 8. 1 Pet. 4. 7. & 5. 8, 9.

f Prov. 1. 6, 9—11. 1 Cor. 15. 34. Rom. 13. 13. Acts 2. 15.

g Is. 59. 17. Rom. 13. 12. Eph. 6. 11, 13, 14, 17. 2 Cor. 6. 7.

h Ps. 43. 5. & 42. 11. Rom. 8. 24. & 5. 4, 5. 2 Thes. 2. 16. Gal. 5. 5. Heb. 6. 19. 1 John 3. 1—3.

i Jude 4. 1 Pet. 2. 8. Rom. 9. 11, 22, 23. 2 Thes. 2. 13, 14. 2 Tim. 2. 19, 20.

k Mat. 20. 28. John 10. 10, 15. Rom. 14. 8, 9. 2 Cor. 5. 15, 21.

l Ch. 4. 10, 18. Jude 20. 1 Cor. 14. 26. Rom. 14. 19.

* Or *exhort.*

Verses 6—11. On the foregoing considerations the apostle grounds his exhortations to the practice of several necessary duties.

1. *Therefore let us not sleep as do others,* in carelessness about these eternal concerns, trifling away the precious moment of opportunity; *but let us watch* and pray, awake to the great affairs of our immortal souls, and ever listening when the sound, *Behold he cometh, Go ye out to meet him,* shall reach our ears. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. *And,*

2. *Be sober,* temperate in the use of all God's creatures, neither overcharged with surfeiting or drunkenness, nor with the cares or pleasures of this life. *For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night,* and seek the darkness to hide their guilty heads, stupifying their consciences till the dreadful hour shall startle them into sensibility. *But let us who are of the day,* and walk in the light of truth, *be sober* (νηφωμεν) and vigilant, not intoxicated with any earthly pursuits or enjoyments, but seeking in the first place the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

3. We must be armed, as well as on our guard; *putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation;* these being the cardinal graces, by which the soul, like a warrior completely clad in armour, is able to resist every attack of the enemy, unhurt amidst all the fiery darts which sin and Satan can hurl against us. *Note,* (1.) We have mighty foes to grapple with, and need be well armed against them. (2.) Where faith is grounded on Christ, love in lively exercise, and hope with piercing eye looking up to eternal things, then none of our enemies can hurt us, nor will any of the snares of this world be able to prevail to draw our affections off from God and the things which are above.

4. He encourages them, from past experience, with confidence still to trust in the Lord. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath; but,* as is evident from his grace which we have already received, hath predestinated us *to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us,* and thereby secured our eternal redemption; *that, whether we wake or sleep,* are numbered among the living or among the dead, at the day of his appearing, *we should* then *live together with him* in glory everlasting. *Wherefore comfort yourselves together,* or *exhort and edify one another, even as also ye do;* nothing affording such animating ground of hope, and serving to quicken the soul in all holy walking before God, as these blessed prospects and expectations. *Note,* (1.) Our salvation in Jesus Christ is firmly secured; and the more we are enabled to exercise confidence in him, the more steadily shall we bear up under all opposition. (2.) Christians should delight in exhorting, comforting, and edifying one another; and nothing can afford them more abundant matter than the expected coming of their Lord.

12. And we beseech you, brethren, [m] to

m 1 Cor. 16. 18. Phil. 2. 20. Gal. 6. 6. 1 Cor. 9. 11, 14. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. Heb. 13. 7, 17.

know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13. And [n] to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* [o] be at peace among yourselves. 14. Now we † exhort you, brethren, [p] warn them that are ‡ unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*. 15. [q] See that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but [r] ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

n 1 Cor. 4. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Mat. 10. 40. Gal. 4. 14.
o John 14. 27. Mark 9. 50. Rom. 14. 19. 2 Cor. 13. 11.
† Or *beseech*.
p Rom. 14. 1. & 15. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 6. 6. Gal. 6. 1, 2. Eph. 4. 2. Col. 3. 12—16. & 1. 28. 2 Thes. 3. 11, 12. Heb. 12. 12.
‡ Or *disorderly*.
q Lev. 19. 18. Prov. 17. 13. & 20. 21. & 24. 29. Mat. 5. 39, 44, 45. Rom. 12. 17—21. 1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Pet. 3. 9. & 2. 21, 23.
r Gal. 6. 10. ch. 3. 12. Phil. 4. 8. Heb. 13. 16, 18.

Verses 12—15. The apostle passes on to other needful exhortations.

1. He enjoins them to respect and honour their ministers. *And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord,* presiding in your worshipping assemblies, *and admonish* and instruct *you* in the good ways of the Lord, *and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Note,* (1.) The duty of ministers is to *labour* with zeal and diligence for the good of their people's souls, to be *over them,* watching for their good as the shepherd tends his flock, with a constant eye to the great Shepherd who hath committed this trust to them; and to *admonish* them publicly and privately, without partiality, instructing them in all God's holy will. (2.) The duty of people to their ministers is to *love* them, to *esteem them highly* for their work's sake, to *know* and acknowledge them, with thankfulness for their labours, and serious attention to their advice.

2. He exhorts them to the discharge of those duties, which, as Christians, they owed each other.

(1.) *Be at peace among yourselves,* cultivating that mutual harmony and love with each other, and your ministers, which, as a church, will most especially tend to your establishment.

(2.) *Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly,* reprove them for their disorderly walk, and threaten them with the church's censures if they amend not their ways; *comfort the feeble minded,* whose hearts are ready to sink under their trials, and are dejected with temptation or affliction, encourage them to bear up, and suggest every reviving motive to cheer their drooping spirits; *support the weak,* whose attainments are low in grace and knowledge, and are therefore more easily offended; we should therefore bear with their infirmities, and endeavour to strengthen their faith; *be patient toward all men,* put up with every affront or provocation, forbearing, and forgiving one another in love, and still waiting and hoping for their amendment.

3. *See that none render evil for evil unto any man,* in look, in word, or deed, *but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men;* do good to their bodies and souls, and be ready to every work and labour of love.

s Mat. 5. 12. Luke 10. 20. Rom. 12. 12. 2 Cor. 2. 14. & 6. 10. Phil. 2. 18. & 3. 1. & 4. 4. 1 Pet. 4. 13. Jam. 1. 2. Rom. 5. 2, 11. Ps. 149. 1, 2.
t Luke 18. 1—7. & 21. 36. Rom. 12. 12. Acts 10. 2. & 12. 5. Eph. 6. 18. Col. 4. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 3. with Exod. 30 8.
u Eph. 5. 4, 20. Col. 3. 15, 17. Heb. 13. 15. Job 1. 21. Ps. 34. 1.
x 1 Cor. 12. 3—13. Eph. 4. 30. 1 Tim. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 6.
y 1 Cor. 14. 1, 39.
z 1 Cor. 2. 11, 15. & 11. 2. & 12. 10. & 14. 29. 1 John 4. 1. Is. 8. 20. Acts 17. 11. 2 Thes. 2. 15.
a Rev. 3. 11. Heb. 4. 14. & 10. 23. Phil. 1. 27. & 3. 16. 1 Cor. 15. 58.
b Exod. 23. 7. Eph. 5. 7, 11. Ps. 1. 1. & 16. 4. Jude 23. Phil. 4. 8. Rom. 13. 13. ch. 4. 12.

16. [s] Rejoice evermore. 17. [t] Pray without ceasing. 18. [u] In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 19. [x] Quench not the Spirit. 20. [y] Despise not prophesyings. 21. [z] Prove all things; [a] hold fast that which is good. 22. [b] Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Verses 16—22. We have here divers short and weighty exhortations.

1. *Rejoice evermore* in God as your Portion, in Christ as your Redeemer, in the Spirit as your Comforter; in one another, in all holy ordinances, and under every tribulation.

2. *Pray without ceasing;* be daily and often employed in this blessed work, in private in your families, or among the faithful, *Note,* To live without prayer, is the sure proof of an unregenerate heart.

3. *In every thing give thanks,* under every dispensation of Providence, not only for mercies received, but also under every affliction, maintaining still a cheerful spirit; *for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you,* and the constant, grateful returns we owe for the rich redemption which we have obtained in his dear Son.

4. *Quench not the Spirit,* by indulging any evil temper in your heart, or allowed sin in your conduct; resisting his gracious motions, or neglecting those means of grace wherein his divine influences are communicated to you.

5. *Despise not prophesyings,* or *prophecies,* which still contain much useful matter, and should be constantly read and regarded; and attend upon the ministrations of the word.

6. *Prove all things,* and try, by the gospel test, every doctrine which is advanced, that you may not be a prey to deceivers: *hold fast that which is good,* unmoved by seducers among yourselves, or the persecutions of your enemies from without.

7. *Abstain from all appearance of evil,* dreading sin in its most distant approaches, and avoiding whatever may have a tendency to lead you into evil, under however innocent a guise it may present itself unto.

23. And the very [c] God of peace [d] sanctify you wholly: and *I pray God* [e] your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24. [f] Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it.* 25. [g] Brethren, pray for us. 26. [h] Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. 27. I ‖ charge you by the Lord [i] that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. 28. [k] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

c Rom. 15. 33. & 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 4. 9. Heb. 13. 20. 2 Thes. 3. 16.
d Lev. 20. 8. John 17. 17.
e 1 Cor. 1. 8. Phil. 1. 6, 10. Col. 1. 22. ch. 3. 13. Eph. 5. 26, 27. Jude 24.
f 1 Cor. 1. 9. & 10. 13. 2 Thes. 3. 3. Tit. 1. 2. Heb. 6. 17, 18. Num. 23. 19.
g Col. 4. 3. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Rom. 15. 30. Eph. 6. 19, 20.
h Rom. 16. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 14.
‖ Or *adjure.*
i Col. 4. 16.
k Rom. 16. 20, 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18. Eph. 6. 24. Phil. 4. 23. 2 Thes. 3. 18. Heb. 13. 25. Rev. 22. 21.

Verses 23—28. The apostle concludes,

1. With his prayers for them. *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly;* may he, who is the author and giver of peace to your consciences, and who unites you together in this happy bond, may he cleanse you from all iniquity, and perfect you in holiness: *and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body,* in every member and every faculty, *be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Note,* (1.) Prayer is the great means of sanctification. (2.) He who hath called us to his kingdom and glory, must preserve and keep us for himself, for of ourselves we have no strength.

2. He expresses his confidence in God's promises and protection. *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it;* he never hath, never can fail those that trust him, and from his faithfulness we derive our fidelity.

3. He entreats an interest in their prayers. *Brethren, pray for us.* The greatest ministers need the prayers of all their people, and the more they are mindful of them at a throne of grace, the more good will they receive from their ministrations.

4. He adds his salutation. *Greet all the brethren with an holy*

kiss. Let every member of the church be assured of my most cordial and affectionate regards.

5. He adjures them solemnly to read this epistle to the whole church. *I charge you by the Lord,* in his name, *that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. Note,* (1.) All Christians are bound to read the Scriptures diligently; nor can there be a stronger mark of Antichrist, than the keeping these sacred records sealed up in an unknown tongue. (2.) That public worship is very defective, where the Scriptures are not read in the congregation.

6. He closes with his usual benediction. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.* May the sovereign, boundless, and everlasting favour of the adored Jesus, be your portion now and for ever. *Amen!*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

Introduction.

THIS Second Epistle was written soon after the former, and seems to be designed to prevent their running into a mistake, which might arise from some passages in the former Epistle, concerning the second coming of Christ; as if it were near at hand. The apostle in this Epistle is careful to prevent any wrong use some among them might make of those expressions of his, that were agreeable to the dialect of the prophets of the Old Testament; and informeth them, that there were many intermediate counsels yet to be fulfilled before that day of the Lord shall come, though, because it is sure, he had spoken of it as near. There are other things he writeth about for their consolation under sufferings, and exhortation and direction in duty.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

After the introduction, ver. 1, 2. *the apostle begins this epistle with an account of his high esteem for these Thessalonians,* ver. 3, 4. *He then comforteth them under their afflictions and persecutions,* ver. 5—10. *And tells them what his prayers were to God for them,* ver. 11, 12.

1. [a] PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2. [b] Grace unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3. [c] We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; 4. So that we ourselves [d] glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: 5. [e] *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted [f] worthy of the kingdom of God, [g] for which ye also suffer: 6. [h] Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7. And to you who are troubled [i] rest with us, when the Lord Jesus [k] shall be revealed from heaven with * his mighty angels, 8. [l] In flaming fire, † taking vengeance on them that [m] know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9.

a See 1 Thes. 1. 1. Acts 13. 9. & 15. 22. & 18. 1. & 17. 1—10. John 14. 23. & 17. 21—23. 1 John 1. 3. & 4. 8, 16.
b Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. Gal. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 2.
c Rom. 1. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 4, 15, 16. Phil. 1. 3—7. Col. 1. 3—8. 1 Thes. 1. 2, 3. & 3. 6, 7. & 4. 9. ch. 2. 13. Mat. 13. 23. Ps. 84. 7. Prov. 4. 18. Is. 40. 29—31. 2 Pet. 1. 4—8. & 3. 18. ch. 5. 5. Job 17. 9.
d 2 Cor. 1. 14. & 9. 2. 1 Thes. 2. 14, 19. & 1. 3, 10. & 3. 4, 7.
e Phil. 1. 28. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 18. ver. 6.
f Eph. 4. 1, 13. Col. 1. 10, 12, 22. 1 Thes. 5. 23. Rev. 3. 4. ver. 11.
g 1 Thes. 2. 14. Acts 14. 22. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 12. John 16. 33.
h Rev. 6. 10. & 16. 5—7. & 19. 2. & 18. 20. Deut. 32. 43. Zech. 2. 8.
i Mat. 5. 11. & 25. 34. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. & 5. 10. Heb. 4. 9. Luke 16. 25.
k 1 Thes. 4. 16. Mat. 24. 30. & 25. 31. Jude 14. Rev. 20. 11, 12.

* Gr. *the angels of his power.* 1 Ps. 50. 3. Deut. 32. 22. Nah. 1. 2, 6. Rom. 2. 8, 9. 2 Pet. 3. 7, 10, 12. Jude 15. Rev. 1. 7.
† Or *yielding.* l Is. 27. 11. Hos. 4. 6. Ps. 92. 6, 7. 9. 1 Thes. 4. 5. Eph. 2. 12. Gal. 4. 8. Prov. 29. 18. John 3. 18, 36. Heb. 2. 3. & 10. 29. & 12. 25, 29. Rom. 2. 8.

n Ps. 79. 6 Mat. 25. 41, 46. & 3. 12. & 13. 41, 42, 49, 50. 1 Jo. 3. 14. & 2. 19. & 66. 24. Mark 9. 43—48. Rom. 2. 8, 9. Jude 6, 7. Rev. 14. 10, 11. & 20. 10, 14, 15.

n Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

o Acts 1. 11. & 3. 19, 20. Ps. 89. 7. & 68. 34. 1 Thes. 1. 10. & 4. 16. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

10. When he shall come ° to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you ᵖ was believed) in that day.

p Ch. 2. 13. ver. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13.

Verses 1—10. The apostle joins the same persons in the inscription of this epistle with himself as in the former. *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians, in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1. He expresses his thankfulness to God on their behalf. *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet,* and gratefully to acknowledge his blessings and mercies, especially those spiritual blessings, which he hath so richly bestowed upon you, *because that your faith groweth exceedingly,* in fuller discoveries of the gospel, and more unshaken confidence in the promises, as it is evident in all the blessed fruits of grace and holiness which flourish among you, *and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth,* the sure proof of your faith unfeigned. *Note,* (1.) Faith, as well as every other grace, is at present imperfect; and they who are most advanced, have need to pray, *increase our faith.* (2.) Where true faith is, every other grace must follow, for it worketh by love.

2. Their eminence in grace gave him occasion to boast of them to other churches. *So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God;* as for your other gifts and graces, so especially *for your patience and faith in all your persecutions, and tribulations, that ye endure,* with holy intrepidity, unshaken perseverance, and calm submission, bearing up under every trial. *Note,* The commendation of good men should be a powerful encouragement to us abidingly to approve our fidelity in the cause of Christ.

3. Their sufferings would soon end in eternal rest, and the authors of them suffer condign vengeance, *which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God,* who will soon make his impartial justice to appear, and even now it is your honour, and wisely ordered by him, that such tribulation should befall you, *that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer,* conformed thus to your head, and made meet to reign with him: *seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you,* who shall shortly feel the arm of an avenging Judge; *but to you who are troubled, rest with us,* even the present rest in God, into which they who believe do now enter, and soon that eternal rest will come, which remaineth for the people of God, *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,* in all the pomp of tremendous majesty; *in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;* whether idolatrous Gentiles, or unbelieving Jews, or impenitent sinners of every kind, *who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;* driven into eternal banishment from his blissful abode, and suffering in body and soul the vengeance of eternal fire: *when,* in that happy day for his redeemed, *he shall come to be glorified in his saints,* whose perfect salvation shall then be accomplished; *and to be admired in all them that believe,* being henceforward the subject of their everlasting adoration, love, and praise; *because our testimony among you was believed,* and you will reap the blessed fruits of your faith, *in that* great *day. Note,* (1.) There is a day at hand, when the persecutors and the persecuted will have impartial justice done them at the bar of God. (2.) The prospect of that tribunal should comfort us under all the unjust reproaches, revilings, and tribulations which we now endure. (3.) The appearing of the Lord will be terrible to the ungodly and the sinner, whose neglect of God and his gospel will then be avenged; when wrath to the uttermost shall overtake them, and, driven with confusion from the presence of an angry Judge, the jaws of hell shall yawn to receive them; and deep ingulphed in everlasting burnings, they shall sink and never rise up again. (4.) Christ will be the eternal object of his people's admiration; and whilst with wonder they trace from first to last the amazing dispensation of his grace, their hearts will glow with rapture, and their tongues be filled with never-ending praise.

q 1 Thes. 1. 2. & 3. 10. Col. 1. 3, 9—12. 22. Phil. 1. 4, 8—11. Eph. 1. 16—19. & 3. 14—19. 1 Thes. 5. 23, 24. 1 Pet. 1. 3—7. 2 Pet. 1. 2.

11. Wherefore also ᵠ we pray always for you, that our God would ‡ count you ʳ worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the ˢ good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the ᵗ work of faith with power: 12. ᵘ That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

‡ Or *vouchsafe.*

r See ver. 5. Eph. 4. 1. Col. 1. 12. Rev. 3. 4. 2 Pet. 1. 4—10.

s Eph. 1. 4—12. & 2. 7, 8. Rom. 5. 20, 21. Tit. 3. 5—7. Zech. 4. 7.

t Eph. 1. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 2. 13. Col. 2. 12. John 6. 29. 1 Thes. 1. 3, 5. 14. ver. 10. John 17. 10, 21—24, 26.

u 1 Pet. 1. 7. & 4.

Verses 11, 12. In the prospect of this day the apostle redoubled his supplication for them. *Wherefore also we pray always for you.*

1. *That our God,* in whose favour and love we have the most assured interest, *would count you worthy of this calling;* enabling you to walk as becomes your vocation, and bring you to the possession of the glory he hath promised, *and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness,* accomplishing the purposes of his sovereign grace towards you, carrying on and completing in you the salvation which he hath begun; *and the work of faith with power,* strengthening this radical grace, that all the rest may flourish with greater vigour. *Note,* (1.) All our worthiness comes from God's good pleasure, who hath chosen, called, and led us hitherto; and to his sovereign grace we must be alike indebted for all that is yet to come, that we are enabled in faith to persevere, and shall reach at last the heavenly hill. (2.) If our faith be wrought of God with power, then shall we never fail.

2. He prays, *That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you,* by your exemplary conduct and conversation, *and ye in him,* as now united to him by faith, and soon to rise and reign with him eternally; *according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,* which he hath bestowed on you for this great end, that his own glorious name might be for ever exalted, and all the praise of the sinner's salvation be ascribed to him alone.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

The apostle is very careful to hinder the spreading of an error which some among them had fallen into, concerning the coming of Christ, as being very near, ver. 1—3. *Then he proceedeth to confute this error he cautioned them against, by telling them of two great events that were antecedent to the coming of Christ,* viz. *A general apostasy, and the revelation of Antichrist, concerning whom the apostle tells them many remarkable things about his name, his character, his rise, his fall, his reign, and the sin and ruin of his subjects,* ver. 3—12. *He then comforts them against the terror of this apostasy, and exhorts them to steadfastness,* ver. 13—15. *And concludeth with a prayer for them,* ver. 16, 17.

1. NOW ᵃ we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,

a Rom. 12. 1. 2 Cor. 10. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 1. 1 Tim. 6. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 3. 13. & 4. 16, 17. Mat. 25. 31—34. & 24. 30, 31.

and *by* our gathering together unto him,
2. [b] That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3. [c] Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come [d] a falling away first, and that [e] man of sin be revealed, the [f] son of perdition; 4. Who opposeth and [g] exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5. [h] Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6. And now ye know what * withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7. For the [i] mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way: 8. And then shall that [k] Wicked be revealed, [l] whom the Lord shall consume [m] with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9. *Even him*, whose coming is [n] after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, 10. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in [o] them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11. [p] And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12. [q] That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

b Jer. 29. 8. Mat. 24. 4. Col. 1. 24. & 2. 8, 18. ch. 3. 14. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 John 4. 1. Mic. 2. 11. 1 Thes. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 4. 7, 8.
c Mat. 24. 4, 23. Jer. 29. 8. Eph. 5. 6.
d Dan. 7. 8, 20—25. & 11. 36—39. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5. & 4. 3, 4. 1 John 2. 18. Rev. 9. 1—11. & xiii.
e Ver. 8—10. 1 John 2. 18. Rev. 13. 5, 6, 11, 12, 14. Dan. 7. 25.
f Rev. 9. 11. & 13. 10. & 17. 2, 6, 8. & 19. 20. John 17. 12.
g Dan. 11. 36, 37. & 7. 8, 25. Rev. 13. 6—8. with 1 Cor. 8. 5.
h Ver. 15. Rev. 3. 3. 1 Thes. 2. 11. Col. 1. 28. Acts 20. 31.
* Or *holdeth*.
i Rev. 17. 5. Acts 20. 29. 1 John 2. 18. & 4. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 12. & 3. 3. 3 John 9. Rom. 16. 3. Col. 2. 18—24.
k Ver. 3, 4. Rev. 9. 1—11. & xiii. Dan. 7. 8, 20—25. & 11. 36—39. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5. & 4. 3, 4.
l Dan. 7. 10, 11, 22, 26. & 11. 45. 2 Tim. 3. 9. Rev. 12. 5, 13, 18. & 13. 10. & 14. 6—20. & 15. 6—8. & xvi. & 17. 14, 16. & 18. 2—24. & 19. 2, 20, 21. & 20. 10.
m Is. 11. 4. Hos. 6. 5. Rev. 2. 16. & 19. 15, 20, 21. Job 4. 9.
n Deut. 13. 1. Mat. 24. 24. John 8. 44. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Eph. 2. 2. Rev. 13. 13, 14. & 19. 20.
o Rev. 13. 8. & 17. 8. 2 Cor. 2. 15. & 4. 3. Ps. 109. 17.
p Ps. 81. 11, 12. & 109. 17. Prov. 1. 29. 1 Kin. 22. 22. Is. 44. 10. & 66. 4. Ezek. 14. 9. Mat. 24. 5, 11, 24. 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2. Rev. 9. 8, 10. & 13. 2—8, 11—16.
q Rom. 1. 32. Ps. 9. 17. Mark 16. 16.

Verses 1—12. An error of a dangerous tendency had, it seems, crept into the church of the Thessalonians, that the coming of Christ to judge the world should be in their days. Whether this arose from their mistake of what the apostle had mentioned in his former epistle, or was broached by some who vouched his authority to support what they advanced; he sets himself to confute the assertion, and to rectify their judgment in this matter.

1. He solemnly warns them not to be troubled with needless fears and apprehensions. *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him;* by all the hopes you entertain of meeting him with joy in that day, I adjure you, *that ye be not soon shaken in mind,* from the gospel which ye have embraced, and tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; *nor be troubled* by any assertions which may be advanced, or misconstructions which may arise; *neither by spirit,* by those who pretend to speak under divine inspiration; *nor by word,* however confidently any may advance this notion; *nor by letter, as from us,* either counterfeiting our hand, or perverting our meaning; *as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means:* the consequence of such a persuasion would be very dangerous; and when you found yourselves disappointed of your vainly raised expectations, it might shake your faith in the truth of the whole gospel revelation. *Note,* (1.) One way in which the arch-deceiver strikes at the faith of God's elect, is by endeavouring through his emissaries, pretending to revelation, or a knowledge of the prophetic word, to raise groundless hopes in their minds, and from the disappointment of them to suggest, that the whole may be a delusion. (2.) Though we cannot fix the time of Christ's coming, yet nothing is more certain, than that he that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry: may we without fear or dismay be ready to meet him. (3.) However dispersed God's people now may be in different regions, and living in different ages, they shall one day be gathered together around the throne of Jesus, and so shall be ever with the Lord.

2. He confutes the error which was broached, by showing, that many events, which would require much time to fulfil them, must precede the second coming of Christ.

(1.) There must be first a general apostasy. *For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first,* from the doctrines of the gospel, and the practice of godliness, which shall usher in the reign of Antichrist.

(2.) The rise of the antichristian power is described, ver. 3—10. To whom what is here spoken belongs, hath been matter of much dispute: I cannot but own, with the best Protestant commentators, my full conviction, that the Popish hierarchy is the subject of this prophecy; wherein we have,

[1.] *The names* of this person, or rather state, here spoken of. *The man of sin, the son of perdition, that wicked one;* which do not point out any individual, but a succession of men, carrying on the same destructive designs; whose wicked practices and horrid delusions will be the cause of perdition to multitudes, who will perish with them.

[2.] When *that man of sin* is *revealed, the son of perdition,* he may be known by these characters. *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;* assuming all power in heaven and in earth; undertaking to enact laws contrary to God's word and will; and setting up himself above kings and emperors, yea, and above the angels too, who are called gods in Scripture; *so that he as God,* arrogating divine perfections, *sitteth in the temple of God,* the church, where he hath erected his unhallowed throne; *showing himself that he is God;* assuming the blasphemous titles of, *our God the pope, God upon earth,* &c. usurping divine authority over the bodies and consciences of men; pretending to pardon sin by his own power; and speaking great swelling words of blasphemy. *Remember ye not,* says the apostle, *that when I was yet with you, I told you these things.*

[3.] His *rise* is pointed out. *And now ye know,* if you reflect upon what I told you formerly, *what withholdeth,* that the man of sin doth not immediately appear, even the power of the heathen Roman emperors. During their rule, the bishops of Rome were prevented from rising above their fellows; but this empire would in process of time moulder away, *that he may be revealed in his time;* when God, according to his own decrees, should permit the antichristian power to rear its head. *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work,* and the seeds of pride, dissension, and worldly ambition, have begun to be sown: *but he that letteth,* the Roman emperors, *will let, until he be taken out of the way,* their power declining, and the seat of empire being removed from Rome; *and then shall that Wicked be revealed,* and the mystery of iniquity, and the tyranny of the popish power, arrive at their height.

[4.] His ruin is as certain as his rise. *Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming;* raising up a noble army of preachers, who by the word of truth, accompanied with the Spirit's power

shall cut in sunder the fetters wherewith superstition hath enslaved the minds of men; and as the kingdom of Antichrist shall be overturned hereby, so shall he and all his followers at last perish in the lake of fire.

[5.] The way in which this wicked one shall maintain his usurped dominion is described. *Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders;* with all satanical influence and wiles, pretending to work miracles in support of his cause, *and* by a system of frauds deluding the nations of the earth, *with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish,* deceiving the souls of men to their eternal ruin; *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,* but turned aside to error, and chose their own delusions. *And for this cause,* in just judgment upon them, *God shall send them strong delusion;* abandoning them to their own hearts, and giving them up to judicial blindness; *that they should believe a lie;* all those absurd legends, forgeries, and falsehoods, with which the church of Rome abounds; *that they all might be damned who believe not the truth,* rejecting Christ and his gospel, *but had pleasure in unrighteousness,* delighting in their errors, superstitions, and bloody persecutions, to fill up the measure of their iniquities. *Note,* It is just in God to abandon obstinate sinners to their own delusions, and leave them to the damnation which themselves have chosen.

13. But [r] we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14. Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the [s] glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15. Therefore, brethren, [t] stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. 16. [u] Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* [x] everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, 17. [y] Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

r Ch. 1. 3, 4. Eph. 1. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 2—4.
s Eph. 1. 14. John 10 28. 1 John 2. 25. John 17. 24. & 14. 2, 3. Rev. 3. 21. Rom. 8. 17.
t 1 Cor. 16. 13. Phil. 4. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 2. ch. 3 6, 14. Prov. 23. 23. Jude 3. Rev. 3. 11. & 2. 10.
u Ch. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Jer. 31. 2. 1 John 4. 9, 10, 19. John 16. 27. & 3. 16.
x Ps. 103. 17. Heb. 9. 12. & 13. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Heb. 6. 18, 19. 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. & 5. 1.
y Is. 40. 1, 2. & 41. 10, 14. & 46. 4. & 51. 3, 12. & 54. 10. & 57. 18, 19. & 58. 11. & 60. 19, 20. & 61. 2, 10. & 66. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 3—6. 1 Cor. 1. 8. 1 Thes. 3. 13.

Verses 13—17. The apostle,

1. Expresses his thankfulness to God for his electing love. *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because* it is evident, from your whole conduct and conversation, that *God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation;* having predestinated you, before the worlds were, to an eternity of blessedness, as elect vessels, separated by his sovereign grace from the corrupted mass of mankind: and, as the means of accomplishing the purposes of his eternal counsels, hath, *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth,* begun to prepare you for the inheritance to which he hath appointed you: *whereunto he* also *called you by our gospel,* the happy instrument of your conversion, *to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ,* which he hath procured for his people, and freely bestows upon them, according to the riches of his grace. *Note,* (1.) God hath a people whom he hath chosen from the beginning unto salvation, and men, nor devils, nor sin, shall be able to frustrate the designs of his grace towards them. (2.) Wherever the Lord chooses a soul for glory, he inseparably annexes the means to the end; calling them by his gospel to faith and holiness, and working both in their hearts. It would be the most absurd presumption to fancy we are the elect, if we cannot feel and demonstrate the work of the Spirit of faith and santification in our hearts and lives.

2. He exhorts them to be faithful. *Therefore, brethren,* in the assured prospect of success, *stand fast;* God's election of you should be the quickening and encouraging motive to make your own calling and election sure; *and hold the traditions which ye have been taught,* the doctrines which we, your faithful ministers, have delivered to you, as received from Christ; *whether by word,* in our public preaching or private discourse; *or* by *our epistle,* lately sent to you. *Note,* God's word is our only rule of duty; thereunto we must cleave.

3. He closes with a fervent prayer for them. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father,* who alike are the objects of our worship, and are one in the glory of the same undivided Godhead: *who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation,* the foretastes of those joys that shall hereafter be uninterrupted and eternal: *and good hope through grace,* built on the substantial foundation of his unchangeable word; *comfort your hearts* with a clearer knowledge of your invaluable privileges, and a brighter manifestation of his love to your souls amidst all your trials and sufferings; *and stablish you in every good word and work,* that you may approve yourselves faithful, and unto death persevere immoveably in the doctrine and practice of the blessed gospel. *Note,* (1.) God's everlasting love is the fountain of all our blessedness. (2.) Though our consolations may now be at times interrupted by the manifold temptations to which we are exposed, in eternity they will flow with an unceasing stream like a river. (3.) Good hope is still a sure anchor of the soul, when great joy may be withdrawn; and all is *through grace,* not for our desert, but according to the multitude of God's mercies. (4.) It is the Lord's work to comfort and stablish our hearts; and whilst we are waiting upon him, we shall assuredly renew our strength.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 54.

In the close of the foregoing chapter the apostle had prayed earnestly for the Thessalonians, and now he desireth their prayers, encouraging them to trust in God, to which he subjoins another petition for them, ver. 1—5. *He then proceedeth to give them commands and directions, for the correcting some things he was informed were amiss among them,* ver. 6—15. *And concludeth with benedictions and prayers,* ver. 16—18.

1. FINALLY, brethren, [a] pray for us, [b] that the word of the Lord * may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you: 2. And that [c] we may be delivered from † unreasonable and wicked men: for [d] all *men* have not faith. 3. But the Lord is [e] faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil. 4. And [f] we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. 5. And [g] the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and [h] into ‡ the patient waiting for Christ.

a 1 Thes. 5. 25. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Col. 4. 3. Rom. 15. 30. Mat. 9. 38.
b Acts 6. 7. & 13. 49. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Tit. 2. 10—14. 1 Thes. 1. 5.
* Gr. *may run.*
c Rom. 15. 31. 1 Thes. 2. 18.
† Gr. *absurd.*
d Rom. 10. 16. Mat. 11. 25. John 6. 44. Acts 2. 40. & 13. 45. 50. & 17. 5, 13, & 28. 24. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
e Num. 23. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 9. & 10. 13. 1 Thes. 3. 5, 23, 24. & 3. 3, 13. John 17. 15. 2 Tim. 4. 18.
f 2 Cor. 7. 16. Gal. 5. 10. 1 Thes. 4. 10. & 5. 11. ch. 2. 15. ver. 6, 11. Rom. 2. 7. Gal. 6 9.
g 1 Chr. 29. 18. Jude 21. 1 John 4. 16, 19. Mat. 22. 37. 1 Thes. 4. 1, 3, 9.
h 1 Thes. 3. 5. & 1. 3, 10. Tit. 2. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28. 2 Pet. 3. 12.
‡ Or *the patience of Christ.*

Verses 1—5. The apostle here draws to a conclusion, and,

1. Entreats their prayers. *Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course,* and spread with increasing success, *and be glorified, even as it is with you,* in the

mighty effects produced by our ministration of it; *and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men,* hardened in pride and prejudice against the truth: who use every violent effort to oppose its progress, and silence the ministers of the gospel; *for all men have not faith;* but even among professors of Christianity we often meet with the greatest opposers, and are in most danger from these false brethren. *Note,* (1.) The success of his labours lies nearest the heart of every gospel minister. (2.) All who have tasted of the grace of God in truth, are bound in ceaseless prayer to beg that the same word which they have received, may, in defiance of all opposition, run and be glorified, to the conviction of sinners, the confusion of gainsayers, and the edification of the faithful. (3.) Unreasonable and wicked men abound in every age: and they who, though professors of Christianity, are themselves destitute of divine faith, cannot but now, as then, testify the same enmity against the zealous preachers of the gospel.

2. He expresses his confidence in them. *But the Lord is faithful who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil;* whatever wiles seducers may employ, or however severely you may be exposed to the enmity of persecutors, the Lord will never fail you, and his grace shall make you more than conquerors. *And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do, and will do the things which we command you,* in his name, and by his authority. *Note,* (1.) Our great encouragement is God's fidelity to his promises: he will not fail us, and therefore we cannot fail him. (2.) If the Lord did not keep us, we should not for a moment be able to keep ourselves; but when we have him at our right hand, neither the evil of sin shall prevail against us, nor the evil of suffering discourage us.

3. He adds a short prayer for them, containing two important requests. *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God,* turning your affections from every crooked path, and directly leading you to his blessed self, and to that happiness which is to be enjoyed in a sense of his present and everlasting love to your souls; *and into the patient waiting for Christ;* enabling you with cheerfulness and submission to take up the cross, and to look for the coming of your Lord, when there shall be an end put to all your sufferings for ever.

i 1 Cor. 5. 4. Acts 3. 6. ver. 6.

k Ver. 11, 14, 15. Rom. 16. 17. 2 Tim. 3. 5. 1 Thes. 5. 14. & 4. 11. Tit. 3. 10. 2 John 8. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11, 13.

l 1 Cor. 4. 16. & 11. 1. 1 Thes. 1. 6. & 2. 10. & 4. 11.

m Acts 18. 3. & 20. 34. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 9. & 12. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 9.

n Mat. 10. 10. 1 Cor. 9. 1—6, 14. Gal. 6. 6. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18.

o 1 Cor. 4. 16. & 11. 1. Phil. 3. 17. 1 Tim. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 3.

p Gen. 3. 19. 1 Thes. 4. 11.

q 1 Tim. 5. 13. ver. 6. Is. 56. 10. Mat. 20. 3, 6. 1 Pet. 4. 15.

r Ver. 6. Rom. 12. 1. 2 Cor. 10. 1. ch. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 21. & 6. 13, 14. 2 Tim. 4. 1.

s 1 Thes. 4. 11. Eph. 4. 28. Rom. 12. 11.

6. Now we command you, brethren, [i] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye [k] withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. 7. For yourselves know how [l] ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; 8. Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but [m] wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: 9. [n] Not because we have not power, but [o] to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. 10. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, [p] that if any would not work, neither should he eat. 11. For we hear that there are some which [q] walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies. 12. Now them that are such [r] we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, [s] that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. 13. But ye, [t] brethren, [r] ‖ be not weary in well-doing. 14. And if any man obey not our word ‖ Or *faint not.* * by this epistle, [u] note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. 15. [x] Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

* Or *signify that man by an epistle.*

t Gal. 6. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Pet. 3. 18. & 1. 4—8. Prov. 4. 18.

u Ver. 6. Mat. 18. 17.

x Lev. 19. 17. 2 Cor. 10. 8. & 13. 10. 1 Thes. 5. 14.

Verses 6—15. Though the apostle had so highly commended them, and expressed his confidence in them in general, yet there were some among them who needed sharp rebuke; and indeed in this imperfect state of things, no absolutely perfect and pure society of men is to be expected.

1. He warns them to avoid the company of such as walked disorderly among them, whose ill characters he here describes. *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,* and by the apostolic power committed to us, *that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that* pretends to be a Christian, but *walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us,* being a disgrace and a dishonour to his profession. *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us,* and remember the practice we recommended to you, and the example which we set before you; *for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you, neither did we eat any man's bread for nought,* without paying for it; *but wrought with labour and travail night and day,* to earn our maintenance, *that we might not be chargeable to any of you,* and might preach the gospel freely, without putting you to the least expense. *Not because we have not power* to demand our subsistence, as due to our ministerial labours: *but* we rather chose to wave our right, *to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us,* encouraging industry, and discountenancing idleness. *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat,* nor receive any relief from the church, whose charity should be applied, not to the maintenance of the slothful, but to the support of the sick, infirm, and those who through age or accident are disabled from providing for themselves. *For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but* depending on others for relief, and *are busy-bodies,* tattling from house to house, prying into the secrets of families, blowing up the coals of dissension, and the very pests of society. *Note,* (1.) When we can appeal to our people for the exemplariness of our own conversation, and for the conformity of our practice to our preaching, we may command and exhort them to their duty with confidence. (2.) Sloth and indolence are most opposite to the spirit of Christianity; and though men may plead they do no harm, yet if they neglect the duty of their calling and stations, God will reckon with them as with disorderly walkers. (3.) Idleness opens a door to every evil; and they who choose not to do their own work, the devil will find them employ.

2. He addresses himself with authority to these disorderly walkers. *Now them that are such, we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ,* by every endearing argument which his love can suggest, or the dread of his displeasure urge, *that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread;* peaceably minding their own affairs with diligence, and providing for themselves and families a becoming maintenance from the produce of their honest industry.

3. He directs the faithful and industrious how they should behave. *But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing,* but with diligence discharge the labours of your calling; and if you have more than your own necessities require, there are many deserving objects who crave your charity. *And if any man* among you *obey not our word by this epistle,* and change not his ways, *note that man, and have no company with him;* permit him not to

be your intimate, nor admit him to the table of the Lord; *that*, by your just censure of his conduct, *he may be ashamed*, and brought to repentance and amendment. *Yet count him not as an enemy* at once, and deal roughly, *but admonish him as a brother*, that, if it please the Lord, he may yet be reclaimed, and not be finally ruined. *Note*, (1.) We must not only walk orderly ourselves, but show our disapprobation of those who behave dishonourable to their profession. (2.) Before more heavy censures are pronounced, every kind admonition must be attempted. Love will often shame those into ingenuous acknowledgments, that severity would but have exasperated and hardened.

16. Now [y] The Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all. 17. The salutation of Paul [z] with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. 18. [a] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

y Rom. 15. 33. & 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 4. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 23. Num. 6. 24—26. Ps. 29. 11. & 147. 14. Rom. 5. 1—11. & 8. 28. John 16. 33 2 Cor. 4. 17.
z 1 Cor. 16. 21. Col. 4. 18. with ch. 2. 18. Rom. 16. 22.
a See 1 Thes. 5. 28. Rev. 22. 21.

Verses 16—18. The apostle concludes with,

1. His prayer for them. *Now the Lord of peace himself*, who purchased it by his blood, and by his Spirit seals it to the hearts of his people, *give you peace always by all means;* meeting you in the use of every instituted ordinance; filling you with a comfortable sense of his reconciliation to you; and giving you a happy union and harmony among each other. *The Lord be with you all;* may his presence and blessing be ever in the midst of you; and where he manifests himself, there heaven is already begun in the soul.

2. His subscription. *The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle*, of its genuineness, to prevent the forgeries of seducers: *so I write*, in the close of every letter, when my amanuensis hath finished.

3. The benediction. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all;* may you share all the present and eternal blessedness included in his sovereign grace and love! *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO

TIMOTHY.

Introduction.

HITHERTO Paul's epistles were directed to churches, now follow some to particular persons: two to Timothy, one to Titus, and another to Philemon; all three ministers: Timothy and Titus were Evangelists, an inferior order to the Apostles, as appears by that, Eph. iv. 11. *Some prophets, some apostles, some evangelists.* Their commission and work was much the same with that of the apostles, to plant churches, and water the churches that were planted. Timothy was first converted by Paul, and therefore he calls him his *own son in the faith;* we read of his conversion, Acts xvi. 23.

The scope of these two Epistles is to direct Timothy how to discharge his office as an evangelist at Ephesus, where he now was, and where Paul ordered him for some time to reside, to perfect the good work which he had begun there.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

After the inscription in ver. 1, 2. *we have*, 1. *The charge given to Timothy*, ver. 3, 4. 2. *The true end of the law*, ver. 5—11. *where he shows it is entirely agreeable to the gospel.* 3. *He mentions his own call to be an apostle; for which he expresses his thankfulness*, ver. 12—16. 5. *His doxology*, ver. 17. 6. *A renewal of the charge to Timothy*, ver. 18. *And of Hymeneus and Alexander*, ver. 19, 20.

1. [a] PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God [b] our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, [c] *which is* our hope; 2. Unto [d] Timothy, *my* own son in the faith: [e] Grace, mercy, *and*

a Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2. & 22. 21. & 26. 16—18. see Rom. 1. 1, 5. Gal. 1. 1. Eph. 4. 11.
b Ch. 2. 3. & 4. 10. Luke 1. 47. Tit. 1. 3. & 2. 10, 13. & 3. 4. Jude 25. Deut. 32. 15. 1 Sam. 6. 1. Is. 12. 2. & 1. 15, 17, 22.
c Ps. 71. 5. Col. 1. 27. 1 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Thes. 2. 16 Heb. 6. 18, 19.
d Acts 16. 1. 1 Cor. 4. 17. 1 Thes. 3. 2. ch. 1. 18. Tit. 4. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. & 2. 1. Philem. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Phil. 2. 19, 22.
e See Rom. 3. 7. 2 Cor. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 2.

peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord. 3. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, [f] when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, 4. [g] Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith; *so do.*

f Acts 20. 1, 3. Gal. 1. 6, 7. ch. 6. 3, 17, 20. Col. 2. 4, 16. ch 4. 1, 6, 11. & 5. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 14. & 4. 2. Tit. 1. 13.

g Ch. 4. 7. & 6. 4, 20. 2 Tim. 2. 16, 23. Tit. 1. 14. & 3. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 16.

Verses 1—4. We have here,

1. The apostolical inscription. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ* the true Messiah, *by the* express *commandment of God* appointed to this office, who is *our Saviour*, having in his eternal mind designed the glorious plan of our redemption; *and* of *our Lord Jesus Christ*, one with the Father in glory and authority; *and who is* emphatically our hope, all our expectations in time and eternity resting upon his finished salvation; *unto Timothy my own son in the faith*, begotten by me in the gospel, is this epistle sent.

2. His salutation. *Grace, mercy, and peace*, be with you, *from God our Father*, in whose love we have a common interest; *and Jesus Christ our Lord*, who bought us with his blood, called us to the obedience of the faith, and, as his more immediate servants, put us in trust with his gospel.

3. He reminds him of the design he had in leaving him at Ephesus, and exhorts him to be faithful to his charge. *As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some, that they teach no other doctrine;* even those Judaizing teachers, who would corrupt the simplicity of the gospel: be faithful to thy trust, and warn the people to beware of these seducers; *neither* to *give heed to fables*, their absurd traditions, *and endless genealogies;* affecting to trace up their descent from Abraham and the patriarchs, and valuing themselves highly on such an ancestor; *which minister questions*, and endless disputes, *rather than godly edifying, which is in faith. Note*, (1.) Unedifying disputes about unessential matters have the most pernicious tendency to destroy vital religion. (2.) There can be no true godliness, but what springs from faith as its principle. (3.) Ministers must watch over the flock, and guard them from the inroads of error, as well as impiety. (4.) Broachers of new doctrines, contrary to the fundamental articles of faith, should receive from the bishops of the church deserved rebuke.

5. [h] Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and *of* a good conscience, and *of* faith unfeigned: 6. From which some having swerved, [i] have turned aside unto vain jangling; 7. [k] Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. 8. But we know that [l] the law *is* good, if a man use it lawfully; 9. Knowing this, that [m] the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the [n] lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10. [o] For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is [p] contrary to sound doctrine; 11. According to the [q] glorious gospel of the [r] blessed God, [s] which was committed to my trust.

h Mat. 22. 37—40. Rom. 10. 8—14. Gal. 5. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 3. Heb. 9. 14. & 10. 22. Gal. 5. 6. Acts 24. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 22. 1 John 3. 18, 23. & 4. 20.

i Ch. 4. 2. & 5. 15. & 6. 4, 10, 20. 2 Tim. 2. 18. & 4. 4. Tit. 1. 10, 14.

k Gal. 4. 21. ch. 6. 4. Rom. 2. 19, 20.

l Rom. 7. 12. Ps. 119. 128. & 19. 7—10. Gal. 4. 24.

m Gal. 3. 19. & 5. 23. Rom. 13. 3.

n 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Hos. 4. 1, 2. Rev. 21. 8. & 22. 15.

o Heb. 13. 4. Rom. 1. 26, 27. Lev. 18. 22. Exod. 21. 10. Deut. 24. 7. Rev. 21. 8, 27. & 22. 15. Zech. 5. 4. Hos. 4. 1, 2. & 10. 4.

p Ch. 6. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 13. & 4. 3. Tit. 1. 9. & 2. 1.

q 2 Cor. 3. 7—11. Ps. 138. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 6, 15. Eph. 1. 6, 12, 14. Phil. 1. 11.

r Ch. 6. 15. 2 Cor. 11. 31. Rom. 1. 25. & 9. 5. Neh. 9. 5.

s 1 Thes. 2. 2, 4. Gal. 2. 7. ch. 2. 7. Tit. 1. 3. Rom. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 18—20. Eph. 3. 8.

Verses 5—11. Having repeated the charge before given to Timothy, concerning the deluding teachers, he here,

1. Directs him what end he should aim at, the preservation of the church's peace. *Now the end of the commandment* (either of the moral law, or of the charge which the apostle had given him) *is* to promote *charity*, or love towards God and man, flowing *out of a pure heart*, sanctified by the blessed Spirit, *and of a good conscience*, purged from dead works by the blood of sprinkling, *and of faith unfeigned*, the radical grace, from whence love and every other divine temper springs: *from* all *which some having swerved*, and wandering wide of the mark, *have turned aside unto vain jangling*, trifling questions, and idle disputes; *desiring to be teachers of the law;* setting up for great wisdom, as interpreters of it, and zealous to urge its observation upon the Gentiles as necessary to salvation; *understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm;* real strangers to its spiritual nature, use, and design. *Note*, (1.) Love in the heart is the great preservative from all disputes and dissensions. (2.) It is a sad consideration, when ignorant men intrude into the ministry, strangers to the oracles of God, and unacquainted with any of the truths themselves in which they pretend to instruct others.

2. The right use of the law is here declared. *But*, however abused it may be, *we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully*, and apply it to the purposes for which God gave it, to convince the conscience of sin; to be a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ; and, though ceasing to be a covenant of works, yet continuing to be a rule of duty, according to which God will proceed in his judgment at the last day. *Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man*, nor doth the damning sentence of it lie against any faithful soul, that is righteous in Christ Jesus; *but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane*, who with daring impenitence and wilful obstinacy transgress it, *for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine:* all which, and every other crime, the law condemns; and the judgment denounced by the law is *according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust;* there being the most perfect agreement in this respect between the law and the gospel, which condemns all ungodliness, and teaches us to live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present evil world. *Note*, The gospel is an awful glorious trust; and whilst we bless God for the honour he puts upon us in committing it to our charge, we need tremble for ourselves, lest we should be found unfaithful.

12. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, [t] who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13. Who [u] was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but [x] I obtained mercy, because [y] I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. 14. And the grace of our Lord was [z] exceeding abundant with [a] faith and love which is

t Acts 9. 21. 1 Cor. 7. 25. & 15. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 4. 1. 1 Thes. 2. 4. ch. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 17.

u Acts 8. 3. & 9. 1, 5, 13. & 22. 4. & 26. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6.

x Ver. 14, 16. 1 Cor. 15. 8, 10. Rom. 5. 20, 21.

y Luke 23. 34. John 9. 39, 41. Acts 3. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Mat. 12. 31.

z Rom. 5. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 10.

a 2 Tim. 1. 13. Gal. 5. 6. 1 John 4. 19. Luke 4. 47.

in Christ Jesus. 15. This *is* a [b] faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that [c] Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; [d] of whom I am chief. 16. Howbeit, for this cause [e] I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, [f] for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. 17. [g] Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

b Ch. 3. 1. & 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Tit. 3. 2, 8.
c Mat. 9. 13. & 18. 11. Luke 19. 10. Rom. 3. 24—26. & 5. 6—10. 1 John 3. 5, 8. John 1. 29, 36. Mat. 1. 21. & 20. 28.
d 1 Cor. 15. 9. Eph. 3. 8.
e Ver. 13. Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. Jer. 31. 20.
f Acts 13. 39. Heb. 7. 25. John 6. 37.
g Is. 1. 18. & 55. 1, 7.
g 1 Chr. 29. 11. Ps. 10. 16. & 145. 3. Dan. 7. 9, 14.
i John 4. 12. John 1. 18. Heb. 11. 27. Rom. 1. 23. & 16. 27. ch. 6. 16. Jude 25.

Verses 12—17. The apostle with deep gratitude acknowledges the distinguishing favour shown him of God, not only in calling him to the knowledge of his grace, but in putting him intrust with the gospel, and qualifying him for the discharge of it. *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. Note,* (1.) None are Christ's ministers, but those whom he puts into their office. (2.) Whom he calls, he will qualify for the discharge of their ministry. (3.) Want of ministerial abilities is a sure proof that men run unsent.

1. The apostle humbly owns the dreadful state out of which by divine grace he was called; *who was before a blasphemer* of Christ and his gospel, *and a persecutor* of his people, *and injurious,* branding the Christian name with every malignant aspersion. *Note,* (1.) The depth of our guilt serves to magnify but the more the riches of divine grace in our pardon and salvation. (2.) True converts are ever ready to take shame to themselves, and own their former abominations with deep regret.

2. God hath mercy on him. *But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief;* which he mentions not as an extenuation of his guilt, but to show the state of rooted prejudice, and hardened unbelief, in which the Lord found him; *and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant,* beyond all conception wonderful, that it should be extended to such a wretch as me: *with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus,* and which in the richest measure the Lord was pleased to bestow upon my soul. So that from the happiest experience I can now declare, that *this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief:* none therefore, after the mercy which I have received, need despair. *Howbeit,* notwithstanding my enormous guilt, *for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first,* or *the chief* of sinners, *Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting;* encouraging the vilest to hope and return to him, as being still willing and able to save to the uttermost. *Note,* (1.) Unbelief is at the bottom of every evil. (2.) The chief of sinners may be saved as freely as the least; those only perish who will not come to Christ that they may have life. (3.) They who are discouraged under a sense of the greatness of their sins, should remember those who have already found mercy, and from the deepest crimes have risen to the greatest heights of grace; witness David, Manasseh, Peter, and this apostle. (4.) All who by faith lay hold on Jesus Christ, have everlasting life, and shall never more enter into condemnation.

3. He ascribes praise to God for all the rich grace which he had experienced. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God!* to Jesus, who in the highest possesses every divine attribute and perfection, *be honour and glory for ever. Amen. Note,* They who are sensible of their infinite obligation to Christ, will be ceaseless in their grateful acknowledgment to the Author of all their mercies.

18. [h] This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19. [i] Holding faith and a good conscience; [k] which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck; 20. [l] Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander: whom I have [m] delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

h Ver. 3, 19. ch. 4. 14. & 6. 12, 13. 2 Tim. 2. 3. & 4. 1, 7. Philem. 1. Phil. 2. 25. Eph. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 10. 3—5. Gal. 4. 24.
i Ch. 3 9 Phil. 1. 27. & 3. 16. & 4. 1. Jude 1. Prov. 23. 23. Rev. 2. 13. & 3. 3, 8, 10, 11. Tit. 1. 9.
k Phil. 3. 18, 19. see ver. 4, 6. ch. 6. 3—6. 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. Acts 20. 29. 1 John 2. 19.
l 2 Tim. 2. 17. & 4. 14, 15. Acts 19. 33.
m 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. & 4. 21. & 11. 32. 2 Cor. 10. 6. & 13. 7, 10. Mat. 18. 17.

Verses 18—20. The apostle repeats his charge to Timothy, mentioned ver. 3—5. *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee,* and marked thee out as appointed of God for signal service, *that,* remembering these things, *thou* mightest be quickened to correspond therewith, and *by them mightest war a good warfare;* as a faithful soldier of Christ, manfully fighting under his banner against sin and error; *holding faith,* firmly attached to the purity of the gospel doctrines, *and* maintaining *a good conscience,* void of offence towards God and man; *which some having put away,* rejected and thrust from them, *concerning faith have made shipwreck,* and apostatized from the fair profession which they once made; *of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander,* those notorious heretics, *whom I have delivered unto Satan;* by my apostolic power assigning them over to that tormentor, to inflict upon them severe chastisement; *that they may learn not to blaspheme,* and that by their sufferings they may be brought to a conviction of their sins; or, at least, so terrified, as not to dare any longer to persist in their horrid blasphemies. *Note,* (1.) We are now engaged in a dangerous warfare, and the ministers of Christ especially will meet with the strongest opposition. We have need therefore to hold fast by him who is our strength, that we may stand in the evil day. (2.) None usually turn out so dreadfully, and become such horrid blasphemers, as those who apostatize from the profession of religion which once they made.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

In this chapter St Paul treats, 1. *Of prayer, with many reasons for it,* ver. 1—8. 2. *Of women's apparel,* ver. 9, 10. 3. *Of their subjection, with the reasons of it,* ver. 11—14. 4. *A promise given for their encouragement in childbearing,* ver. 15.

1. I * EXHORT therefore, that, first of all, [a] supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2. For kings, and *for* all that are in †authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life [b] in all godliness and honesty. 3. [c] For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of [d] God our Saviour; 4. [e] Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 5. For *there is* [f] one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6. [g] Who gave himself a ransom for all, [h] to be testified

* Or *desire.*
a Jam. 5. 16. Ps. 122. 6—9. Jer. 29. 7. Ezra 6. 10.
† Or *eminent place.*
b Acts 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Luke 1. 6. 1 Thes. 2. 10. Tit. 2. 10—14. & 3. 8. 14. Rom. 12. 10—21. & 13. 1—14. Eph. iv—vi. Col. iii, iv. 1 Thes. v. 1 Pet. ii, iii.
c Eph. 4. 1. & 5. 9, 10. Col. 1. 10, 22. Phil. 1. 11. & 4. 8, 18. Heb. 13. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 20. ch. 5. 4. 1 Thes. 4. 1, 3, 7.
d Ch. 1. 1. & 4. 10. Luke 1. 47. Tit. 1. 3. & 2. 10, 13. & 3. 4. Jude 25. Deut. 32. 15. 1 Sam. 2. 1. Is. 12. 2. & 45. 17, 22.
e Is. 55. 1, 7. Ezek. 18. 23. John 3. 16. Tit. 2. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Rom. 3. 29, 30. Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. Mal. 1. 11.
f Deut. 6. 4. Is. 44. 6. John 17. 3. Rom. 3. 29, 30. & 10. 12. 1 Cor. 8. 6. Gal. 3. 20. Heb. 9. 15. & 8. 6. with Job 9 33.
g Mat. 20. 28. John 10. 15. Mark 14. 24. Is. 53. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15, 21. Eph. 5. 2. & 1. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 18. Rev. 5. 9. Heb. 9. 12. Tit. 2. 14. Heb. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18.
i John 2. 1, 2. & 4. 10.
h Or a *testimony.* 1 Cor. i. 6.

i Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. & 3. 5. Rom. 16. 26. Col. 1. 26. 2 Tim. 1. 11.

k See Rom. 1. 1, 5. & 11. 13. & 15. 16, 19. Acts 9. 15. & 13. 2, 3. & 22. 21. & 26. 16—18. Gal. 1. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 11. Eph. 3. 8.

l Rom. 1. 9. & 9. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 18, 23. & 11. 11, 31. Gal. 1. 20. 2 Thes. 2. 5, 10.

m Ps. 65. 2. Mal. 1. 11. John 4. 1—24.

n Ps. 134. 1. Is. 1. 15. Mat. 5. 24. & 16. 12, 14, 15. Phil. 2. 14. Jam. 1. 6. Heb. 11. 15.

in [i] due time. 7. [k] Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, ([l] I speak the truth in Christ, *and* lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. 8. I will therefore that [m] men pray every where, [n] lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Verses 1—8. The apostle exhorts,

1. That *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made*, in the church for all ranks and conditions of men; particularly *for kings*, and *for all that are in authority*, the inferior magistrates: *that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life*, protected from all violence and injuries; and *in all godliness and honesty*, approving our unfeigned piety to God, and our unimpeached integrity towards men.

2. He suggests the strongest reasons to support his exhortations. *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour who*, enjoins universal charity, and *will have all men to be saved;* some of all nations, ranks, and conditions, Gentiles as well as Jews, high and low, rich and poor; *and*, in order thereunto, hath sent out his gospel *to* call them, that they may *come to the knowledge of the truth*, by the faith of which alone salvation can be obtained. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;* who, though very God, hath taken our nature into personal union with himself, and in his glorified body stands as the alone Mediator before the throne, to make the persons, prayers, and services of his people accepted. *Who gave himself a ransom for all*, paying down the price of our redemption in the drops of his own most precious blood, and thereby making a full satisfaction to divine justice for sinners of every condition and degree, as was foretold by the prophets, and *to be testified in due time* to all nations. *Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle*, by a divine commission, (*I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not*, as the heart-searching God doth bear me witness) *a teacher of the Gentiles*, to whom especially I am sent, *in faith and verity*, to bring them to the true faith of Christ, and this office I labour to discharge with all simplicity and faithfulness. *Note*, (1.) It is God's will that we should pray for others as well as for ourselves. (2.) Our encouragement to draw near to a throne of grace is this, that we have one Mediator there, who ever liveth to make intercession for us. (3.) Since Jesus hath paid, and God hath accepted the ransom, all that plead it have a right to the eternal redemption thereby obtained. (4.) None can be saved but by coming to the knowledge of the truth: where Christ is not preached, there can be no hope, for there is salvation in no other. (5.) It is an inestimable blessing to enjoy the light of the gospel, and to sit under their ministry who preach it in faith and verity.

3. He directs them how to pray. *I will therefore that men*, who bear the Christian name, *pray every where:* not confined to any particular place, since God is alike present in all; in the closet, in the family, as well as in the great congregation; only when we draw near to him if we would obtain acceptance, we must be found, *lifting up holy hands*, not polluted with allowed sin, but washed in atoning blood, *without wrath and doubting*, since harboured malice, unbelieving distrust of God, and a contentious spirit, must necessarily destroy all the efficacy of prayer.

o Tit. 2. 3, 5. 1 Pet. 3. 3—5. Is. 3. 16—26. Zeph. 1. 8.

‡ Or *plaited.*

9. In like manner also, that [o] women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with ‡ broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; 10. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with [p] good works. 11. [q] Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13. [r] For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14. [s] And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. 15. [t] Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.

p Prov. 31. 31. Luke 1. 6. Acts 9. 36. ch. 5. 10.

q 1 Cor. 14. 30. Gen. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 22, 24, 33. Col. 3. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 1, 4.

r Gen. 1. 27. & 2. 7, 18, 22. 1 Cor. 11. 8, 9.

s Gen. 3. 6, 13. 2 Cor. 11. 3.

t Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. Jer. 31. 22. Mat. 1. 25. Luke 2. 7. Gal. 4. 4, 5. or ch. 4. 3. & 5. 10, 14. Tit. 2. 5. with Gen. 3. 16.

Verses 9—15. The apostle here directs how women professing godliness should behave.

1. With modesty. *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamfacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.* What a contrast to this description are our manners! yet the truly gracious woman will still think modesty her brightest ornament; and when fashion imposes aught that is fantastical, extravagant, or immodest, will dare to disobey.

2. *Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection:* not presuming to be speakers in the house of God, *but* hearers: for *I suffer not a woman to teach* in public, *nor to usurp authority over the man*, by that or any other instance of affected superiority; *but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve*, from his side, Gen. ii. 22. to denote her inferiority. *And Adam was not deceived* by the serpent, *but the woman being deceived was in the transgression;* and he, seduced by her, or out of fond affection, determined to die with her, wilfully followed her example. *Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-bearing*, amidst all the anguish which flows from the sentence pronounced on her, Gen. iii. 16. and through that child which is born of woman, the adored Immanuel, she shall obtain everlasting salvation; *if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety*, and prove themselves living members of Christ, in whom there is no difference between male or female, but both are alike called to partake of his grace and glory.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

In this chapter our apostle treats of church-officers. And, 1. *He gives us the qualifications of a person to be admitted to the office of a bishop*, ver. 1—7. 2. *Of the qualifications of deacons*, ver. 8—10. *And of their wives*, ver. 11. *And again of the deacons*, ver. 12, 13. 3. *Of the reasons of his writing to Timothy, whereupon he speaks of the church and the foundation truth professed therein*, ver. 14. *to the end.*

1. THIS [a] *is* a true saying, If a man desire [b] the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2. [c] A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, * of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3. [d] ‡ Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4. [e] One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house,

a Ch. 1. 15. & 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Tit. 1. 3, 8.

b Acts 1. 20. & 20. 28. Phil. 1. 1. ch. 1. 11, 12. 2 Tim. 1. 11. ch. 2. 2. 7. & 5. 17. 1 Pet 5. 2. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 28.

c Tit. 1. 6—9. 2 Tim. 2. 24. Rom. 12. 13. ch. 4. 12.

* Or *modest.*

d Tit. 1. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 2. Is. 56. 10—12. Mic. 3. 5. Lev. 10. 9. Jer. 6. 13. Tit. 3. 2 Ezek. 44. 21.

† Or *not ready to quarrel and offer wrong as one in wine.*

e Gen. 18. 19. Josh. 24. 15. Ps. 101. 2—8. Tit. 1. 6.

how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6. Not [f] a novice, lest, [g] being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7. Moreover, [h] he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

[f] Or *one newly come to the faith.* Num. 4. 3. 1 Sam. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 2. 2.
[g] Job 40. 11, 12. Prov. 18. 12. & 29. 23. Ps. 138. 6. with Jude 6. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Mat. 25. 41. Is. 14. 13.
[h] Acts 12. 12. & 6. 3. 1 Sam. 2. 24. 1 Cor. 5. 12. 1 Thes. 4. 12.

Verses 1—7. Timothy being left to preside over and regulate the affairs of the Ephesian church, the apostle gives him directions concerning those who should be ordained to ministerial offices among them.

This is a true saying, if a man, inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, *desireth the office of a bishop*, or overseer of the church of Christ, *he desireth a good work*; the post is most honourable and important, yet withal most laborious, and requires singular qualifications for the right discharge thereof. *A bishop then must* (1.) *Be blameless*; his morals irreproachable, and his character able to bear the nicest scrutiny. (2.) If he be not single, let him be *the husband of one wife*, that hath never given a divorce, in order to marry again, nor lives in polygamy. (3.) He must be *vigilant* over the souls committed to his care, and habitually resident among them. (4.) *Sober*, moderate in the use of every creature-comfort, and temperate in all things. (5.) *Of good behaviour*; courteous, engaging, prudent, edifying. (6.) *Given to hospitality*; ready to relieve strangers, and assist the necessitous. (7.) *Apt to teach*; furnished with Christian knowledge and experience, and possessing the faculty of communicating his sentiments with ease and propriety for the improvement of others. (8.) *Not given to wine*; not merely no drunkard, but never sitting long at the cups, or loving the glass. (9.) *No striker*; not passionate or quarrelsome. (10.) *Not greedy of filthy lucre*, and suspected of attachment to earthly gains and advantage; *but*, (11.) *Patient*; a pattern of meekness and long-suffering. (12.) *Not a brawler*; clamorous, contentious, and talkative; *nor* (13.) *Covetous*; seeking the fleece more than to feed the flock, and serving for hire, rather than for the love of men's souls. (14.) *One that ruleth well his own house*, with due discipline and authority; *having his children in subjection with all gravity: for if a man know not how to rule his own house*, and so to behave there as to preserve order and decorum, *how shall he take care of the church of God*, where so much more difficulty may be expected, and so much more prudence is necessary? (15.) *Not a novice*, and but lately acquainted with, and converted to, the faith of Christ; *lest being lifted up with pride*, thrusting himself arrogantly into an office for which he is not qualified, and ambitious of human honour, or popular applause, *he fall into the condemnation of the devil*, and sink the deeper from the height whereunto he affected to soar. (16.) *Moreover, he must have a good report of them who are without*; his conduct unsullied with any thing which would be an obstruction to his ministry; *lest he fall into reproach*, and grow contemptible, *and* into *the snare of the devil.*

Ere any man appears a candidate for the ministry, let him solemnly consider these things. It is not ease, or honour, or gain, or a genteel employment, that should lead us into the service: these are motives dishonourable, unhallowed, impious. Zeal for God, disinterested love of souls, must warm our bosoms, and unreserved devotedness of ourselves to Christ must mark each step. And *Who is sufficient for these things*, may we well say? The best qualified will be most conscious how short they come, and be looking constantly up to him who hath promised, *Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world*, Matt. xxviii. 20.

8. Likewise *must* [i] the deacons *be* grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9. [k] Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10. And let these also [l] first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless. 11. [m] Even so *must their* wives *be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12. Let the deacons be [n] the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13. [o] For they that have ‡ used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

[i] Phil. 1. 1. Acts 6. 3, 5, 6. see ver. 2, 3. Lev. 10. 9. Ezek. 44. 21.
[k] Ch. 1. 19. Tit. 1. 9. Rev. 3. 10, 11. Prov. 23. 23. Jude 1. 3. Phil. 1. 27. Heb. 4. 14. & 10. 22, 23. 2 John 4, 9, 10. 3 John 4.
[l] Ch. 5. 22. 1 John 4. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 2. Acts 6. 3.
[m] Ch. 5. 9. Rom. 16. 1. Tit. 2. 3, 4. ch. 2. 10.
[n] Ver. 2. Tit. 2. 6. Prov. 22. 6. Gen. 18. 19. Josh. 24. 15. Ps. ci.
[o] Rom. 12. 8. Mat. 25. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16.
‡ Or *ministered.*

Verses 8—13. We have,

1. The character of the deacons, whose office it was chiefly to take care of the outward matters of the church, assist the ministers, provide for the poor, and manage the public stock.

(1.) They must be *grave*, men of venerable deportment. (2.) *Not double-tongued*; warping the truth to please in different companies, and speaking with design or dissimulation. (3.) *Not given to much wine*, but persons of exemplary temperance. (4.) *Not greedy of filthy lucre*, lest they be tempted to embezzle the church's stock. (5.) *Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience*; cleaving steadily to the simplicity of the gospel doctrines, and adorning them by a becoming conversation. (6.) *And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless*; having undergone a proper examination, and being approved, let them be invested with their office. (7.) *Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife*, avoiding all divorce and polygamy; *ruling their children and their own houses well*; setting them a good example, and maintaining due order and regularity. *For they that have used the office of a deacon well*, with fidelity and diligence, true to the trust committed unto them, *purchase to themselves a good degree* of honour and respect in the church, *and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus*; God blessing such fidelity with an increase of grace, and greater openness and freedom in the profession of the gospel before men.

2. The character of the deacons' wives. *Even so must their wives be grave*, in manners, dress, speech, and deportment; *not slanderers*; speaking evil of persons behind their backs, and sowing discord in the church: *sober*, and free from excess: *faithful in all things*, that they may be a credit to their husbands, and adorn their station.

14. These things write I unto thee, [p] hoping to come unto thee shortly: 15. But, if I tarry long, [q] that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in [r] the house of God, which is the church [s] of the living God, the [t] pillar and ‖ ground of [u] the truth. 16. And, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was [x] manifest in the flesh, [y] justified in the spirit, [z] seen of angels, [a] preached unto the Gentiles, [b] believed on in the world, [c] received up into glory.

[p] Ch. 4. 13. 1 Cor. 11. 34. 2 John 12. 3 John 14. Phil. 1. 24.
[q] Mat. 24. 41. & 13. 52.
[r] 2 Tim. 2. 20. Heb 3. 2, 3, 5, 6. Mat. 16. 18.
[s] Jer 10. 10. 1 Thes. 1. 9.
[t] Is. 59. 19. & 2. 2, 3. & 43. 10, 21. Jude 3.
‖ Or *stay.*
[u] Ver. 16. Gal. 3. 1. ch. 4. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 13. John 18. 3.
[x] Is. 7. 14. & 9. 6. John 1. 14. Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 8. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 18.
[y] 2 Cor. 13. 4. Rom. 1. 4. John 16. 10.
[z] Mat. 4. 11. & 28. 2. John 20. 12. Ps. 68. 17. & 47. 5. Eph 3. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 12.
[a] Eph. 3. 5, 6. 8. Col. 1. 6, 23, 27. Rom. 10. 48.
[b] Col. 1. 6, 23 Rev. 7. 9
[c] Mark 16. 19. Ps. 110. 1. Heb. 1. 3. & 4. 14. & 8. 1.

Verses 14—16. Though he hoped to be with him at Ephesus shortly, yet, lest the Lord should call him elsewhere, he had sent the above directions. *These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long,* and arrive not so soon as I purpose, *I* have sent this epistle, *that thou mightest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth;* which last words some refer to the church, where the truth is held forth as an inscription written on a pillar, and maintained with all steadfastness: others to Timothy himself, who was a firm pillar in that church; but best of all, they may be referred to Christ himself, the living God abiding in his own temple, and its true foundation and support. *And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness,* especially in the following particulars; *God was manifest in the flesh,* and took our nature upon him. *Justified in the Spirit,* when by his resurrection he was declared free from every charge, and God's justice fully satisfied; *seen of angels,* when triumphant he ascended to the throne of majesty on high amidst their acclamations; *preached to the Gentiles,* as a Saviour to the uttermost, and freely inviting them to partake of all the blessings of his gospel: *believed on in the world,* both by Jews and Gentiles, notwithstanding the ignominy of his cross; *received up into glory* to possess the reward of his sufferings: or *gloriously received,* his gospel in the most astonishing manner spreading through the earth, and bringing vast multitudes of converts to the obedience of the faith. *Note,* (1.) The all-sufficiency of the atonement of Jesus depends upon the divine glory of his person. (2.) He who suffered on a cross was very God as well as very man. This is among the mysteries of godliness, where reason must bow down, and faith adore.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

St Paul here foretells, 1. *A dreadful apostasy,* ver. 1—3. 2. *He treats of Christian liberty,* ver. 4, 5. 3. *He gives Timothy divers directions with respect to himself, his doctrine, and the people under his care,* ver. 6. *to the end.*

1. NOW the Spirit [a] speaketh expressly, that in the latter times [b] some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2. [c] Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience [d] seared with a hot iron; 3. [e] Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from [f] meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 4. [g] For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5. [h] For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

a 2 Thes. 2. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5. 2 Pet. 3. 3. John 2. 18. Jude 18. Dan. 7. 8, 20, 24, 25. & 11. 36—39.
b Rev. 13. 3, 8. 1 John 2. 18. Jude 3, 4, 18. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 7, 9—11. Rev. 9. 2, 11. & 13. 5, 6, 13, 14. & 17. 5. & 18. 2.
c Rom. 16. 18. Eph. 4. 14. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 15, 18, 19. & 3. 2, 3, 17. Mat. 7. 15. ch. 5. 19. 2 Tim. 3. 5.
d Eph. 4. 19. Rom. 1. 28.
e Heb. 13. 4. 1 Cor. 7. 39.
f Gen. 1. 29, 30. & 9. 3. 1 Cor. 10. 30. Mat. 14. 19. Rom. 14. 6. ver. 4.
g Gen. 1. 31. Rom. 14. 14, 20. 1 Cor. 10. 25. Tit. 1. 15. Acts 10. 15.
h Ch. 6. 17. 1 Cor. 7.

Verses 1—5. We have here the prophecy of that dire apostasy from the faith, which was of old foretold, and which we have seen so strikingly and dreadfully verified in the corruptions of the church of Rome. *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly,* in the prophetic writings, and by us who write under his immediate inspiration, *that in the latter times* of the present dispensation, *some shall depart from the faith;* and the marks of this apostasy he describes,

1. The departure will arise from *giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils,* or demons, reviving the errors of paganism in the worship of angels, dead saints, yea, their very relics, and making these a kind of mediators between God and them.

2. *Speaking lies in hypocrisy;* pretending to great zeal for the church and religion, yet propagating the most damnable heresies, such as justification by works, the free-will of man to good, &c. and by false legends, and forged miracles, deceiving the souls of the ignorant: *having their consciences seared with a hot iron,* and sticking at no abominations which may contribute to advance their wicked ends; even consecrating regicide, dispensing with the most solemn oaths, and counting every species of barbarity lawful, yea, laudable, to be perpetrated on those who oppose their destructive ways: witness the blood of martyrs, that by popish cruelty hath dyed so plentifully this land.

3. *Forbidding to marry;* speaking dishonourably of the ordinance itself, encouraging celibacy, and forbidding marriage to their clergy, monks, and nuns, in direct contradiction to God's word.

4. Commanding *to abstain from meats,* under the hypocritical show of self-denial; forbidding flesh in Lent, and enjoining fish instead of other animal food, *which God hath created to be received,* and eaten at all times, without distinction of days and seasons, if it be used *with* moderation and *thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing,* proper for food, *to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified* for our use *by the word of God,* which declares there is nothing now common or unclean; *and* by *prayer* imploring his blessing, that we may use every creature-comfort to his glory. *Note,* Our common meals should be ever sanctified with devotion, and God's blessing be implored before we presume to use his gifts.

6. If [i] thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, [k] thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. 7. [l] But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness. 8. For bodily exercise profiteth [m] * little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, [n] having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 9. [o] This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation. 10. [p] For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we [q] trust in the living God, who is the [r] Saviour of all men, [s] especially of those that believe. 11. [t] These things command and teach. 12. [u] Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an * example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13. [y] Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 14. [z] Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15.

i Rom. 15. 15. 2 Tim. 1. 6. & 2. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13, 15. & 3. 1. Jude 5.
k 2 Tim. 2. 15. & 3. 10, 14—17. & 1. 13. Col. 3. 16. Jer. 15. 16. Ps. 119. 11, 18, 97—100. & 1. 2. 1 Cor. 1. 5.
l Ch. 1. 4. & 6. 20. 2 Tim. 2. 16, 23. & 4. 4. Tit. 1. 14. & 3. 9. 1 Cor. 9. 24. Acts 24. 16. Tit. 2. 11—13. & 3. 8, 14.
m Mat. 15. 8. Heb. 13. 9. Col. 2. 23. Is. 1. 11—15. Jer. 6. 20. Amos 5. 21, 22. 1 Cor. 8. 8. Mat. 6. 6, 7. & 7. 22, 23.
* Or *for a little time.*
n Deut. 28. 3—12. & 30. 9. Ps. 1. 3. & 37. 4, 29. & 84. 11. & 91. 10. & 37. 11. & 112. 2, 3. & 119. 16. & 128. 1. & 145. 19. Prov. 3. 16. & 8. 35. & 9. 11. Eccl. 8. 12. Is. 3. 10. & 32. 17. Mat. 6. 16, 33. & 19. 29. Rom. 8. 28. & 14. 17. 1 Cor. 3. 22. ch. 6. 6. Rev. 3. 12, 21.
o Ch. 1. 15. & 3. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Prov. 22. 20.
p 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. & 9. 26. 2 Cor. 4. 8—10. & 6. 1—10. 2 Tim. 3. 10, 11.
q Gal. 2. 16. Acts 15. 11. Prov. 3. 5, 6. Ps. 37. 3—7.
r Ps. 36. 6. & 107. 13—20. Acts 14. 17. & 17. 25, 28.
s Is. 45. 17, 22. 2 Cor. 5. 21.
t Ch. 6. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Tit. 2. 15. & 3. 8.
u 1 Cor. 16. 10, 11. Tit. 2. 15.
x Tit. 2. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 2. 1 Cor. 11. 1. 2 Cor. 6. 4—7. 1 Thes. 1. 6. & 2. 10. 2 Thes. 3. 7, 9.
y Ch. 3. 14. ver. 6, 15, 16. John 5. 39. 2 Tim. 2. 15. & 3. 15—17 & 4. 2.
z 2 Tim. 1. 6. ch. 1. 18. & 5. 22. Acts 6. 6. & 14. 23. & 13. 3. & 8. 17. & 19. 6.

a Ver. 13. Ps. 1. 2. & 105. 5. & 119. 97—99 Acts 6. 4.
b Mat. 5. 16. Phil. 2. 15, 16. ver. 11, 12.
† Or *in all things.*
c Acts 20. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Tit. 2. 7, 15. 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.
d Ezek. 33. 9. & 3 19, 21. Dan. 12. 3. 1 Cor. 9. 22, 27. Rom. 10. 10—17. & 11. 14. Jam. 5. 20. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20.

a Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; b that thy profiting may appear † to all. 16. c Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine: continue in them: for in doing this d thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.

Verses 6—16. We have here,

1. The apostle's encouraging exhortation. *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* Such fidelity to his trust would bring down the blessing of the Lord upon his soul, and prove his own abundant advantage. *Note,* Nothing is a greater means of edification to a minister's own soul, than his labours for the good of his brethren.

2. He quickens him to diligence in his Christian calling. *But refuse profane and old wives' fables,* the absurd genealogies and traditions of the Judaizing teachers; *and exercise thyself rather unto godliness;* strain every nerve to set forth the doctrines and duties of the gospel, and in thy own temper and conduct show thyself eminently exemplary. *For bodily exercise,* the most rigid observance of the externals of religion, *profiteth little; but godliness,* vital experimental religion, manifested in heart and life, *is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is,* in the sanctified and happy use of worldly comforts, *and of that which is to come,* where God hath prepared for those that love him such good things as pass man's understanding. *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation,* as a truth which will be proved infallibly certain by every real Christian, and none will ever have reason to repent a life of godliness. *For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach,* undismayed and unshaken, *because we trust in the living God, who* is able abundantly to fulfil his promises, and is *the Saviour of all men,* bestowing innumerable providential blessings upon them, and rescuing them from many miseries; but *especially of those that believe;* by his distinguishing grace and love bestowing upon them not only multiplied mercies in this world, but having purchased and secured for them an eternal salvation in heaven. *Note,* (1.) Though this world is not our home, nor our portion, yet, even here below, the truly godly are the most happy people. (2.) Christ hath a peculiar people, to whom he is in a special manner a Saviour, rescuing them from all spiritual evils, and bringing them to eternal blessedness.

3. He directs him particularly how to demean himself. *These things command and teach* with all authority. *Let no man despise thy youth,* nor give them any occasion to do so; *but* behave so as to engage and command reverence and respect: and *be thou an example of the believers, in word,* in all grave and edifying discourse, free from youthful levity; *in conversation,* strictly religious, and sincerely upright; *in charity,* fervent towards God, and the souls of men; *in spirit,* zealous for the cause of Jesus, and abounding in all the fruits of righteousness; *in faith,* unwavering, in profession bold; *in purity* of heart and conduct, without blemish or suspicion. *Till I come, give attendance to reading* the Scriptures in private, and in the congregation; *to exhortation,* bringing the word of God home to the consciences of the hearers, with warm application, for the conviction of some and the consolation and edification of others; *to doctrine,* clearly stating the great points of the Christian faith, and vindicating them from all opposers. *Neglect not the gift that is in thee,* but make the best improvement of the abilities with which God hath furnished you, and of the extraordinary gift *which was given thee by prophecy,* as some inspired men had foretold, *with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,* when you were ordained to the work of the ministry. *Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them,* with such evident devotedness of heart, such delight in the service, and such exemplariness of conduct, *that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed to thyself,* as a minister and a Christian, *and unto thy doctrine,* that it may exactly correspond with the gospel word; *for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. Note,* (1.) They who show themselves examples to the flock, and evidently prove that they believe and practise themselves what they preach to others, though young, will necessarily command respect and reverence; whilst grey hairs, dishonoured by an unbecoming conduct, will be justly despised. (2.) They who are to teach others, should be much in prayer and reading the Scriptures, that they may lay in a fund of useful knowledge, and be full of matter for their public ministrations. An idle minister must needs be an unprofitable preacher. (3.) They who have the charge of immortal souls should be wholly engrossed with this great concern, and give themselves up to their awful employment. (4.) It is our great encouragement to fidelity in the ministry, that not only our own soul shall be saved, but that we shall be made happily instrumental to the eternal salvation of others, who will be our joy and crown in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

Here the apostle directs Timothy, 1. *How to reprove,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Of widows, both elder and younger,* ver, 3—16. 3. *Of elders,* ver. 17—19. 4. *Of public reproof,* ver. 20. 5. *A solemn charge of ordination,* ver. 21, 22. 6. *Of his health,* ver. 23. *and of men's sins very different in their effects,* ver. 24, 25.

1. REBUKE a not an elder, but entreat *him* as a father; *and* the younger men as brethren; 2. The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, b with all purity.

a Lev. 19. 3, 32. ver. 19. 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25. & 4. 2. Mat. 18. 15—17. Gal. 6. 1, 2.
b Ch. 4. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 22. 2 Cor. 6. 6. 1 Thes. 5. 22. Phil. 4. 8.

Verses 1, 2. The apostle proceeds to give him farther directions concerning the needful, though less pleasing, work of rebuke. Ministers are reprovers by office, and must be faithful to this trust.

Rebuke not an elder, in years or office, if ought be found in him which demands censure, with a magisterial air, or unbecoming severity; *but,* with respect to his venerable years, *entreat him as a father* to remove the cause of offence; *and the younger men as brethren;* with all freedom, yet withal in love and meekness; *the elder women as mothers,* with due respect; *the younger as sisters, with all purity;* avoiding every thought, word, look, or gesture, that hath the most distant tendency to evil.

3. c Honour widows that are widows indeed. 4. But if any widow have children or * nephews, d let them learn first to shew † piety at home, and to requite their parents: e for it is good and acceptable before God. 5. f Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6. g But she that liveth ‡ in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7. h And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. 8. i But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own ‖ house, he

c Exod. 22. 22. Ps. 68. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 3. Acts 6. 1. ver. 4, 5. 10, 16.
* Or *grandchildren.*
d Gen. 45. 10, 11. & 47. 12. Mat. 15. 4. Eph. 6. 1, 2. Ruth 2. 18.
† Or *kindness.*
e Ch. 3. 13. Eph. 4. 1. & 5. 9, 10. Col. 1. 10. Phil. 4. 8, 18. Heb. 13. 16. & 6. 10.
f Luke 2. 36, 37. & 18. 1. 1 Cor. 7. 32. Eph. 6. 18. Acts 26. 7.
g Luke 16. 19. Mat. 8. 22. Rev. 3. 2. Jam. 5. 5.
‡ Or *delicately.*
h Ch. 1. 3. & 4. 11. & 6. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Tit. 2. 15. & 1. 15. ch. 4. 16. Jam. 1. 27.
i Is. 58. 7. Gal. 6. 10. 2 Cor. 12. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16. Luke 12. 47, 48. John 15. 22.
‖ Or *kindred.*

hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 9. Let not a widow be * taken into the number under threescore years old, [k] having been the wife of one man, 10. [l] Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have loved strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. 11. But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to [m] wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; 12. [n] Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. 13. And withal [o] they learn *to be* idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not. 14. I will therefore that the younger women [p] marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary † to speak reproachfully. 15. For some [q] are already turned aside after Satan. 16. [r] If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are [s] widows indeed.

* Or *chosen.*

k Ch. 3. 2, 12. Tit. 1. 6. Luke 2. 36.

l Acts 9. 39. ch. 3. 4, 7, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 9. Heb. 13. 2. Gen. 18. 4. & 19. 2. Luke 7. 38, 44. John 13. 5, 14. Acts 16. 15, 16. Rom. 12. 15. Phil. 4. 8. Luke 1. 6.

m Deut. 32. 15. Hos. 13. 6.

n Heb. 6. 4, 6. & 10. 26—31, 38. Rev. 2. 4.

o Tit. 2. 3, 5. Lev. 19. 16. Prov. 11. 13. & 20. 19. & 18. 8. & 26. 20, 22. Ezek. 22. 9. 2 Thes. 3. 10, 11, 14.

p 1 Cor. 7. 9. ver. 8. Eph. 6. 4. Tit. 2. 3.

† Gr. *for their waiting.*

q Phil. 2. 21. & 3. 17, 18. 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 3. 18. & 4. 10. Gal. 3. 1.

r Ver. 4. Gen. 45. 10, 11. & 47. 12. Mat. 15. 4. Eph. 6. 1, 2. Ruth 2. 18.

s See ver. 3, 5, 9, 10.

Verses 3—16. The apostle particularly directs Timothy how to behave in the case of widows who applied to be assisted out of the church's stock, and to be employed in pious offices under the direction of the deacons.

1. *Honour widows that are widows indeed,* really in distress, in need of assistance, and deserving to be placed on the church's list; and these he describes, ver. 7. *Now she that is a widow indeed, and is desolate,* without any friends to support her, *trusteth in God,* who is the friend of the friendless; and they who cast their care upon him shall not be destitute; *and* such a one *continueth in supplications and prayers night and day;* depending upon the Lord's providential help, and showing her undissembled piety. *But she that liveth in pleasure,* gaily, idly, and voluptuously, *is dead while she liveth;* dead to God and godliness, and in no wise to be received of the church, or supported from the common stock. *And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless,* and that no just offences may call for rebuke or censure. *Note,* A life of carnal pleasures is a state of real death; the soul there lies entombed in flesh, and such a person is really a living sepulchre.

2. If any widows have near relations capable of providing for them, the church ought not to be burdened with their maintenance. *If any widow have children or nephews,* or grand-children, *let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents,* by taking all care of them when labouring under age and infirmities; *for that is good and acceptable before God;* their bounden duty, and agreeable to his holy will. *But if any,* who make profession of the Christian name, refuse that assistance, which in such a case he is bound to afford, *and provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house,* his aged parents, next to his wife and children, claiming a title to a maintenance, as parts of that family which depend on him for a provision, *he hath denied the faith,* by such a conduct *and is worse than an infidel;* even the very heathen will rise up to condemn a conduct so base and unnatural. *Therefore, if any man or woman that believeth have widows,* mothers, or grandmothers, *let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may* have sufficiency to *relieve them that are widows indeed.*

3. He points out the age and qualifications of those who should be entered on the poor's list, or be taken into office and employed by the church under the deacons. *Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,* and never married to another after any divorce; *well reported of for good works* in her former better days; *if she have brought up children* in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; *if she have lodged strangers,* when brought by providence in her way; *if she have washed the saints' feet,* condescending to the lowest offices of charity; *if she have relieved the afflicted,* with her help, her counsel, and her substance; *if she have diligently followed every good work.*

4. *But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ,* as they may be in danger of doing, *they will* then *marry* improperly, perhaps wickedly, into some heathen family; *having* thus *damnation, because they have cast off their first faith,* and apostatized from the profession which they once made; *and withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house* in useless and impertinent visiting; *and not only idlers, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies,* officious and talkative, *speaking things which they ought not,* to the hurt of their neighbours' reputation, and to the disturbance of society.

17. [t] Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of [u] double honour, especially they who [x] labour in the word and doctrine. 18. For the scripture saith, [y] Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: and, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward. 19. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but ‡ before [z] two or three witnesses. 20. Them that sin [a] rebuke before all, that others also may fear. 21. [b] I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, [c] ‖without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. 22. [d] Lay hands [e] suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure. 23. [f] Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities. 24. [g] Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after. 25. [h] Likewise also the good works *of some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

t Rom. 15. 27. 1 Cor. 9. 14. Gal. 6. 6. Phil. 2. 29. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. Prov. 3. 9. Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Cor. 12. 28.

u Acts 28. 10. 2 Kin. 2. 9. Is. 40. 2. Jer. 16. 18. & 17. 18. Zech. 9. 12.

x Rom. 12. 6—8. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 14—17. Acts 6. 2, 4. 2 Tim. 4. 2. ch. 4. 16.

y Deut. 25. 4. 1 Cor. 9. 9. Mat. 10. 10. Lev. 19. 13. Deut. 24. 14, 15. Luke 10. 7.

‡ Or *under.*

z Mat. 18. 16. John 8. 17. 2 Cor. 13. 1. Heb. 10. 28. Deut. 17. 6. & 19. 15, 18.

a Gal. 2. 11, 14. Deut. 13. 11. Tit. 1. 13. & 2. 15. 2 Tim. 4. 2.

b Ch. 6. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 27. 2 Tim. 2. 14. & 4. 1. Gal. 1. 20. Phil. 1. 3.

c Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 17. 4. & 29. 18. Prov. 18. 5. 2 Thes. 2. 5.

‖ Or *without prejudice.*

d Acts 6. 6. & 13. 3. ch. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 6. & 2. 2.

e Ch. 3. 10. Josh. 9. 14. Eph. 5. 11. ch. 4. 12. 2 John 11.

f Ps. 104. 15. Eph. 5. 29.

g Acts 8. 18. & 1. 16, 17. Gal. 5. 19, 20. 22, 23. Phil. 4. 8. 1 Pet. 3. 8—16.

h Gal. 5.

Verses 17—25. The apostle here directs Timothy,

1. Concerning the proper maintenance of a gospel ministry. *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour,* highly esteemed and liberally provided for, *especially they who labour in the word and doctrine,* whose eminent zeal and diligence require a suitable acknowledgment; *for the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn;* but as he works

he shall be freely allowed to eat; *and* our Lord hath said, *The labourer is worthy of his reward. Note,* The work of the ministry is laborious; and well do they who discharge it with zeal and diligence deserve an honourable provision.

2. Concerning the accusation of an elder. *Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses* of character and credibility; and listen to no bare surmises or slanderous suggestions. *Them that sin* before all, being open, notorious, and scandalous offenders, *rebuke before all,* publicly and with sharpness, *that others also may fear,* respecting no man's rank or greatness. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,* the eternal Judge; *and the elect angels,* who are the spirits that minister to the heirs of salvation; *that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another,* not prejudging the cause through favour or affection; *doing nothing by partiality,* nor suffering any consideration to prejudice or bias your minds for or against any man, but deciding according to truth.

3. Concerning the ordination of ministers. *Lay hands suddenly on no man* to put him into the ministry, till he hath been thoroughly tried, and found faithful and able; *neither be partakers of other men's sins,* by conniving at the intrusion of unfit persons into the sacred office: *keep thyself pure* from the blood of all men, discountenancing all unbecoming behaviour, and in thy own conversation a pattern of purity and chastity.

4. Concerning his own health. *Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities;* indefatigable labour, and strict abstemiousness, preyed upon a tender constitution probably, and required in moderation something more supporting than water, to which he had confined himself. *Note,* The creatures of God are designed for our use and comfort; only let them be used with moderation; not to pamper the flesh, but so as to enable us the better to fulfil the duties of our station.

5. With regard to censure and ordination, of which he had before spoken, he farther observes, *Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment,* and being notorious, such are to be rejected from the ministry, and laid under the church's censure; *and some men they follow after,* and though they studiously conceal their sins, yet on deeper and closer examination, they will after a while come out; and therefore they should not hastily be admitted into sacred orders, without due probation. *Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand,* their whole character strikingly exemplary, and their ministerial gifts eminent; so that they may be admitted without hesitation: *and they that are otherwise cannot be hid,* more caution is needful with those whose qualifications are dubious, and it requires some time to make it clear whether they should be received: for, if they are really corrupt in principle or practice they will soon betray themselves. *Note,* (1.) Before any be admitted into sacred orders, their character and qualifications should be well examined. An ignorant and scandalous ministry is the greatest reproach to any church. (2.) However secretly men may hide their sins, yet usually in time their true character appears, and at least at a judgment-day no veil can hide the workers of iniquity.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

1. *He treats on the duty of servants,* ver. 1, 2, 2. *Of teachers,* ver. 3—5. 3. *Of godliness and covetousness,* ver. 6—10. 4. *What Timothy was to flee, and what to follow,* ver. 11—13. 5. *A solemn charge,* ver. 13—17. *And,* 6. *A charge for the rich,* ver. 17—19. *And lastly, A charge to Timothy,* ver. 20, 21.

a Eph. 6. 5—8. Col. 3. 22—25. 1 Pet. 2. 16, 18. Tit. 2. 5—10. Neh. 5. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 19. Is. 52. 5. Ezek. 36. 23. Rom. 2. 24.

1. LET [a] as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed. 2. And they that have believing masters, let b Gal. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. them not despise *them,* because they [b] are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are * faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. 3. c If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; 4. d He is † proud, knowing nothing, but ‡ doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, 5. e || Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

* Or *believing.*

c Ch. 1. 3. Rom. 16. 17. Gal. 1. 6, 7. 2 Tim. 1. 13. & 4. 3. Tit. 1. 3. & 2. 1, 10—14. & 3. 7.

d Prov. 25. 14. 1 Cor. 8. 1, 2. Gal. 6. 3. ch. 1. 4, 7. 2 Tim. 2. 23. Tit. 1. 14. & 3. 9. Prov. 13. 7. 1 Cor. 11. 16. Jam. 4. 1.

† Or *a fool.*

‡ Or *sick.*

e 1 Cor. 11. 16. Rom. 16. 17, 18. ch. 1. 6, 19. Is. 5. 6, 11. 2 Pet. 2. 3. Tit. 1. 11, 14, 16. 2 Tim. 3. 5, 8. 2 John 10. Tit. 3. 10. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. Rev. 18. 4.

|| Or *gallings one of another.*

Verses 1—5. The apostle lays down,

1. The duty of Christian servants. *Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour,* respect, and dutiful obedience; *that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed,* and that unbelievers may never have occasion to reproach them, as if their religion had made them proud, lazy, or disobedient. *And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren,* as if Christianity destroyed the distinctions of providence, and brought all men on a level; no, *but rather do them service,* with peculiar submission, delight, diligence, and honesty, *because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit,* sharing all the blessings of the gospel salvation. *Note,* (1.) The gospel was never designed to destroy the distinctions God hath been pleased to make among men, but to direct every man how to adorn that station in which it hath pleased God to call him. (2.) The kindness and condescension of Christian masters must never teach servants to presume, but to treat them with greater respect, more affectionate regard, and unimpeached fidelity.

2. He warns Timothy to teach steadily these truths, and to beware of deceivers. *These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise,* as the Judaizing teachers, who suggest as if it were unlawful for Christian slaves to obey their unbelieving masters; *and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness,* inculcating all dutiful discharge of our relations towards men, as well as piety towards God; *he is proud,* vainly puffed up with arrogant conceit of his own wisdom, though in fact *knowing nothing* as he ought to know; *but doting about questions and strifes of words,* engaging in vain and idle disputes about matters utterly insignificant, *whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and* who by such a spirit and temper evidently show, that they are *destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness,* serving merely their own worldly interests, and not the cause of Christ and immortal souls; *from such withdraw thyself;* have no communion with them, nor suffer them to assemble among the faithful. *Note,* (1.) The doctrines of the gospel are doctrines according to godliness: and whatever would corrupt vital and practical religion cannot be the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2.) Proud disputers must needs be far from any true knowledge of that gospel whose first injunctions are peace and love. (3.) They who make godliness in profession the ladder to earthly gain, will shortly find how fearful is their loss, when death shall hurl them into the abyss of wretchedness.

6. [f] But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7. [g] For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. 8. [h] And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. 9. [i] But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10. [k] For the love of money is the root of all evil: which whilst some coveted after, they have * erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11. [l] But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 12. [m] Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

f Ps. 37. 16. Is. 33. 16. ch. 4. 8. Prov. 8. 21. & 15. 16. & 16. 8. & 17. 1. 2 Cor. 9. 8. Heb. 13. 5.
g Job. 1. 21. Ps. 49. 17. Eccl. 5. 15.
h Gen. 28. 20. Ps. 55. 22. & 35. 28. & 30. 8. Mat. 6. 25, 33. Phil. 4. 11. Heb. 13. 5. 1 Pet. 5. 7.
i Prov. 11. 28. & 15. 27. & 20. 21. & 28. 20, 22. Mat. 13. 22. Jam. 5. 1. ch. 3. 7.
k Exod. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 19. 1 Kin. 21. 2—16. Mat. 26. 15. Acts 5. 3. Tit. 1. 11. with Eccl. 11. 8. Ps. 109. 8—19. Jam. 5. 1—3. ch. 3. 7.
* Or *been seduced.*
l 1 Sam. 2. 27. 2 Kin. 1. 9. & 4. 16, 40. & 5. 8. 2 Tim. 3. 17. & 2. 22—25. ch. 4. 12. 1 Thes. 2. 10. Phil. 4. 8.
m 1 Cor. 9. 25, 26. 2 Cor. 10. 3—5. & 4. 7, 8. Phil. 3. 12, 14. Rev. 3. 12, 21. 2. Pet. 1. 5, 10.

Verses 6—12. From the mention of the abuses of some corrupters of godliness, the apostle,

1. Cautions Timothy against covetousness, and to possess a contented mind. *But godliness with contentment is great gain,* making the mind happy in every state of life, and under every dispensation of providence; and this is the truest and most substantial gain even here below, where all our creature-comforts are so precarious, insufficient, and perishing. *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out;* but must return naked to the tomb, as we came from the womb. *And,* therefore, *having food and raiment,* covering for our bodies, and refreshment such as nature craves, *let us be therewith content,* nor grasp after more, thankful for the mercies of the day, and trusting the Lord for the provision of to-morrow. *But they that will be rich,* and, instead of being satisfied with their present allotted portion, are determined by every method to add to their store, and have their heart set upon wealth as their grand object; they *fall into temptation and a snare, and* become an easy prey to the devil, plunging themselves in the unhallowed pursuit after riches, *into many foolish and hurtful lusts,* into deceit, fraud, lying, rapine, injustice, &c. *which drown men in destruction and perdition,* and both body and soul perish for ever. *For the love of money is the root of all evil,* and the source of every vile and scandalous action: *which while some have coveted after,* we have seen the dreadful issue, *they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows;* besides all their crosses and vexations, laying up much bitterness for themselves, if they should hereafter be brought to repentance; and if not, treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. *But thou, O man of God, flee these things,* be warned by other sad examples, and shun with abhorrence all such covetous principles and practices. *Note,* (1.) There is no true contentment in this world but that which springs from real godliness. (2.) We consult our truest interests when our souls are our first concern. (3.) It is a mortifying reflection to every worldling, how short-lived must be his enjoyments, and that he can carry nothing with him to the grave but a shroud and a coffin. (4.) Nature is satisfied with little, grace with less, but covetousness with nothing. (5.) They who *will* be rich are in the high road to ruin; Satan desires no fairer mark. (6.) The love of money hath destroyed more than any one other vice whatever. (7.) They who, to gain the world, lose their own souls, will prove shortly their folly to be great as their sin.

2. He enjoins him what was his proper pursuit. *Follow after righteousness,* in your transactions with men; *godliness,* and holiness of heart and life; *faith,* an increasing measure of this divine grace, and approved fidelity in all your conversation; *love* to God and men; *patience* under every provocation; and *meekness,* bearing with, and gently instructing those that oppose themselves: yet, showing withal a becoming zeal for the truth, *fight the good fight of faith* against all opposing foes, from earth, or hell, or inbred corruption; *lay hold on eternal life,* earnestly pressing towards the goal for the glorious prize, *whereunto thou art also called* by divine grace, as a Christian and an evangelist; *and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses* at thy ordination, and in the presence of those among whom thou hast preached and suffered for the gospel's sake. *Note,* (1.) We are engaged in an arduous warfare, and have need and must fight every step to heaven against a host of spiritual foes which oppose our progress. (2.) Eternal life, the glorious crown before us, should animate us for every conflict. (3.) The good profession we have once made should engage us with increasing diligence to approve our fidelity before God and man.

13. [n] I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate [o] witnessed a good † confession; 14. [p] That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: 15. Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* [q] the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16. Who [r] only hath immortality, [s] dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; [t] whom no man hath seen, nor can see: [u] to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen. 17. [x] Charge them that are rich in this world, [y] that they be not high-minded, [z] nor trust in ‡ uncertain riches, but in the [a] living God, [b] who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18. [c] That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, || willing to communicate; 19. [d] Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may [e] lay hold on eternal life. 20. O Timothy, [f] keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called. 21. Which some professing, [g] have erred concerning the faith. Grace *be* with thee. Amen.

¶ The first to Timothy was written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Pacatiana.

n Ch. 5. 21. 2 Thes. 5. 27. 2 Tim. 4. 1. Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Acts 17. 25. John 5. 21.
o Mat. 27. 11. John 18. 36, 37. Rev. 1. 5. & 3. 14. Is. 55. 4.
† Or *profession.*
p Ch. 4. 11—16. 2 Tim. 3. 14. Tit. 2. 7, 10—15. Phil. 1. 6, 10. 1 Thes. 3. 13. & 5. 23. 1 Cor. 1. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 4.
q Ch. 1. 11, 17. Deut. 10. 17. Ps. 136. 2, 3. Lev. 17. 14. & 19. 16. Ps. 83. 18. & 10. 16. Dan. 5. 34, 35.
r Ch. 1. 7. Rom. 1. 23. John 5. 26. & 6. 57. Jer. 10. 10. Deut. 32. 40.
s 1 John 1. 5, 7. 2 Chr. 6. 1. & 5. 13, 14. Exod. 40. 35. Rev. 15. 8.
t Deut. 4. 12. John 1. 18. & 6. 16. & 5. 37. 1 John 4. 12, 20. Exod. 33. 20.
u Rom. 16. 27. Eph. 3. 21. Phil. 4. 20. ch. 1. 17. 2 Pet. 3. 18. Jude 25. Rev. 1. 6. & 4. 11. & 5. 12, 13. & 7. 10, 12
x Ch. 1. 3. & 4. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 14. Ps. 119. 46.
y Ps. 62. 10. Prov. 23. 5. Rom. 11. 20. & 12. 16. Phil. 3. 2, 4.
z Ps. 62. 10. & 52. 7. Job 31. 24. Prov. 11. 28. Mat. 6. 33, 34. Mark 6. 8. & 10. 24. Luke 12. 15—20. Prov. 23. 5.
‡ Gr. *the uncertainty of riches.*
a Ver. 16. ch. 3. 15 & 4. 10. 1 Thes. 1. 9. Jer. 10. 10.
b Acts 14. 17. & 17. 25. Mat. 6. 33. 1 Cor. 3. 22.
c Luke 12. 21. Jam. 2. 5, 16. Eccl. 11. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 8. 3, 12. & 9. 7. Heb. 13 16. Deut. 15. 7. Mat. 5. 42. Rom. 12. 8, 13. Tit. 3. 8.
|| Or *sociable.*
d Mat. 6. 20. Luke 12. 33. & 16 9. ver. 18. Mat. 10. 40, 41. Gal. 6. 8, 9.
e Ver. 12. Phil. 3. 12, 14. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 1. 4.
f Rev. 3. 3, 10, 11. 2 Tim. 1. 14. & 2. 2, 14, 16, 23. ch. 1. 4. & 4. 7. Tit. 1. 9, 14. & 3. 9. Col. 2. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 20. & 3. 18—20.
g Ch. 1. 6, 19. 2 Tim. 2. 18.

Verses 13—21. The apostle concludes,

1. With repeating his solemn charge, and enforcing it with the most cogent arguments. *I charge thee in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things*, the author of life to all his creatures, and the giver of spiritual life to his chosen; *and before Christ Jesus*, whose minister thou art, and *who* himself *before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession*, boldly asserting his own glorious character and office; *that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable*, faithful to the solemn trust reposed in thee, *until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ* at the great day: *which in his times*, fixed in the eternal counsels, *he shall show*, exactly accomplishing the promise of his coming, which he hath given to his people, according to the glorious names and characters which he bears, *who is the blessed and only Potentate*, to whom all in heaven and earth are subject, who hath the supreme and universal dominion: and, as he is infinitely blessed in himself, he makes also his people happy under his government: *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*, who all from him derive their power and authority, and to him are accountable; *who only hath immortality* in and of himself, and is the author of it to his creatures, whether angels or men; *dwelling* in uncreated glory, *in the light which no man*, in his present mortal state, *can approach unto; whom no man hath seen or can see*, in the full blaze of his divine perfections and attributes: *to whom be honour and power everlasting* ascribed by all the hosts of earth and heaven. *Amen!*

2. He gives him a particular charge to be delivered to the more opulent members of the church. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded*, puffed up on their worldly wealth and attainments: *nor trust in uncertain riches* as their dependence and rock, since these are transitory possessions; *but in the living God*, the only substantial and abiding good, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*, loading us with his benefits, and allowing us all sanctified use of his creatures: wherefore they who are thus favoured must see *that they do good* with their wealth, not abusing it in luxury and extravagance; but *that they be rich in good works*, employing their treasures for the benefit of mankind; *ready to give*, even unasked, to the indigent and necessitous; *willing to communicate* of their substance, without grudging or niggardliness; *laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come*, disposing of their treasures in such a way as *that they may* have treasure in heaven, and *lay hold on eternal life*. *Note*, (1.) Wealth is a talent intrusted with us for the benefit of our brethren: we are stewards, and must give an account of our profiting to the great Master. (2.) Riches are a great temptation to pride; therefore, such as have affluence should be often admonished in their high estate to keep a humble mind. (3.) They are truly rich who are rich unto God, and improve their abundance to his glory.

3. He warns him, as before, to take heed of deceivers. *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust*, the unadulterated gospel word; *avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called*, the noisy talk and proud boastings of Judaizing teachers, pretending to high attainments in science, when in fact utter strangers to true wisdom: *which some professing, have erred concerning the faith*, and apostatized from the truth. *Note*, That science which draws men from the simplicity of the gospel, however proud men may value themselves thereon, will be proved at last to be the most egregious folly.

4. He gives him his parting benediction. *Grace be with thee*, and that shall preserve thee from all error, and strengthen thee for the faithful discharge of the ministry. *Amen!*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO

TIMOTHY.

Introduction.

THIS second epistle Paul wrote to Timothy from Rome, when he was a prisoner there, and in danger of his life. By these words, *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand*, chap. iv. ver. 6. it appears that his removal out of this world, in his own apprehension, was not far off; especially considering the rage and malice of his persecutors; and that he had been brought before the emperor Nero, which he calls *his first answer when no man stood with him, but all men forsook him*, chap iv. ver. 16. And interpreters agree that this was the last epistle he wrote.

Where Timothy now was, is not certain: The scope of this epistle somewhat differs from that of the former, not so much relating to his office as an evangelist, as to his personal conduct and behaviour.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 66.

After his introduction, ver. 1, 2. *we have,* 1. *Paul's sincere love to Timothy,* ver. 3—5. 2. *Divers exhortations given to him,* ver. 6—14. 3. *He speaks of Phygellus and Hermogenes, with others, and closes with Onesiphorus,* ver. 15. to the end.

1. PAUL, [a] an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to [b] the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, 2. To Timothy, *my* [c] dearly beloved son: [d] Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord. 3. [e] I thank God, whom [f] I serve from *my* forefathers with pure conscience, [g] that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; 4. [h] Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; 5. When I call to remembrance the [i] unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy [k] mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

a Rom. 1. 1. Gal. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 1. Acts 9. 15. & 26. 16—18. & 13. 9.
b 1 John 2. 25. & 5. 10—13. 2 Cor. 1. 20. Acts 10. 43. John 17. 3. & 6. 40—57. Acts 4. 12.
c See 1 Tim. 1. 1, 2, 18. 1 Cor. 4. 15.
d See Rom. 1. 7. 2 Cor. 13. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 2, 3.
e 2 Thes. 1. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 2. & 5. 18. Eph. 5. 20. Col. 3. 17. see Rom. 1. 8.
f Acts 24. 14, 16. & 23. 1. & 22. 3. & 26. 4. & 27. 23. Rom. 1. 9. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Heb. 13. 18. Acts 20. 18—35. 1 Thes. 2. 10.
g See 1 Thes. 1. 2. & 3. 10.
h Ch. 4. 9, 21. Rom. 10. 12. & 15. 30—32. Phil. 1. 8. & 2. 24. 1 Thes. 2. 17—22.
i Ch. 1. 2, 5. Tit. 1. 1. Gal. 5. 6. Eph. 2. 8. Col. 2. 12. 1 Thes. 1. 3. Jam. 2. 5.
k Acts 16. 1. Exod. 15. 2. 1 Cor. 7. 14. Ps. 22. 10. & 71. 17.

Verses 1—5. St Paul opens this epistle,

1. With his apostolic salutation to Timothy. *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,* acting under a divine commission, *according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,* who hath for his people brought life and immortality to light by his gospel; *To Timothy, my dearly beloved son,* begotten by me in the gospel, and sharing my warmest paternal affection; *Grace, mercy, and peace,* with all the unutterable blessings therein contained, be with thee, *from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord. Note,* (1.) True ministers of Christ feel the tenderest regard for their spiritual children, and cease not incessantly to pray that the best of blessings may descend upon them. (2.) All our mercies come to us as the free gift of God in Jesus Christ, whether the present pardon, peace, and grace which we receive here, or the promise of immortal life and glory which we expect hereafter.

2. He thanks God for him. *I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers,* as a true child of Abraham, and descendant of the patriarchs, *with a pure conscience,* purged now from dead works by a Redeemer's blood, *that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day,* which I statedly offer at a throne of grace morning and evening; *greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears,* and the distress which appeared at our last parting, *that I may be filled with joy,* if the Lord so pleases, by our happy meeting again; and it the more engages my heart to thee, *when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee,* and which hath been proved on so many occasions, *which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also,* who treadeth in the same steps. *Note,* (1.) It is a singular blessing to have religious parents, for though grace comes not by education, yet God often blesses effectually their labours, who study to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (2.) Where unfeigned faith dwells, there every good fruit and gracious disposition will naturally be produced.

6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance [l] that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the [m] putting on of my hands. 7. [n] For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 8. [o] Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9. Who [p] hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, [q] not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; 10. [r] But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath [s] abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11. [t] Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12. For the which cause I also [u] suffer these things: nevertheless [x] I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have * believed, and I am persuaded that [y] he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. 13. [z] Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14. [a] That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

l See 1 Tim. 4. 14. ch. 2. 1. & 4. 2, 5. 1 Thes. 5. 19, 20.
m Acts 6. 6. & 8. 17. & 13. 2, 3, 23. & 19. 6. 1 Tim. 4. 14. & 5. 22.
n Rom. 8. 15. Heb. 2. 15. Luke 24. 49. Acts 1. 1. & 3. 22, 23. & 3. 14. 5. & 18. 9. & 21. 13. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 3—10, 12. & 4. 1. & 6. 7. & 10. 4. Gal. 4. 3—7. Col. 1. 11. ch. 2. 1. & 4. 17.
o Rom. 1. 16. Mat. 10. 33. Mark 8. 38. Acts 5. 41. 1 Cor. 1. 6. & 2. 2. Eph. 3. 13. & 6. 20. 1 Tim. 1. 18. ch. 2. 3, 9, 10. & 4. 5. Col. 1. 24.
p 1 Tim. 1. 1. & 2. 3. & 4. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 9. Phil. 3. 14. Rom. 8. 30. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Heb. 3. 1.
q Rom. 9. 11. & 3. 24. & 5. 20, 21. & 8. 29. Eph. 2. 8. & 1. 4. & 3. 11. Tit. 3. 4—7. & 1. 2. Rom. 16. 25.
r Is. xxv. Rom. 16. 25, 26. Col. 1. 26, 27. Mark 16. 15. Eph. 1. 9. & 3. 9. Tit. 1. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 20, 21.
s Is. 25. 8. 1 Cor. 15. 54, 55. Heb. 2. 14.
t See Acts 9. 15. & 22. 21. & 26. 16—18. Rom. 1. 5. & 11. 13. & 15. 16, 19. 1 Tim. 2. 7.
u Ver. 8. ch. 2. 9, 10. & 3. 10—12. & 4. 16, 17.
x Eph. 3. 1, 13. & 4. 1. & 6. 20. Col. 1. 24. Acts 20. 24 & 21. 13. & 5. 41. Rom. 5. 3—5. 2 Cor. 1. 3—10. Acts 27. 23, 25. Ps. 91. 2. * Or *trusted.*
y 1 Pet. 4. 19. ch. 4. 8. Heb. 7. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 5. John 10. 28, 29.
z Prov. 23. 23. Phil. 1. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 10, 14. & 6. 3, 14, 20. ch. 2. 2. & 3. 14. & 4. 3. Tit. 1. 9, 13. & 2. 1. 1 John 2. 24, 27. 2 John 6. 9, 10. Rev. 2. 11. Jude 3.
a 1 Tim. 6. 20. & 4. 14. ch. 21. 15. & 3. 14. with Rom. 8. 11. John 14. 17, 26. 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. & 6. 19, 21.

Verses 6—14. The apostle here,

1. Stirs up his dear son to the vigorous exercise of his ministry. *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee,* blowing the embers of divine love and zeal into a flame, and making the most profitable use of those distinguished spiritual gifts which God hath bestowed upon thee, *by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear,* that we should be discouraged by opposition, *but of power,* to bear up against every enemy undismayed, *and of love* to Christ and men's souls, which all the waters of persecution cannot quench, *and of a sound mind,* settled in the doctrines of truth, steady in attachment to them, and willing cheerfully to suffer for them. May such a spirit be in every minister!

2. He exhorts him boldly to take up his cross. *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner,* for they are honourable bonds, which are borne for the sake of Jesus and his cause; *but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel,* sympathizing with those that suffer, and willing to endure any persecutions on account of it, according to the power of God, which is engaged for the support of all those who are faithful. *Note,* (1.) All Christians, and ministers especially, must prepare for the cross, and expect it. (2.) They who dare commit their all to God, and look up to him for help, shall experience his Almighty assistance in every time of need.

3. He suggests the strongest motives to engage his fidelity to God and his gospel. *Who hath saved us* with an everlasting salvation in the Son of his love, Christ Jesus, *and* hath *called us with a holy calling* by the word of his gospel, that we might be separate from a world that lieth in wickedness, and sanctified for his honour and glory, *not according to our works*, for the sake of any goodness foreseen in us, or works done by us; for all that we were, and could do, was an abomination in his sight; *but* our salvation was *according to his own* sovereign *purpose and grace, which was*, in God's eternal design and predestination, *given us in Christ*, the head and representative of his elect, *before the world began*, or any creature had their being, *but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who*, coming in the human nature, hath made the richest discoveries of God's grace to perishing sinners; and, by dying upon the cross as their substitute, *hath abolished death*, delivering them from the wages of sin, the curse of the law, and all the fearful consequences thereof in time and eternity, *and hath brought life and immortality to light by the gospel*, giving a brighter and clearer revelation of the eternal blessedness prepared for body and soul in a better world, and of the way which only leads thereto, than had ever before been made to the sons of men. *Note*, (1.) All who are effectually called of God, experience the power of his Spirit upon their hearts as a Spirit of holiness. (2.) Those who are saved by grace in time, were saved in the divine purpose from eternity, and their stability and perseverance secured in Christ Jesus before the world began. (3.) Every redeemed soul may regard death as a vanquished foe; since the sting of sin is taken out, we have nothing to fear, but every thing to hope, whilst in the grave we see the golden gates of life and immortality unfolded, and the bright beams of everlasting glory illuminating the dark valley of the shadow of death.

4. He proposes to him his own example. *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles*, and count it my highest honour. *For the which cause I also suffer these things*, being now the prisoner of Jesus Christ, for my fidelity in maintaining the privileges of the Gentiles; *nevertheless I am not ashamed*, neither of the gospel, nor of the chain he wore for the sake of it, *for I know whom I have believed*, the glories of his person, and the riches of his grace; *and I am persuaded that he is able*, as his promises assure me he is willing, *to keep that which I have committed to him*, even the precious deposit of my immortal soul, *against that day*, that great day of his appearing and glory. *Note*, (1.) Though we suffer for the gospel, we need not be ashamed; the cause will gloriously support us. (2.) What we have committed to Christ is safe for eternity: he never hath failed those that trust him: blessed and happy the soul that can say, *I know whom I have believed.*

5. He exhorts him to fidelity. *Hold fast the form of sound words*, the sacred, unadulterated oracles of God, and the pure doctrines of the gospel, *which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus;* copy the pattern of my preaching, especially in these fundamental articles; and as thy faith in, and love to, the Redeemer hath appeared, with all fidelity and warm affection to the souls of men, urge upon them the said blessed truths. *That good thing which was committed unto thee by the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in us;* be faithful to the solemn trust committed to thee, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, who abides in the hearts of all his people; with persevering diligence maintain the purity of the gospel. *Note*, (1.) Jesus is the glorious object of our faith and love, and to him should our hearts for ever cleave. (2.) The Lord must keep us, or we cannot keep ourselves; and the indwelling energy of the Holy Ghost alone can enable us for the discharge of every sacred trust which he hath committed to us.

15. This thou knowest, [b] that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 16. [c] The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and [d] was not ashamed of my chain: 17. But, when he was [e] in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*. 18. The Lord grant unto him [f] that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

[b] Ch. 4. 10, 16. Phil. 2. 21.

[c] Mat. 10. 41, 42. & 25. 35—40. 1 Kin. 17. 13, 24. 2 Kin. iv. ch. 4. 19.

[d] Ver. 8. Acts 28. 20. Eph. 6. 20. & 3. 1, 13. & 4. 1.

[e] Acts 28. 16. Mat. 25. 35, 36, 40.

[f] Mat. 5. 7. Acts 3. 19. Rom. 15. 25. 2 Thes. 1. 10. ch. 4. 8. Heb. 6. 16.

Verses 15—18. To engage his dear son Timothy's fidelity, he mentions the apostasy of some as a warning, and the steadfastness of Onesiphorus as an encouragement to him.

1. The apostasy of some. *This thou knowest, that all they who are in Asia are turned away from me*, either the generality of the Asiatic churches and ministers, or rather such of the Asiatics as were at Rome, who were ashamed of his chain, and disowned him in his prison, *of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. Note*, It is one of the bitterest pangs of suffering, to feel ourselves then deserted by those from whom we might reasonably, from their professions, have expected the greatest comfort and support.

2. The steadfastness of Onesiphorus. *The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus;* probably he was an Ephesian, and absent from his family with the apostle, whom he attended and served with great fidelity and zeal, and therefore the grateful Paul in return pays him with his prayers, begging that the choicest blessings of God might descend upon him and his; *for he oft refreshed me* with seasonable visits, and supplies of necessaries, *and was not ashamed of my chain*, when cowardice and fear of reproach basely deterred others from coming near me. *But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day*, when Jesus shall come to reward every kindness shown to his servants, especially to those who are suffering for righteousness' sake. *And in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well. Note*, (1.) When we can make no other return to our kind friends, at least in our prayers we are bound to recommend them to the Saviour's mercy, and beg him to reward them. (2.) *That day!* How should it be ever in our view, that great decisive day, when our eternity of happiness or misery must be determined! (3.) We have nothing to cry for at God's hands but mercy; living or dying, the best have no merit to plead, but must expect eternal life as the *gift* of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 66.

In this chapter, 1. *He encourages him in his work, showing him from whence he must fetch help*, ver. 1. 2. *He must take care of a succession in the ministry*, ver. 2. 3. *He exhorts him to constancy and perseverance in this work*, &c. ver. 3—15. 4. *He must shun profane and vain babblings*, ver. 16—18. *for they will be pernicious and mischievous.* 5. *He speaketh of the foundation of God which standeth sure*, ver. 19—21. 6. *What he is to avoid, youthful lusts, and foolish and unlearned questions; and what to do*, ver. 22. to the end.

1. THOU therefore, [a] my son, [b] be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2. And [c] the things that thou hast heard of me * among many witnesses, the same [d] commit thou to faithful men, who

[a] See ch. 1. 2.

[b] Ch. 1. 7, 14. Eph. 6. 10. Is. 40. 29—31. & 45. 24. Zech. 10. 12. Phil. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 5. & 12. 9, 10.

[c] Ch. 1. 13. & 3. 10, 14. 1 Tim. 6. 12. & 4. 14.

* Or *by*.

[d] 1 Tim. 5. 22. & 3. 2—7. Tit. 1. 5—9.

shall be able to teach others also. 3. Thou therefore [c] endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4. [f] No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. 5. And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. 6. [g] † The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits. 7. [h] Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

c Ch. 1. 8. & 4. 5. 2 Cor. 10. 3—5. Eph. 6. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 8.
f 1 Cor. 9. 7, 25 & 7. 32, 33. 1 Tim. 4. 15. Acts 20. 23—24. Phil. 3. 12—14. with 1 Pet. 5. 4.
g 1 Cor. 9. 10. with Luke 10. 2. & 20. 9.
† Or *the husbandmann labouring first, must be partaker of the fruits.*
h Deut. 22. 29. Heb. 3. 1. & 12. 3. Luke 9. 44. Acts 7. 11. & 16. 14.
i Col. 1. 9. Eph. 1. 18, 19. & 3. 16—19. John 16. 13. & 14. 26. 1 John 2. 20, 27.

Verses 1—7. The apostle in this chapter continues his exhortations. *Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Jesus Christ,* sensible of thy own weakness, and dependent upon him who alone can enable thee for the arduous work. *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses,* publicly declared, and proved by numerous testimonies of the law and the prophets, *the same commit thou to faithful men,* whose sincerity and abilities have been tried and approved, *who shall be able to teach others also,* and preserve the glorious truths of gospel grace unadulterated. *Thou therefore endure hardness,* all those persecutions and afflictions, to which, in the gospel warfare, thou must be exposed, acquitting thyself *as a good soldier of Jesus Christ,* fighting manfully under his banners, with such courage, patience, and perseverance, as may effectually secure the crown. *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life;* his military service is incompatible with the pursuit of any other trade or profession; he must be at his general's call, and ever ready to obey his orders, *that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier;* so must every minister of Christ be disengaged from worldly concerns, that he may be wholly employed in the service of the great Captain of our salvation, and make it his whole study and care to please him, and advance the interests of his kingdom. *And if a man strive for masteries* in the Olympic games, *yet is he not crowned* with that fading crown the reward of victory, *except he strive lawfully,* according to the rules prescribed; and much more should they, who have before them a crown of glory incorruptible, exert every effort, according to the orders of their Divine Master, to win the eternal prize. *The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits,* or *the husbandman must labour first before he partakes of the fruits;* so must the faithful minister labour for the good of immortal souls, and patiently wait for the success of his ministry, and the expected reward in the day of Christ. *Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things,* enabling thee to make a deep application of these things to thy own soul; and, as a valiant soldier, a brave combatant, and laborious husbandman, to acquit thyself in thy ministerial office. *Note,* Let all who look to the ministry consider these things, and count the cost before they presume to appear a candidate for the service.

8. Remember that Jesus Christ, [k] of the seed of David, [l] was raised from the dead according to [m] my gospel: 9. [n] Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil-doer, *even* unto bonds; but [o] the word of God is not bound. 10. [p] Therefore I

k 2 Sam. 7. 11. Ps. 132. 11. Is. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. Mat. 1. 1—17, 20. & 15. 22. Luke 1. 27, 32. & 2. 4—7. Rom. 1. 3. Rev. 5. 5. & 22. 16.
l Acts 2. 24. Rom. 1. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 1—8. Mat. xxviii. Mark xvi. Luke xxiv John xx.
m Rom. 2. 16. & 1. 16. & 15. 19. ch. 1. 10, 11. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. & 2. 7.
n Eph. 3. 1, 13. & 4. 1. & 6. 20. Phil. 1. 7. Col. 1. 24 & 4. 3, 18. ch. 1. 8, 12. Acts 24. 5.
o Phil. 1. 12, 13. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
p Eph. 3. 1, 13. Phil. 2. 17. Col. 1. 24. 2 Cor. 1. 4, 6. ver. 11, 12.

endure all things for the elect's sakes, [q] that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. 11. [q] *It is* a faithful saying: For [r] If we be dead with *him,* we shall also live with *him:* 12. If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him:* [s] if we deny *him,* he also will deny us: 13. [t] If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

q 1 Tim. 1. 15. & 3. 1. & 4. 9. Prov. 22. 20. Tit. 3. 8.
r Rom. 6. 5, 8. & 8. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 10. Gal. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2, 13. Phil. 3. 10. John 16. 2, 3, 23. Acts 14. 22. Mat. 19. 28, 29. & 16. 24, 25. & 10. 32.
s Mat. 10. 33. Mark 8. 38. Luke 9. 26. & 12. 9.
t Rom. 3. 3. & 9. 6. Num. 23. 19. 2 Cor. 1. 20. Tit. 1. 2. Heb. 6. 17.

Verses 8—13. To encourage him boldly to suffer, the apostle suggests,

1. The grand foundation of their hope, as built upon the resurrection of Jesus. *Remember that Jesus Christ,* the promised Messiah, *of the seed of David,* in his human nature, *was raised from the dead,* showing thereby the complete redemption which he had obtained for his people, *according to my gospel* which I preached unto you.

2. He sets before him his own example: *Wherein,* that is, for preaching which gospel, *I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound:* even in my prison the gospel still runs and is glorified in the conversion of many souls, and others boldly labour and at large, though I am confined. *Therefore,* dependent upon the power of God, *I suffer all these things for the elect's sakes,* willing to endure, if I am called thereunto, even death itself, *that they may also obtain* (confirmed in the faith by my unshaken steadfastness in suffering for it) *the salvation which is in Jesus Christ with eternal glory,* of which, from first to last, he is the author, finisher, and bestower, on all his chosen, and they are wholly indebted for it to his sovereign grace and love. *Note,* (1.) A noble example is a powerful encouragement to follow on. (2.) Though persecutors may confine the ministers, the word of God will still work effectually on as many as the Lord will call. (3.) All the elect shall infallibly obtain eternal salvation, for Christ hath secured it for them, and will bring them to be with himself where he is, that they may behold his glory.

3. The reward of faithful suffering should engage him boldly to take up the cross. *It is a faithful saying; For if we be dead with him,* as vitally united to him in his death, or if called to die for his cause as he died for us, *we shall also live with him,* planted also in the likeness of his resurrection, and raised up to immortal life and glory: *if we suffer* for him, *we shall reign with him,* sitting down on his throne: but *if* we prove faithless, and *deny him* in the hour of temptation, *he also will deny* and disown *us* in the great day of his appearing: *if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful;* his promises and threatenings will surely be accomplished, whether men believe them or not: *he* is immutable, and *cannot deny himself,* or falsify his word. *Note,* (1.) It is our privilege to suffer, when we see that the issue will be glorious. (2.) The hope of life with Jesus should raise us superior to all the fears of death, though in its most tremendous form. (3.) They who, for any worldly interest or advantage, or to avoid shame, reproach, or suffering, disown the Lord Jesus, his gospel, and suffering servants, will bear in eternity their burden, and be driven from his presence with everlasting contempt.

14. [u] Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they [x] strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers. 15. [y] Study to shew thyself

u Rom. 15. 15. 1 Tim. 5. 21. & 6. 13. ch. 4. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 12—15.
x Acts 15. 24. &. 20. 30. 1 Tim. 1. 4. & 6. 4. Tit. 3. 9, 11. 2 Pet. 2. 1
y Tit. 3. 2, 7, 8. 1 Tim. 4. 12—16. 1 Cor. 2. 4. & 3. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 2. John 16. 12. Acts 20. 27. Eph. 1. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 7. ver. 24, 25.

approved unto God, a workman that
z 1 Tim. 1. 4. & 4. 7. & 6. 4, 5, 20. Tit. 1. 14. & 3. 9. ch. 3. 13. needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16. z But shun profane *and* vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness.
‡ Or *gangrene.* 17. And their word will eat as doth a ‡ canker: of whom is
a 1 Tim. 1. 20. a Hymeneus and Philetus; 18. b Who concerning the
b 1 Tim. 1. 2?, & 1. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 12. Col. 3. 1. truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

Verses 14—18. The apostle proceeds to give further exhortations to Timothy.

1. To seek the edification of those under his charge. *Of these things put them in remembrance, charge them,* with all solemnity and authority, *before the Lord,* as in his presence, *that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers,* drawing them from the purity of the gospel, instead of promoting godly edifying. *Note,* Any trivial matter will afford occasion of strife to a contentious spirit.

2. He enjoins him to show himself an able minister of Jesus Christ. *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,* diligent, faithful, laborious, skilful, *rightly dividing the word of truth,* and giving to each his portion in due season, according to the various cases and conditions of the people's souls. *But shun profane and vain babblings,* the dreams of the Judaizing teachers, *for they will increase unto more ungodliness,* and lead to the most pernicious errors in principle and practice. *And their word will eat as doth a canker,* corroding the hearts of the hearers, and threatening their eternal death: *of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus,* the chief heretical seducers; *who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already;* probably they asserted, that the resurrection was only mystical and spiritual, not of the body but of the soul: *and* have *overthrown the faith of some. Note,* (1.) Error is spreading as a gangrene; and, though it may appear little at first, threatens the most fatal consequences. (2.) They who love to hear themselves talk, will be sure to prove the truth of that Scripture, that in the multitude of words there wanteth not folly. (3.) A true minister will labour to speak ever to the purpose, not curious about a fine harangue, but careful to apply the word of truth to the consciences of his hearers.

c Mat. 24. 24. Rom. 9. 11. & 11. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 19. Job 19. 25, 26. Is. 28. 16. & 46. 10. 1 John 2. 19, & 3. 9. 19. Nevertheless, c the foundation of God standeth || sure, having this seal,
|| Or *steady.* d Nah. 1. 7. John 10. 14, 27. & 13. 18. Rom. 8. 28—30, 33, 34. & 11. 2. Num. 16. 5. d The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, e Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.
e 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3, 15. Tit. 2. 10—14. & 3. 8. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Eph. 5. 3—7. Col. 3. 5, 6. Luke 1. 74, 75. 20. But in a great house f there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to
f Rom. 9. 21—23. honour, and some to dishonour. 21. g If
g Is. 52. 11. 1 John 3. 3. Jam. 4. 8. 2 Cor. 7. 1. ch. 3. 17. Eph. 2. 10. a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.

Verses 19—21. Among all the errors of deceivers, this is *nevertheless* our comfort:

1. That *the foundation of God standeth sure:* the faith of God's elect can never be destroyed, however many false professors prove apostates; and God's designs of grace towards them cannot be frustrated by any designs of the most subtle deceivers, for their stability is secured, *having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his,* and embraces them with the arms of everlasting love, from which neither men nor devils can pluck them: *and,* in consequence of his sealing his people until the day of redemption, this is his expectation from them, and will be their practice, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity,* and by the fruits of sanctification prove the certainty of their election.

2. *But* as *in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour;* so it need not be thought strange, that in the visible church, while some professors adorn the gospel, others appear a scandal to the name they bear, a dishonour to the Redeemer, and will, at the last, be rejected by him. *If a man therefore purge himself from these* errors and practices of the seducing teachers, *he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work,* employed by him on earth with approbation, and after having finished the work which he hath given them to do below, shall be removed to shine in his better temple of eternal glory above. Lord, may my lot be with these!

22. h Flee also youthful lusts: but
h Ps. 119. 9. Eccl. 11. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 11. i follow righteousness, faith, charity,
i 1 Tim. 6. 11. & 4. 12. Heb. 12. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 2, 10. Rom. 14. 1, 17. & 15. 5, 6. peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23. But k foolish
k 1 Tim. 1. 4, 6. & 6. 4, 5. Tit. 2. 9. & 1. 4. and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. 24. And
l Mat. 12. 19. 1 Tim. 3. 2. & 2. 2, 3. & 6. 11. Tit. 1. 9. & 3. 2. with l. 13. 2 Cor. 13. 10. l the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men,* apt to teach,
* Or *forbearing.* * patient: 25. m In meekness instructing
m Gal. 6. 1. 1 Pet. 3. 15. those that oppose themselves; n if God
n Acts 8. 22. 1 Tim. 2. 4. peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26.
o Is. 49. 25. & 42. 6, 7. 1 Cor. 15. 34. Col. 1. 13. Acts 26. 18. 2 Cor. 2. 11. 1 Tim. 3. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8. o And *that* they may † recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are ‡ taken captive by him at his will.

† Gr. *awakè.* ‡ Gr. *taken alive.*

Verses 22—26. Some personal directions are here given to the young evangelist.

1. *Flee youthful lusts,* not merely those of the flesh, but the more dangerous ones of pride, love of pre-eminence, and popular applause, those fatal rocks against which so many make shipwreck, and need be shunned with peculiar care.

2. *Follow righteousness* towards God and men, *faith, charity, peace, with* all the other train of heavenly tempers which abide in *them who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Note,* They who are Christians indeed, are constant at a throne of grace, and, in purity of heart and life, prove their professions sincere.

3. *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes,* and open a field of endless and unprofitable controversy. *And the servant of the Lord must not strive;* the follower of the Lamb of God should copy the pattern of his meekness, not quarrelsome, *but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach* in the most inoffensive way, *patient* under the provocations of the most untractable, and the prejudices of the weak. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves,* against the gospel doctrines; mildly arguing, and gently remonstrating, desirous to win them by love, and overcome them by kindness; *if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth,* as it is in Jesus; *and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will,* as birds in the snare of the fowler, where they must lie and perish, unless divine grace breaks the snare, and delivers the miserable soul. *Note,* (1.) Nothing is more necessary for a

minister than unwearied patience and meekness. (2.) We must labour for the souls of men, but God only can give them repentance. (3.) The gospel word is the great instrument which the Lord employs for the conversion of the heart. (4.) They are the vilest of slaves who are led at the devil's beck to the service of divers lusts and pleasures; and happy it is for the soul that is delivered from this dreadful servitude by the power of divine grace, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 66.

He foretells Timothy what the last days would be, with the reasons thereof, ver. 1—9. 2. *Prescribes various remedies against them,* ver. 10. *to the end; particularly his own example; and the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation, and will be the best antidote against the corruptions of the times we live in.*

1. THIS [a] know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2. For men shall be [b] lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3. [c] Without natural affection, truce-breakers, * false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4. [d] Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5. [e] Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: [f] from such turn away.

a 2 Pet. 2. 1. & 3. 3. Jude 18. 1 John 2. 18. Dan. 7. 8, 20—25. & 11. 36—39. 1 Thes. 2. 3—12. 1 Tim. 4. 1—4. ch. 4. 3. 4. Rev. vi, viii, ix, xi—xiii, xvii.
b Phil. 2. 21. 2 Pet. 3. 2, 12—19. Tit. 1. 11. Jude 11, 16. Rom. i. 30. Rev. 13. 5, 6.
c 2 Pet. 2. 10—12. Jude 4, 8, 12. Rom. 1. 31. Rev. 13. 2, 5—7. & 11. 7—10.
* Or *makebates.* or *devils.*
d Mat. 10. 21. & 24. 9, 10. Phil. 3. 19. Dan. 7. 8, 20, 25. & 11. 30—39. Rev. 9. 8. & 13. 5—7. & 17. 5.
e Tit. 1. 16. Mat. 7. 15. with Acts 3. 13. Tit. 2. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 8.
f Rom. 16. 17, 18. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. ch. 2. 16, 23. Tit. 3. 10. Mat. 18. 17. 2 John 10, 11.

Verses 1—5. The apostle apprizes Timothy of the dangerous days which approached, that he might not be surprised when the offences came. *This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come,* when sad corruptions, creeping into the church, shall make it difficult to preserve a pure conscience. *For men shall be lovers of their own selves,* wholly devoted to the pursuits of their worldly honour and interests; *covetous,* insatiate after filthy lucre; *proud,* and vain-glorious boasters; *blasphemers* of God and man: *disobedient to parents: unthankful* to their benefactors; *unholy* in heart and conversation; *without natural affection,* which appears even in brutes; *truce-breakers,* perfidious to the most solemn engagements; *false accusers;* like devils incarnate, blackening with every opprobrious calumny their opponents: *incontinent,* indulging every bestial appetite; *fierce* and furious in their tempers; *despisers of those that are good,* and treating men, far their betters, with contempt; *traitors,* false to their trusts, betraying their nearest friends; *heady,* driving furiously in their wicked courses, impatient of control; *high-minded,* puffed up with vain conceit of their own superiority; *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,* and what is the aggravation of all their other abominations, making great pretensions to piety, *having a form of godliness,* and affecting rigid attachment to the externals of worship, *but denying the power of it,* real enemies to vital religion; *from such turn away,* and shun them as the plague.

These corruptions began in the Gnostics, which in the apostle's days appeared, and the perilous times advanced to their height when the Roman pontiffs, after a train of diabolical practices, raised their blasphemous hierarchy, and consecrated their abominations. And to the papal apostasy are all these characters strikingly applicable.

6. For of this sort are they [g] which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7. [h] Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8. Now, as [i] Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: [k] men of corrupt minds, † reprobate concerning the faith. 9. [l] But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men,* as theirs also was.

g Tit. 1. 11. Mat. 23. 14. Mark 12. 40. Rom. 16. 18. Eph. 4. 14.
h Ch. 4. 3, 4. Prov. 26. 14. Deut. 29. 4. Is. 27. 11. & 28. 9, 10.
i Exod. 7. 11, 22. & 8. 7, 18.
k 1 Tim. 1. 19. & 6. 1, 5. Tit. 1. 16. Rom. 1. 28. 2 Cor. 13. 5, 6.
† Or *of no judgment.*
l Exod. 7. 12. & 8. 18. & 9. 11. ch. 2. 10. Ps. 76. 10.

Verses 6—9. The apostle proceeds,

1. To point out the artful and pernicious practices of the seducers. *For of this sort are they which creep into houses* with every wheedling art, *and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,* imposing upon them with flattering speeches, and gaining them to their party, *ever learning* of these vain teachers, *and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,* but bewildered in the endless mazes of error. *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses,* setting up their pretended miracles in opposition to his divine commission, *so do these also resist the truth* of the gospel: *men of* the like *corrupt minds* as these Egyptian sorcerers, *reprobate concerning the faith,* rejected and abhorred of God.

2. He foretells that all their efforts should be impotent. *But they shall proceed no further* than the magicians did, nor be able to deceive the elect; *for* an effectual check shall be given to them, and *their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was,* and all their lying miracles shall be detected. *Note,* Error may, for a time, prevail, but truth shall finally be triumphant.

10. But [m] thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, 11. [n] Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. 12. Yea, [o] and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 13. But [p] evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

m Or *thou hast been a diligent follower of.* Phil. 2. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 6, 12. & 6. 11, 12. ch. 2. 22, 24, 25.
n Acts 13. 45, 50. & 14. 2, 5, 19, 20. 2 Cor. 6. 8—11. & 4. 8—12. 1 Cor. 4. 9—13. Job 5. 18, 19. Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 2. & 46. 3, 4. Ps. 34. 19.
o 2 Cor. 1. 10. Mat. 16. 24. & 10. 17, 28. & 23. 34. John 17. 14. & 16. 2, 3, 33. 1 Thes. 3. 3. with Rom. 8. 29. Luke 24. 26. Acts 14. 22.
p 2 Pet. 2. 20. ch. 2. 16. 1 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 11.

Verse 10—13. Nothing could better serve to guard Timothy against these seducers than the striking contrast between their conduct and that of the blessed Paul.

1. He reminds him of what he had seen. *But thou hast fully known my doctrine,* and the uniform tenor of my preaching; my exemplary *manner of life,* steady *purpose* to advance God's glory and the good of men's souls, unshaken *faith,* fervent *charity,* unwearied *patience,* amidst the many and grievous *persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra: what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.* With such an example Timothy should be animated to fidelity, and might surely expect the same support and deliverances.

2. He informs him that suffering must be every Christian's lot. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,* of one kind or other, from mockery to martyrdom. There is indeed a godliness in form that the world speaks well

of; but to be *godly in Christ Jesus*, in spirit and temper conformed to him, will ever render us abhorred of a world that lieth in wickedness.

3. He predicts the fatal end of these deceivers. *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse*, hurried on from one excess of wickedness to another, *deceiving and being deceived*, till, having filled up the measure of their iniquities, they perish with the arch-deceiver in everlasting burnings.

14. But [q] continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; 15. [r] And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, [s] which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16. [t] All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17. [u] That the man of God may be perfect, ‡ thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

q Ch. 1. 13. 1 Tim. 6. 14. John 15. 7. ch. 2. 2—4.
r Prov. 22. 6. Eccl. 12. 1. 2 Chr. 34. 3. 1 Kin. 18. 11. ch. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 4. 6.
s John 5. 39. & 20. 31. Rom. 10. 17. & 15. 4. Ps. 119. 11. Col. 3. 16.
t 2 Pet. 1. 19, 20, 21. 2 Sam. 23. 2. Rom. 5. 4. Tit. 1. 9, 11. & 2. 11, 12. Ps. 119. 9, 11.
u 1 Tim. 6. 11. ch. 2. 21. Luke 16. 29, 31. Ps. 19. 7—11. & 119. 97—100.
‡ Or *perfected.*

Verses 14—17. As he would be exposed to great temptations, the apostle exhorts him to cleave to the scriptures, as the only infallible guide to truth.

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, the pure and unadulterated doctrines of the gospel, which, on the most satisfying evidence, thou hast believed, *knowing of whom thou hast learned them*, even from me, divinely commissioned from the great Redeemer: *and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures*, early initiated in these sacred records, *which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus*, who is the sum and substance of the whole, and to whom both the law and the prophets bear witness. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God*, both the Old and New Testaments have the same divine original; *and is profitable for doctrine*, none demanding our credence and submission, but what can be clearly proved from thence; *for reproof* of errors, heresies, and all manner of evil; *for correction* of whatever is found amiss in the church; *for instruction in righteousness*, how righteousness before God can be obtained, through faith in a Redeemer, and how we can be enabled so to walk as to please God: *that the man of God*, the true believer, *may be perfect, thoroughly* instructed in all the mind of God, and *furnished unto all good works*, whether as a Christian for those of his station, or as a minister for the arduous service in which he is engaged. *Note*, (1.) Parents should betimes endeavour to lead their children to the Bible. (2.) All the volumes of human learning can never teach us so much true wisdom as one page, one line of the book of God; after all these labours we must have been left to perish in ignorance; but in the oracles of truth, life and immortality are brought to light, and the poorest and most unlettered saint of God is wiser, in the things which make for his everlasting peace, than the deepest metaphysician, or the most profound philosopher. (3.) All scripture is of divine authority, therefore on God's testimony to be received with faith. Our wisdom, where ought mysterious is revealed, is not to reason, but to believe. (4.) The book of God is the Christian's great magazine; he can be in no state and condition, but he will there find direction, instruction, reproof, or comfort, exactly suited to his circumstances.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 66.

In this chapter St Paul, 1. *Doth with great solemnity and earnestness press Timothy to the diligent and conscientious discharge of his work and office, as an evangelist: and the charge given to him, all gospel ministers are to take to themselves*, ver. 1—5. 2 *Why must Timothy now be instant in season, &c. in a particular manner? Because the church was likely to be deprived of the apostle's labours, for his departure was at hand*, ver. 6—8. 3. *Divers particular matters, with a hint and caution about Alexander the coppersmith*, ver. 9—16. 4. *He informeth him of what befell him at his first answer; though men forsook him, the Lord stood by him, and that encouraged him to hope for future deliverance*, ver. 16—18. *And then he concludes with salutations and a benediction*, ver. 19, to the end.

1. I [a] CHARGE *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, [b] who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2. [c] Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; [d] reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. 3. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4. [e] And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5. [f] But watch thou in all things, [g] endure afflictions, [h] do the work of an evangelist, [i] make full proof of thy ministry. 6. For I am now [k] ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7. [l] I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me [m] a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, [n] the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that [o] love his appearing.

a 2 Thes. 2. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 21. & 6. 13. ch. 2. 14.
b Acts 10. 42. & 17. 31. John 5. 22. Rev. 20. 11, 12. Mat. 25. 31—46. Rom. 14. 9—12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 7—10. Heb. 9. 28.
c Luke 14. 23. Hos. 8. 1. Prov. 25. 11. Acts 20. 7. 1 Tim. 5. 20. Tit. 2. 15. & 1. 9, 11, 13. ch. 2. 24, 25. & 3. 10, 16. Col. 1. 28, 29. Acts 20. 20, 21, 27, 31.
d See 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. ch. 3. 1—6. 1 Kin. 22. 8. Is. 30. 10. Amos 7. 12, 13. Mic. 2. 11. ch. 2. 16. 1 Tim. 6. 3—5, 20. Rom. 2. 8.
e 1 Tim. 1. 4, 6, 7. & 4. 7. & 6. 20. Tit. 1. 10, 14. with 2 Pet. 1. 16.
f 1 Thes. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. Acts 20. 28. 1 Tim. 4. 16. Heb. 13. 17.
g Ch. 1. 8. & 2. 3, 10. & 3. 10—12.
h Acts 21. 8. Eph. 4. 11.
i Or *fulfil.* Col. 1. 25. & 4. 17. Rom. 15. 19.
k Phil. 1. 23. & 2. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 14. 1 Sam. 20. 3.
l 1 Tim. 6. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 24, 25. Phil. 3. 14. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Rev. 2. 10, 11. John 17. 4. & 19. 30. 1 Pet. 5. 4 Rev. 2. 10. Heb. 6. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 13. Heb. 9. 28.
m 1 Cor. 9. 25. Jam. 1. 12. n 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7. Gen. 18. 25. o Rom. 8. 23. 2 Cor. 5.

Verses 1—8. The apostle being now ready to conclude his epistle, gives Timothy,

1. His solemn charge. *I charge thee before* the great heart-searching *God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom*, in the last great day, when he shall come in his glory, and give to every man according to his work; *preach the word*, proclaiming, as a herald aloud, the blessed gospel; *be instant in season*, and as some may think, *out of season*; earnest to inculcate the truth upon men's consciences, both on the Lord's day, and every other opportunity, not only in time of peace, but amidst all opposition and persecution: *reprove, rebuke* gainsayers, backsliders, sinners; *exhort* and encourage the faithful, *with all long-suffering*, unwearied in the service, not discouraged at any difficulties in the way, *and* with that *doctrine*, which is according to the scriptures, and profitable for the souls of men. *Note*, (1.) Ministers must not only *preach*, but be *instant*; frozen discourses, languidly delivered, will never fire the hearer's soul. (2.) They who have the work of Christ at heart, will be perhaps often thought very unseasonable in the frequency of their public ministrations, or the freedom of their private rebukes; but they have here a divine warrant.

2. He warns him how difficult it will prove to be faithful

amidst the abounding errors. *For the time will come*, and the mystery of iniquity already begins to operate, *when they will not endure sound doctrine*, the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, *but after their own* depraved *lusts* and passions, *shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears*, desiring to have their fancies entertained, and their corruptions flattered, instead of the free, honest, and faithful rebuke which the gospel ministers deliver. *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth*, averse from it, and refusing to obey it, *and shall be turned unto fables*, listening to the seducing teachers, who with idle tales amuse, and with falsehood lull their consciences asleep. *Note*, They who like to be flattered in their sins, rather than to hear faithful reproof, are justly given up to their own delusions, and the blind are suffered to follow the blind, till both fall into the pit of hell.

3. He admonishes Timothy to guard against these deceivers, and to caution the people that they be not imposed upon. *But watch thou in all things* over thy own heart, and over the church committed to thy care, guarding against the first appearances of evil and error: *endure afflictions* with fortitude and patience: *do the work of an evangelist* with all fidelity and zeal; *make full proof of thy ministry*, that gainsayers may be silenced, and believers comforted and edified.

4. He informs Timothy of his approaching dissolution and glorious hope for his encouragement to follow his steps. *For I am now ready to be offered up*, and to pour out my blood as a libation in the service of the gospel: *and the time of my departure is at hand*, when my disembodied soul shall go to the bosom of my Lord. *I have fought a good fight*, and through grace can look back with satisfaction on my warfare; *I have finished my course*, and am near the glorious prize; *I have kept the faith*, maintained the purity of the doctrines of Christ, and adorned them by unimpeached fidelity in my own conversation. *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge*, the rewarder of those whom he hath chosen and called, and strengthened for the conflict, *shall give me at that day* of his appearing and glory: *and not to me only, but unto all them also who love his appearing*, and live under the influence, and in the prospect and earnest expectation of it. *Note*, (1.) The fidelity of others should be a quickening motive to excite our diligence; and their dying testimony to the blessedness of Christ's ways, should comfort and encourage us to persevere in them. (2.) When we have the sure hope of the crown of righteousness, the day of our departure will be the brightest which ever dawned upon us. (3.) They who are faithful unto death may with delight look back; and whilst they ascribe all to their Master's grace, they cannot but rejoice in the evidence which the review affords of their approved sincerity before him. (4.) Whatever difficulties are in our way, we have a good cause to bear us out, and should comfortably and courageously persevere; whatever we lose for Christ here, we shall, at least in eternity, be unspeakable gainers by him. (5.) There is an awful day at hand, and a righteous judge expected. Blessed and happy are they who truly love the day of his appearing, and can say with confidence, and real desire, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

9. [p] Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: 10. For [q] Demas [r] hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed into Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, [s] Titus unto Dalmatia. 11. Only [t] Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. 12. And [u] Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. 13. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but* especially * the parchments. 14. [x] Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord [y] reward him according to his works: 15. [z] Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood † our words.

p Ch. 1. 4. ver. 21.
q Col. 4. 14. Philem. 24.
r Ver. 16. ch. 1. 15. Phil. 2. 21. 1 Tim. 6. 10.
s Gal. 2. 1, 3. 2 Cor. 2. 13. Tit. 1. 4.
t Acts 16. 10. Col. 4. 14. Philem. 24. Luke 1. 3. Acts 1. 1. & 12. 12, 25. & 13. 5, 13. & 15. 37—39. Col. 4. 10. Philem. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 13.
u Acts 20. 4. Eph. 6. 21. Col. 4. 7. Tit. 3. 12.

* Perhaps original copies of his epistles.
x 1 Tim. 1. 20. Acts 19. 33, 34.
y 2 Sam. 3. 39. Ps. 28. 4. Rev. 18. 6. Is. 3. 11.
z Mat. 10. 16, 17. & 7. 15. Phil. 3. 2.
† Or *our preachings*.

Verses 9—15. Several directions are given to Timothy:

1. *Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me*, as I especially need thy company at this time. *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world*, and now, in this trying season, hath shamefully deserted me, pursuing his own base and worldly interests, *and is departed into Thessalonica*, to be out of the danger to which here he might, as my companion, have been exposed: *Crescens* is gone, on affairs of the church, *to Galatia*, and *Titus to Dalmatia*: so that I am almost left alone. *Only Luke is with me*, my true and faithful fellow-labourer, *and Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus*. *Note*, The love of this present world hath fatally warped many from their fidelity to Christ.

2. *Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry*. Whatever just cause of displeasure the apostle might have had formerly against him, he was now returned to his duty, and therewith to Paul's favour and regard. *Note*, Those who have never so much offended us, we should cordially again receive, whenever they humbly desire to return to the right way.

3. *The cloak*, or, as others render it, *the desk, that I left at Troas, with Carpus*, my host, *when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments*. What these writings contained, of which the apostle was so careful, is uncertain; some have thought it was the roll of his freedom, others, the copies of his epistles, which had been sent to the several churches.

4. He admonishes him to beware of a bitter enemy to Christianity. *Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil*, (Acts xix. 33.) and still bears an implacable enmity to me. *The Lord reward him according to his works*, to whose righteous judgment I leave him. *Of whom be thou ware also: for he hath greatly withstood our words*, and endeavoured to prejudice both Jews and Gentiles against that gospel which we preach. *Note*, Though no private revenge must dictate a thought or wish of resentment, yet obstinate and incorrigible enemies to truth and godliness are to be delivered up to an avenging God.

16. At my first answer [a] no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: [b] *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge. 17. [c] Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; [d] that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and [e] I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18. [f] And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and [g] will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: [h] to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen. 19. Salute [i] Prisca and Aquila, and [k] the household of Onesiphorus. 20. [l] Erastus abode at Corinth: but [m] Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. 21. [n] Do thy diligence to come before winter. [o] Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all

a Ver. 10. ch. 1. 15. Mat. 26. 56. Jer. 9. 3. Ps. 14. 2, 4.
b Luke 23. 34. Acts 7. 60.
c Ps. 109. 31. Is. 41. 10, 14, 15. & 43. 2. & 46. 4.
d Mat. 10. 19. Acts 23. 11. & 27. 23, 24. ch. 1. 7. Phil. 1. 12—14. Col. 1. 25, 26. Rom. 16. 25, 26.
e Ps. 22. 21. Is. 48. 25, 26.
f 1 Sam. 17. 37. 2 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 13.
g 1 Pet. 1. 5—7. Jude 1. Ps. xci. & 73. 24.
h Rom. 9. 5. & 16. 27. 1 Tim. 6. 16. & 1. 17.
i Acts 18. 2, 26. Rom. 16. 3.
k Ch. 1. 16—18.
l Acts 19. 22. Rom. 16. 23.
m Acts 20. 4. & 21. 29.
n Ch. 1. 4. ver. 9. Rom. 16. 21—23. o 1 Cor. 16. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 13. Phil. 4. 21, 22. Col. 1. 14.

the brethren. 22. [p] The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

[p] Gal. 6. 18. Philem. 25. see 1 Tim. 6. 21.

Verses 16—22. The apostle here,

1. Informs Timothy of his present circumstances. *At my first answer*, when I was called to defend myself before the emperor, *no man stood with me, but all*, who could be of any service by their countenance or presence, *forsook me*, through fear and cowardice: *I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge*, but that he would pardon this unfaithfulness, and bring them to repentance. *Notwithstanding*, though deserted by men, *the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me* with boldness, freedom, and fidelity to plead the cause of his gospel; *that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear*, who were present at my trial, or to whom the substance of it should be related: *and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion*, from the cruel Nero, and the jaws of death, which seemed to yawn for me. *And* I am fully confident, from long experience, that *the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work*, that I shall never speak nor act unbecoming the character I bear, intimidated by any fear of sufferings; *and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom*, giving me the inheritance in glory which he hath provided and promised: *to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen! Note*, (1.) In trying times we are not to be surprised if many desert us who promised very fair. (2.) If the Lord stand by us, we want no other support. (3.) It is our comfort, whatever befalls us, that we have a heavenly kingdom secured, and then come life, come death, all must be well.

2. He sends his own and others' salutations, and hastens Timothy to come to him. *Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus*, the chamberlain, *abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick*, not having any suggestion from the Lord, or power, miraculously to restore him. *Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren* in these parts.

3. He concludes with his hearty benediction and prayer for him. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit*, to quicken, teach, guide, and preserve thee. *Grace be with you*, and all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO

TITUS.

Introduction.

THIS Epistle of Paul to Titus is much of the same nature with those to Timothy; both were converts of Paul, and his companions in labours and sufferings, both in the office of evangelists, whose work was to water the churches planted by the apostles, and to set in order the things that were wanting in them. We read much of this Titus, his titles and character, and active usefulness in many places: He was a Greek, Gal. ii. 3. St Paul called him *his son*, Tit. i. 4. *his brother*, 2 Cor. ii. 13. *his partner and fellow-helper*, 2 Cor. viii. 23. *one that walked in the same Spirit, and in the same steps with himself.* He went up with the apostle to the church at Jerusalem, Gal. ii. 1. was much conversant at Corinth, for which church he had *an earnest care*, 2 Cor. viii. 16. Paul's second epistle to them, and probably his first also, was sent by his hand, 2 Cor. viii. 16, 17, 18, 23. and chap. ix. 2, 3, 4. and chap. xii. 18. He was with the apostle at Rome, and thence went into Dalmatia, 2 Tim. iv. 10. after which no more occurs of him in the scriptures. In Crete, a large island at the mouth of the Ægean sea, the gospel had got some footing; and here were Paul and Titus in one of their travels cultivating this plantation; but *the apostle of the Gentiles*, having on him *the care of all the churches*, could not himself tarry long at this place: he therefore left Titus some time there to carry on the work which had been begun; wherein, probably meeting with more difficulty than ordinary, Paul wrote this epistle to him. He was to see all the cities furnished with good pastors; to reject and keep out the unmeet and unworthy; to teach sound doctrine, and instruct all sorts in their duties; to set forth the free grace of God in man's salvation by Christ; and withal to show the necessity of maintaining good works by those who have believed in God, and hope for eternal life from him.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

In this chapter we have, (1.) *The preface or introduction to the epistle,* ver. 1—4. (2.) *The end of Titus' being left at Crete,* ver. 5. *And,* (3.) *How the same should be pursued in reference both to good and bad ministers, from* ver. 6, to the end.

1. PAUL, [a] a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to [b] the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth [c] which is after godliness; 2. [d] * In hope of eternal life, which God, that [e] cannot lie, promised [f] before the world began; 3. [g] But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is [h] committed unto me according to the commandment of [i] God our Saviour; 4. To [k] Titus, [l] *mine* own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, [m] from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

a Acts 13. 9. & 9. 15. & 22. 21. & 26. 16—18. Rom. 1. 5, 9, 11. Jam. 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 1.
b Acts 13. 48. John 10. 26. Eph. 2. 8. 2 Tim. 1. 5. Col. 2. 12.
c 1 Tim. 3. 16. & 6. 3. ch. 2. 11, 12.
d Rom. 8. 24. & 5. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 3. Gal. 5. 5. Col. 1. 23. 1 Thes. 5. 8. Heb. 6. 18, 19. ch. 3. 7.
* Or *for.*
e Num. 23. 19. Heb. 6. 17, 18. 1 Sam. 15. 29. 2 Tim. 2. 13.
f Rom. 1. 2. & 16. 25. Eph. 1. 4, 9. & 3. 9. Col. 1. 26. 2 Tim. 1. 9, 10. 1 Pet. 1. 20. Mat. 25. 34.
g Rom. 16. 26. Col. 1. 6, 23, 26. Eph. 3. 5—8. 1 Cor. 1. 21. Mark 16. 15.
h Acts 20. 24. 1 Cor. 9. 16. 2 Cor. 2. 12. & 4. 13. Gal. 1. 1, 11. & 2. 2, 7. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. & 2. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 10, 11. 1 Thes. 2. 4.
i 1 Tim. 1. 1. & 2. 3. & 4. 10.
k 2 Cor. 2. 3. & 8. 6, 16. & 12. 18. Gal. 2. 3.
l 1 Tim. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 4. 15.
m See Rom. 1. 7. 2 Cor. 13. 11, 14. Philem. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2.

Verses 1—4. The apostle opens with his usual address.

1. He sets forth his own divine commission and apostleship. This epistle comes from *Paul*, who counts it his highest honour to be called *a servant of God* in the gospel of his dear Son, *and an apostle of Jesus Christ*, sent to bear the glad tidings of his salvation to Gentile lands, *according to the faith of God's elect*, the doctrine which is to be embraced by all whom the Lord hath chosen, *and* is pleased effectually to call to *the knowledge of the truth which is after godliness*, and which, having heartily embraced myself, I now with delight publish to others: *in hope of eternal life, which* all who live godly in Christ Jesus are sure to attain unto, because *God, who cannot lie*, hath *promised* it unto them, in Christ their head, *before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Saviour;* and I have with all fidelity laboured to discharge the important trust. *Note*, (1.) The highest dignity is to be the servant of the living God. (2.) There is an elect of God, to whom the gospel will be infallibly effectual. (3.) All who are chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, are in the fulness of time brought to confess the faith, acknowledge the truth, and in all godliness to show its influence upon their hearts. (4.) Eternal life is as sure to all the faithful as the promise of an unchangeable God can make it; he must be false to his word before they can fail of their inheritance in glory. (5.) They who are ministers of God, must be indefatigable in preaching. Dumb dogs that cannot, or will not bark, are not of the Great Shepherd's appointment. 2. He wishes Titus the best of blessings. *To Titus, mine own son after the common faith*, my spiritual child, begotten in the gospel, be *grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. Note*, (1.) All believers have one common faith, and are united to the same Jesus. (2.) If Christ be indeed *our Saviour*, then God's sovereign and everlasting *love* and *mercy*, in all their boundless import of pardon and salvation to the uttermost, and *peace* of conscience, present and eternal, will be our blessed portion.

5. For this cause left I thee in [n] Crete, [o] that thou shouldest set in order the things that are † wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed [p] thee: 6. [p] If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. 7. For [q] a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; [r] not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; 8. But [s] a lover of hospitality, a lover of ‡ good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; 9. [t] Holding fast the faithful word, ‖ as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. 10. [u] For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: 11. [x] Whose mouths must be stopped; [y] who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, [z] for filthy lucre's sake.

n Acts 27. 7, 12, 13.
o 1 Cor. 11. 34. 1 Tim. 1. 3. Acts 13. 23. 2 Tim. 2. 2.
† Or *left undone.*
p 1 Tim. 3. 2—7, 12. 1 Thes. 2. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 12. & 6. 10—12. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Gen. 18. 19. Josh. 24. 15.
q 2 Cor. 6. 3—10. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. Mat. 24. 45. 1 Tim. 3. 2, 3.
r Prov. 26. 12, 16. 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25. Lev. 10. 9. Eph. 5. 18. Ezek. 44. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 2. Is. 56. 10—12. 1 Tim. 3. 3, 8.
s 1 Tim. 3. 2, 11. 1 Cor. 6. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 22.
‡ Or *good things.*
t 2 Thes. 2. 15. 2 Tim. 1. 13. Prov. 23. 23. Jude 3. 1 Tim. 1. 10. & 6. 3. ch. 2. 1, 2, 7, 8.
‖ Or *in teaching.*
u Acts 15. 15, 24. & 20. 29. Rom. 16. 17, 18. Gal. 1. 6—8. & 3. 1. Eph. 4. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 4, 6, 7. & 6. 3—5, 20. Col. 2. 8, 18—22. 2 Tim. 4. 4. & 3. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 1—3, 10—19. 1 John 4. 1.
x Ver. 9. ch. 3. 10. Rev. 2. 2.
y Mat. 23. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 6.
z Is. 56. 11. Ezek. 13. 19. Mic. 3. 5, 11. Rom. 16. 18. Phil. 3. 19. 1 Tim. 3. 3, 8. & 6. 5, 10.

Verses 5—11. St Paul,

1. Reminds him of the end for which he was left in Crete. *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting*, directing them concerning the proper discipline, worship, and conduct, to be observed by this lately converted church; *and ordain elders in every city, as I have appointed thee*, such as shall be found duly qualified for the ministerial work.

2. He describes the character of those whom he should ordain. *If any be blameless*, having a good report of those who know him best: *the husband of one wife*, no polygamist: *having faithful children*, brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; *not accused of riot, or unruly*, dissolute and refractory, but kept under due restraint; neither a disgrace to themselves or their parents. *For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God*, appointed to that high charge in his holy family, and therefore of a character irreproachable; *not self-willed*, of a rash and obstinate temper; *not soon angry*, and firing at every provocation; *not given to wine*, addicted to drunkenness, or fond of the glass; *no striker*, violent in his passions; *not given to filthy lucre*, a mercenary wretch, who serves for hire; *but* out of zeal for Christ and the souls of men. He must be also a *lover of hospitality*, entertaining poor strangers, and Christians driven from their homes by the fury of persecution: *a lover of good men*, without prejudice or exception; *sober*, grave and prudent in his carriage and deportment; *just* and upright in his conversation; *holy* in all his conduct; *temperate* in his desires and appetites; *holding fast the faithful word*, maintaining the purity of the gospel, and dispensing it with all fidelity, *as he hath been taught by us; that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort* and comfort the true members of Christ's church, *and to convince gainsayers* of their errors. *For* such spiritual wisdom is necessary, because *there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers* in Crete as well as other churches, who though professing Christianity, walk disorderly, and with their heretical tenents draw away disciples after them; *especially they of the circumcision*, who are the great corrupters of the faith, urging circumcision and the observance of the Mosaical institutions as necessary to salvation; *whose mouths must be stopped*, not by force, but by sound truth and scriptural arguments to detect their fallacies and silence their cavils; *who subvert whole houses,*

insinuating themselves into the families of professors, *teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake,* adapting their teaching to the palates of their hearers, in order to insinuate into their confidence, and enrich themselves at their expense.

12. One of themselves, *even* a [a] prophet of their own, said, The Cretians *are* always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. 13. This witness is true: wherefore [b] rebuke them sharply, that they may be [c] sound in the faith; 14. [d] Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. 15. [e] Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. 16. [f] They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work * reprobate.

* Or *void of judgment.*

a Acts 17. 28. Rom. 2. 14.
b 1 Tim. 5. 20. 2 Tim. 4. 2. ch. 2. 15.
c Ch. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 10, 19. & 4. 6. & 6. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 13. Rev. 2. 13. & 3. 8, 10.
d 1 Tim. 1. 4, 6, 7. & 4. 7. & 6. 3—5, 20. 2 Tim. 4. 4. Mat. 5. 9. Col. 2. 20—22. Is. 29. 13. & 66. 3, 4.
e Mat. 15. 11. Luke 11. 39, 41. Acts 10. 15. Rom. 14. 14, 20, 23. 1 Cor. 6. 12. & 10. 23, 25. 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4. Hag. 2. 13.
f Is. 29. 13. & 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31. Hos. 11. 12. & 6. 4, 7. Rom. 2. 17—24. 2 Tim. 3. 5, 8. Jude 4. Rom. 1. 28—32.

Verses 12—16. The national character of the Cretians was very bad, therefore they would need sharp rebuke.

1. The apostle quotes one of their own writers. *One of themselves, even a prophet,* or *poet, of their own,* Epimenedes, *said, the Cretians are always liars,* peculiarly addicted to this sin; *evil beasts,* ravenous, gluttonous, and insatiate in their appetites; *slow bellies,* luxurious and indolent: and *this witness is true,* it is their just character. *Wherefore,*

2. *Rebuke them sharply;* such scandalous deeds required severe and cutting remonstrances, *that* their sin and danger being set before them, *they may be sound in the faith,* warned by these rebukes of others to be more watchful, or recovered from such grievous backsliding: *not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men,* the ridiculous legends and vain traditions of those Judaizing teachers, *that turn from the truth,* apostates themselves, and labouring to pervert the faith of others, and to adulterate the blessed gospel of grace, by enforcing upon the conscience the abrogated rites of the Mosaical law. *Unto the pure all things are pure,* and no ceremonial uncleanness contracted by the touch or taste of things forbidden by the Levitical institutions; *but unto them that are defiled,* by the reigning impurity of their hearts and lives, *and unbelieving,* destitute of faith in Jesus, there *is nothing pure,* all they do and say is abominable in the sight of God; *but even their mind and conscience is defiled,* and, when the fountain is thus polluted, every stream which flows from it must needs be foul. *They profess* indeed *to know God,* and make great boasts of their wisdom; *but in works they deny him,* and act as infidels, *being abominable,* in their spirit *and* conduct, *disobedient* to all God's holy laws, as well as enemies to his gospel, *and,* in short, *to every good work reprobate,* unfit and unable for, as well as disinclined to, the practice of them. *Note,* (1.) Stubborn sinners call for severe rebuke. Lenity, where the knife is required, is really cruelty to the patient. (2.) The best preservative against the wiles of deceivers is being sound in the faith. They who are sure grounded on Christ will not easily be shaken. (3.) They who are destitute of right principles must necessarily err in all their conduct: every thing they do, even what is in itself right, as to the matter and deed itself, becomes sin to them, because it proceeds from wrong principles, and is directed to wrong ends. (4.) It is not sounding professions, but holy lives which characterise real Christians. *Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus.*

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

The apostle here directs Titus about the faithful discharge of his own office, generally, ver. 1. *and particularly, as to several sorts of persons,* ver. 2—10. *and gives the grounds of these and of other following directions,* ver. 11—14. *with a summary direction in the close,* ver. 15.

1. BUT [a] speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: 2. [b] That the aged men be * sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. 3. [c] The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness; not [d] false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4. That they may teach the young women to be [e] sober, [f] to love their husbands, to love their children, 5. *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. 6. Young men likewise exhort to be ‡ [g] sober-minded.

a 1 Tim. 1. 10. & 6. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 13. & 4. 3. ch. 1. 9, 13. ver. 2, 11—14. ch. 3. 8.
b Prov. 16. 31. 1 John 2. 13, 14. Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. Ps. 71. 18. & 92. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 5—8. Deut. 32. 29.
* Or *vigilant.*
c 1 Tim. 2. 9, 10. & 3. 11. & 5. 5, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 1—5. Phil. 4. 3. ver. 4.
† Or *holy women.*
d Or *makebates,* or *devils.* 1 Tim. 3. 8, 11.
e Or *wise.* Ver. 2, 6.
f Ch. 3. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 5, 6. Eph. 5. 22. Acts 9. 36.
1 Tim. 5. 10, 14. & 6. 1. & 2. 11, 15. ver. 3, 10. Rom. 2. 24. & 13. 8—10.
‡ Or *discreet.*
g Ver. 2, 4. Eccl. 11. 9. & 12. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Prov. 1. 4. & 22. 6.

Verses 1—6. the apostle proceeds to direct Titus in the faithful discharge of his office. *But,* in contradiction to these deceivers, *speak thou the things which become sound doctrine,* the wholesome truths of God's life-giving word, dividing it aright to every man, according to their age, station, and circumstances.

1. *That the aged men,* as their years as well as profession especially demand from them, *be sober, or vigilant,* circumspect in their conduct: *grave,* in habit, manners, conversation, that they may engage the reverence of their younger brethren; *temperate* and prudent, having their passions and appetites in subjection; *sound in the faith,* in doctrine and practice; *in charity* enlarged; *in patience* exemplary, bearing the provocations of others with meekness, and not fretful under their own infirmities. Such old disciples are noble ornaments to their Christian profession.

2. *The aged women, likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness,* in dress, conversation, and deportment; *not false accusers,* not slandering and defaming any, nor sowing discord among brethren; *not given to much wine,* drunkenness, or the love of liquor, being in women doubly odious and hateful; *teachers of good things,* by their example and discourse inculcating on their daughters every thing which may adorn the Christian name.

3. What the aged must teach, the younger women should learn of them, *to be sober,* avoiding every appearance of wantonness, excess, or levity; *to love their husbands,* cleaving to them in warm affection; *to love their children,* training them up from infancy in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; *to be discreet* in the management of their families; *chaste,* showing the most unfeigned modesty and purity of manners; *keepers at home,* not gadding about to the neglect of their domestic affairs, but ever best pleased to be in their own house; *good,* kind and gentle to their servants, and, like Dorcas, full of alms-deeds and good works; *obedient to their own husbands,* delighting to serve and please them in all things, *that the word of God be not blasphemed* by a contrary behaviour, which would give the adversaries of Christianity occasion to speak reproachfully. *Note,* Nothing makes Christianity appear so amiable as the conscientious discharge of the relative duties which it enjoins.

4. *Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded,* serious, solid, tractable, having a due sense of their own inexperience, and willing to be ruled and advised by their elder and wiser friends.

h 1 Thes. 2. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 3. 1 Tim. 6. 11, 12. 13. & 4. 12. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 13. 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 13. & 5. 10. i 1 Tim. 5. 14. & 6. 3, 20. 1 Pet. 2. 12, 15. & 2. 16. with Luke 1. 6. Acts 24. 16. Phil. 2. 14—16. 1 Thes. 2. 16.

7. h In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *shewing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, 8. Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; i that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Verses 7, 8. We have a particular direction for Titus himself, who, as a young man, should be the example of what he taught to his brethren. *In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works;* practising what he preached: *in doctrine shewing uncorruptness,* declaring the pure unadulterated truth, and maintaining a single eye to God's glory and the benefit of immortal souls; *gravity,* with all seriousness delivering his message, and with all *sincerity;* using *sound speech that cannot be condemned,* inculcating scripture truths in scripture language, and with such plainness and simplicity as *that he that is of the contrary part,* and would be glad to carp at and censure any ambiguous expression, *may be ashamed* of his malicious design, *having no evil thing to say of you,* finding no just charge of error in doctrine, or immorality in practice, to allege against you. *Note,* (1.) They who preach to others must by their practice prove that they believe themselves, else how can it be thought that others should credit them? (2.) Many watch for the halting of Christ's ministers; and the knowledge of this should make them more watchful over all that they speak or do, that confusion may cover their malignant enemies.

k Eph. 6. 5. Col. 3. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 1. 2. || Or *gainsaying.* l Gen. 31. 38, 39. & 39. 6. m Mat. 5. 16. Eph. 4. 1. & 5. 8. Phil. 2. 15, 16. & 1. 27. & 4. 8. & 1. 9, 10. 1 Thes. 2. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 14. & 6. 1. 1 Pet. 3. 15, 16. Neh. 5. 9. n See 1 Tim. 1. 1. ch. 1. 3.

9. *Exhort* k servants to be obedient unto their own masters, *and* to please *them* well in all *things;* not ||answering again; 10. l Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may m adorn the doctrine of n God our Saviour in all things.

Verses 9, 10. The duty of servants, is here prescribed. *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters,* with inward respect, as well as all outward dutiful submission; *and to please them well in all things* lawful to be done; *not answering again,* disputing their orders, murmuring at their commands, or daring to make an impertinent or saucy reply; *not purloining* the least thing from them, *but,* to a crumb of bread, strictly honest; nor conniving at the least waste or robbery committed by others; *shewing all good fidelity,* true to every trust reposed in them, speaking with the greatest veracity, and punctual in the observance of their orders; *that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,* and even in the eyes of their unbelieving masters, if under such, recommend the religion which they profess. *Note,* Such a servant as is here described is a great acquisition. Would to God that those who make profession of godliness oftener read this apostolic directory!

o Ch. 3. 4. Rom. 5. 20, 21. or Acts 20. 24, 32. & 13. 26. Eph. 1. 13. Mark 16. 15, 16. Is. 12. 1—3. Heb. 2. 3. * Or *that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared.* p Is. 2. 2, 3. & 11. 9. & 60. 1—3. Ps. 98. 1—3. Luke 3. 6. John 1. 9. Mark 15. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Rom. 10. 18. & 15. 8—19. Eph. 3. 6—8. Col. 1. 6, 23, 27. q 2 Cor. 7. 1. Eph. 5. 3—5. 2 Cor. 3. 5—24. Rom. 8. 13. & xii—xiv. 1 Pet. i—v. 2 Pet. 1. 3—10. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 15. & 3. 3. & 4. 8. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 7. 1. Acts 24. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 2. 1 John 2. 16.

11. For o the grace of God * that bringeth salvation hath p appeared to all men, 12. Teaching us, that, q denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13. r Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14. s Who gave himself for us, t that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. 15. u These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

r 1 Cor. 1. 7. Phil. 3. 20, 21. Acts 24. 15. Col. 3. 2. 2 Tim. 4. 1, 8. Heb. 9. 28. 2 Pet. 3. 12, 14. 1 John 3. 2. Rom. 8, 23, 24. Gal. 5. 5. Mat. 24. 30, 31. & 25. 31—46. & 19. 28. 1 Thes. 4. 16. Rev. 20. 11, 12. s Mat. 20. 28. & 26. 28. Gal. 1. 4. & 2. 20. & 3. 13. & 4. 4. Eph. 5. 3, 23—27. & 1. 7. & 2. 10. Col. 2. 11—15. 1 Tim. 1. 15. & 2. 6. Heb. 9. 12, 14. & 10. 12, 14. & 7. 25, 26. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. 1 John 3. 5, 8. t Exod. 19. 5, 6. Deut. 7. 6. & 26. 18. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Eph. 2. 10. ch. 3. 6. u 1 Tim. 1. 3. & 5. 7, 20. & 4. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 2. & 2. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 16. 11. ch. 1. 9, 13.

Verses 11—15. The strongest motives are here suggested to enforce the practice before recommended.

1. This is one great end of our redemption. *For the grace of God* displayed in the gospel word, *that bringeth salvation,* declaring the sovereign and free mercy of God in Christ to miserable sinners, *hath appeared* in the most illustrious manner *to all men,* to men of all ranks, degrees, and nations; *teaching us, that, denying ungodliness* of every kind, *and worldly lusts,* whether of the flesh, of the eye, or the pride of life, (1 John ii. 6.) *we should live soberly,* in the government and subdual of every inordinate appetite and passion; *righteously,* with unimpeached integrity and uprightness in our dealings towards men; *and godly,* in all acts of public and private devotion, in the use of every holy ordinance, and with a constant regard to the divine glory, *in this present world,* full as it is of evil and temptation. *Note,* (1.) Our salvation is purely a matter of grace, flowing from God's boundless and sovereign love, without respect to our deserts or desires. (2.) The gospel is a revelation of mercy to all ranks and degrees; and God appears eminently glorious there, in justifying the chief of sinners who believe in Jesus. (3.) Whenever we are truly partakers of grace, the blessed influence thereof will appear on our hearts and lives, effectually engaging us to renounce every known sin, and powerfully quickening us for the discharge of every duty towards God, our neighbour, or ourselves. The doctrines of grace are the only principles which can produce righteousness and true holiness.

2. We expect the appearing of the great Judge, and therefore are peculiarly called upon to prepare to meet him. *Looking for that blessed hope,* the great object of it, the Lord from heaven; *and the glorious appearing of the great God, and,* or *even, our Saviour Jesus Christ,* who shall shortly sit upon the throne of his glory, when all nations shall be gathered before him, to receive from his lips the irreversible sentence, and in whose favour we have an assured interest; *who gave himself for us* an offering and a sacrifice to God, *that he might redeem us from all iniquity,* both from the guilt and power of it; *and* might *purify to himself a peculiar people,* the objects of his sovereign choice, taken from the corrupted mass of mankind to be to the praise of his glory, and *zealous of good works,* influenced by the divine principle of faith which worketh by love, aiming at the advancement of their Redeemer's honour, and yielding themselves up to be guided by his word and will. *Note,* (1.) Every believer hath a blessed hope before him, under the influence of which he lives comfortably, and supported by which he dies happily. (2.) They who would meet the great God their Saviour in peace, must be found among his redeemed, and experience a present deliverance from the reigning power of iniquity. (3.) Christ's people are indeed *peculiar* in their manners, temper, and conduct, distinguished from the world in which they dwell by the purity of their lives, and their zeal for good works.

3. The apostle enjoins Titus to urge these things upon the consciences of his hearers. *These things speak* with all freedom,

and exhort them diligently to observe; *and rebuke with all authority* those who dare oppose the truth, and would maintain their erroneous principles and practices. *Let no man despise thee;* behave in such a manner as may command respect: and if any notwithstanding presume to treat thee or thy ministry with contempt, it shall be at their peril.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

Of duties which concern Christians more in common, and the reasons of them, ver. 1—8. *What Titus in teaching should avoid, and how he should deal with a heretic, with some other directions,* ver. 9—14. *And salutations in the close,* ver. 15.

1. PUT [a] them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, [b] to be ready to every good work, 2. [c] To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, [d] *but* gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. 3. For [e] we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceiving, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. 4. [f] But after that the kindness and love of [g] God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5. [h] Not by works of righteousness which we have done, [i] but according to his mercy he saved us, by the [k] washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6. [l] Which he shed on us [*] abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7. That being [m] justified by his grace, we should be made [n] heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

[a] Rom. 13. 1—6. 1 Tim. 2. 1. 1 Pet. 23. 1—17. Mat. 22. 21. Jer. 27. 17. Prov. 24. 21. Eccl. 8. 2. & 10. 4. with 2 Pet. 2. 10. Jude 8.
[b] Gal. 6. 9, 10. Eph. 2. 10. ch. 2. 14. ver. 8, 14. Phil. 4. 8. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 2 Pet. 2. 5—8. Ps. xv.
[c] Jam. 4. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 15, 23. & 3. 9. 1 Tim. 3. 3. ch. 1. 10.
[d] 1 Tim. 2. 24, 25. Eph. 4. 2. Phil. 3. 5. Col. 3. 12, 13. Gal. 5. 23. & 6. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 7.
[e] Rom. 3. 9—18. & 1. 28—32. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. Eph. 2. 1—4, 12. & 4. 17—19. & 5. 3—8. Gal. 4. 8. & 5. 19—21. Col. 1. 21. & 3. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 3.
[f] Rom. 5. 20, 21. Eph. 2. 4—10, 13—22. ch. 2. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 11.
[g] 1 Tim. 1. 1. & 2. 3. & 4. 10. ch. 1. 3. & 2. 10. Jude 25. Luke 1. 47. Is. 12. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 9.
[h] Rom. 3. 20, 28. & 9. 11, 16. & 11. 6. Gal. 2. 16, 19—21. Eph. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9.
[i] Ver. 4. Eph. 1. 4. & 2. 4, 7, 8. Rom. 5. 20, 21. & 4. 6. Acts 15. 11.
[k] John 3. 3, 5. Ezek. 36. 25—27. Eph. 5. 25, 26.
[l] Is. 44. 3. Joel 2. 28. Ezek. 36. 25, 27. Acts 2. 23. & 10. 45. John 7. 37. & 6. 45. & 1. 16. Rom. 5. 5.
[*] Gr. *richly.*
[m] Rom. 3. 24, 28. & 4. 6. & 5. 1, 15—21. & 11. 6. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Rev. 1. 5. Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 7. Col. 1. 14.
[n] Rom. 8. 17, 23, 24. Gal. 3. 29. Heb. 1. 14. Jam. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 4. ch. 1. 2.

Verses 1—7. The apostle proceeds,

1. To direct Titus respecting the obedience which he must inculcate as due to the civil magistrate. *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers,* under whatever government they live; *to obey magistrates* with loyalty and willing submission; *to be ready to every good work,* rendering to all degrees of men the duty owing to them: *to speak evil of,* or *blaspheme no man,* reviling the magistrates, or raising any slanderous report; *to be no brawlers,* disturbing the peace of society, turbulent and quarrelsome; *but gentle* in temper and manners, *shewing all meekness to all men,* however perverse or provoking their conduct may be towards us.

2. He suggests the most cogent reasons to enforce his exhortation.

(1.) The consideration of their former sinful state; and the more deeply we are sensible of our own vileness, the more we shall feel ourselves obliged to bear with others. *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish,* as our opposers now are, ignorant of divine truth, and under the darkness of our fallen minds; *disobedient* in spirit and practice, refusing to hear and obey the dictates of God's word; *deceived,* and wandering out of the way, under the influence of a corrupted heart, and the wiles of Satan; *serving divers lusts and pleasures,* perfect slaves to our sensual appetites, the basest of all servitude; *living in malice and envy,* possessed and governed by these diabolical passions; regarding others, who were more prosperous in the world, with a malignant eye, and pleased with any miseries which befell them. *Hateful* to God, and all who bear his image, because of these abominations; *and hating one another* with implacable resentment. What a fearful description! yet in this glass may every enlightened sinner discover his own features, and own the humbling resemblance; for as face answereth face, so doth the heart of man to man.

(2.) The kindness and love of God to them in their miserable estate should engage them to show the like pity and compassion towards others. *But after that,* vile as we were, *the kindness and love of God our Saviour,* notwithstanding, *towards man appeared,* most illustriously displayed in his glorious gospel; *not by works of righteousness which we have done,* for all our works were the very reverse, and merited only wrath to the uttermost; *but according to his mercy,* in the most astonishing manner extended to the miserable and the desperate, *he hath saved us,* freely, sovereignly, and for ever, *by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,* who is the glorious agent of the divine change wrought in regeneration; cleansing our souls from the power of corruption, quickening us to a life of grace and holiness, maintaining and carrying it on day by day, till it is perfected in glory; *which* Holy Ghost *he shed on us abundantly,* both in his gifts and graces, *through Jesus Christ our Saviour,* the purchaser of every blessing for his redeemed people, and the dispenser of this Spirit unto them; *that being justified by his grace,* and through faith of the operation of God brought into a state of pardon and reconciliation, *we should be made heirs* of glory, *according to the hope of eternal life,* which he hath given us in that adored Redeemer, who hath obtained a complete salvation for us, not only from all the miseries of sin, but unto all the blessedness of eternity. *Note,* (1.) The salvation of the sinner is entirely of grace, from the beginning to the end: pardon, holiness, and hope of life eternal, are all the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Saviour. (2.) Though we are justified freely, not for any righteousness of our own, but of God's mere favour; yet do we from that moment become different men, and new creatures, by the Spirit of our God, renewed in our minds, and preparing for the glory which is prepared for us.

8. [o] *This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, [p] that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. 9. But [q] avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. 10. [r] A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; 11. Knowing that he that is such [s] is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

[o] 1 Tim. 1. 15. & 3. 1. & 4. 9. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Prov. 22. 20.
[p] Ver. 14. ch. 2. 14. Eph. 2. 10. Phil. 4. 8. & 2. 15, 16. & 11. 11, 27. Gal. 5. 6, 22, 23, 24. Rom. vi, xii—xiv. Eph. iv—vi. Col. iii. Luke 1. 74, 75. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Ps. 19. 11. Is. 3. 10.
[q] 1 Tim. 1. 4, 6, 7. & 4. 7. & 6. 3—5, 20. 2 Tim. 2. 14, 23. ch. 1. 10, 14. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Col. 2. 4, 8, 18—23. 1 Cor. 8. 1. & 13. 2.
[r] Mat. 18. 17. Rom. 16. 17. 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. 2 Tim. 3.
[s] 5. 2 John 10. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, 13. 1 Tim 1. 20. Gal. 1. 8, 9. & 5. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 8. Heb. 10. 26. John 3. 20. Mat. 22. 35. Luke 7. 30. & 12. 47. Eph. 6. 21.
[s] 1 Tim. 1. 19. & 4. 1.

Verses 8—11. The apostle here,

1. Inculcates the doctrine which Titus must preach. *This is a faithful saying,* all that I have above declared of the duties incumbent on believers, the misery from which they have been redeemed, and the amazing grace of which they have been made partakers, is to be steadfastly believed and embraced; *and these things I will that thou constantly affirm;* often insisting upon them in the course of thy ministry, to the end, *that they which have believed in God,* to the saving of their souls, *might be careful to maintain good works;* to excel, and lead the way to others

(προϊστασθαι) with all diligence and zeal improving every opportunity which offers to be useful. *These things are good and profitable unto men;* these doctrines here enforced have the most immediate tendency to advance the benefit of mankind, and promote their present and eternal good. *Note,* The doctrine of justification by grace is so far from destroying the obligation to good works, that it is the only real and effectual principle which can make us careful to maintain them.

2. He cautions him what to shun. *But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law,* which the Judaizing teachers affect, to the great prejudice of Christianity: *for they are unprofitable and vain;* tending to no useful purpose, but sowing discord in the church, and corrupting the simplicity of the gospel.

3. *A man that is a heretic,* who openly professes and maintains doctrines subversive of the fundamental articles of faith, *after the first and second admonition, reject;* if he continues obstinate in his errors, remove him from your communion, and acknowledge him no longer as a brother: *knowing that he that is such is subverted,* apostate from Christ, the only foundation; *and sinneth* wilfully, *being condemned of himself;* openly broaching his sentiments, departing from the confession of faith which he formerly made, and avowedly separating himself from the church of God. *Note,* They who refuse to be reclaimed from their errors by repeated admonition, must be cut off from the body of the visible church by excommunication.

12. When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or [t] Tychicus, [u] be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis; for I have determined there to winter. 13. Bring Zenas the lawyer and [x] Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. 14. And let ours also learn to [y] maintain good works for necessary uses, [z] that they be not unfruitful. 15. [a] All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

¶ It was written to Titus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.

t See Acts 20. 4. 2 Tim. 4. 12.
u 2 Tim. 4. 9, 21.
x Acts 18. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 12. 3 John 6.
y Or *profess honest trades.* 1 Thes. 2. 9. Eph. 4. 28. 2 Thes. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 12.
z Ver. 8. ch. 2. 14. Phil. 1. 11. & 4. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 8.
a 1 Thes. 5. 26, 28. Col. 4. 15, 18. Phil. 4. 21—23. Eph. 6. 23, 24. Gal. 6. 18. 2 Cor. 13. 12—14. 1 Cor. 16. 20—23. Rom. xvi.

Verses 12—15. We have here,

1. Some particular directions given to Titus. (1.) *When I shall send Artemas unto thee,* to supply thy absence, *or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.* (2.) *Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them,* but that they be supplied with every necessary for their travels, when they remove to preach the gospel in some other place. (3.) *And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful,* but adorn the profession which they make, diligent in their several employments, and liberal according to their ability in the maintenance of their ministers, or in assisting any of their brethren who may need their support.

2. He concludes with salutations and his apostolic benediction. *All that are with me salute thee* affectionately. *Greet them that love us in the faith,* and are one in sentiment and heart with us. *Grace be with you all,* in its most abundant fruits and richest manifestations, *Amen!* so prays your faithful friend, confident that God will hear and answer his petitions for you.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

EPISTLE OF ST PAUL

TO

PHILEMON.

Introduction.

THIS epistle to Philemon is placed the last of those with the name of Paul to them, perhaps because the shortest, and of an argument peculiar and different from all others, yet such as the Spirit of God, which indited it, saw would, in its kind, be very instructive and useful in the churches. The occasion of it was this: Philemon, one of note, and probably a minister in the church of Colosse, a city of Phrygia, had a servant named Onesimus, who, having purloined his goods, ran away from him, and in his rambles came to Rome, where Paul was then a prisoner for the gospel, and providentially coming under his preaching there, was, by the blessing of God, converted by him; after which he ministered a while to the apostle in bonds, and might have been further useful to him, but understanding him to be another man's servant, he would not, without his consent, detain him, but sends him back with this letter commendatory, wherein he earnestly sues for his pardon and kind reception.

ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this epistle we have the preface, ver. 1—7. *The substance and body of it,* ver. 8—21. *And then the conclusion,* ver. 22 to the end.

1. [a] PAUL, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-labourer, 2. And to *our* beloved Apphia, and [b] Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to [c] the church in thy house: 3. [d] Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 4. [e] I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers; 5. [f] Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints; 6. That [g] the communication of thy faith may become effectual, by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. 7. [h] For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

a Acts 27. 1. & 28. 16, 17. Eph. 3. 1. 13. & 4. 1. & 6. 20. Phil. 1. 7, 13. Col. 4. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 8. ver. 9.

b Col. 4. 7. Phil. 2. 25.

c Rom. 16. 5. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Col. 4. 15.

d Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 2. & 13. 14. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 2. Col. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Tit. 1. 4.

e Rom. 1. 8. Phil. 1. 3. Col. 1. 3. 1 Thes. 1. 2. 2 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 3.

f Eph. 1. 15. Col. 1. 4. 1 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 5.

g Heb. 13. 16. & 6. 10. & 10. 24. Rom. 12. 13. 2 Cor. 8. 4. & 9. 13. Phil. 4. 14, 15. & 1. 5, 9. Tit. 2. 24.

h 2 Cor. 7. 4, 13. 1 Thes. 3. 7. with 1 Cor. 16. 18. 2 Tim. 1. 16.

Verses 1—7. We have here the preface to this short but beautiful epistle, and may observe,

1. The persons from whom it comes: from *Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ,* now suffering for the gospel cause; *and Timothy our brother:* and where two such eminent servants of the Saviour concurred in a request, what could be denied them?

2. The persons to whom it is directed: *unto Philemon our dearly beloved* brother in Christ, *and fellow-labourer* in the gospel; *and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier,* in the glorious warfare under Christ the Captain of our salvation; *and to the church in thy house,* his whole family being converts to the faith, or the faithful at Colosse assembled there for worship; and by thus saluting them he seems desirous to interest them on his behalf, and to solicit their concurrence in the request he was about to make.

3. The salutation. *Grace to you,* in all its comprehensive import; *and peace,* flowing from a sense of pardon, acceptance, and the assured inheritance of glory; and both proceeding *from God the Father,* from his eternal, sovereign, boundless love, *and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ,* by whom all spiritual blessings have been purchased, and through whom alone they are bestowed upon us.

4. His thankfulness and prayer. *I thank my God,* in a covenant of everlasting love, *making mention of thee always in my prayers,* whenever I approach a throne of grace; *hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;* for which I offer my unceasing praises, and add my fervent prayers, *that the communication of thy faith may become effectual,* to engage thee to every farther instance of generosity and benevolence, *by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you, in,* or *towards Christ Jesus,* to whom much glory will redound, and many thanks be offered by those who feel the benefit of those gracious dispositions which the Saviour hath implanted, and which manifest themselves in every work of labour and love towards his people for his sake: *for we have great joy and consolation in hearing* of *thy* distinguished *love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother,* who gratefully acknowledge thy extensive charity; and this emboldens me to hope, that in the present instance my petition will be successful.

8. Wherefore, though I might be much [i] bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, 9. Yet for love's sake I rather beseech *thee,* being such [k] an one as Paul the aged, and now also a [l] prisoner of Jesus Christ. 10. I beseech thee for my son [m] Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: 11. Which in time past was to thee [n] unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me: 12. Whom I have sent again: thou therefore [o] receive him that is mine own bowels. 13. Whom I would have retained with me, that [p] in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel: 14. But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should [q] not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

i 1 Thes. 2. 6.

k 2 Cor. 15. 8.

l Ver. 1, 10.

m Col. 4. 9. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Gal. 4. 19.

n Ver. 16, 18. Perhaps lazy and thievish.

o Luke 15. 20. Phil. 1. 8. Rom. 13. 8—10. Gal. 6. 1, 2. Mat. 18. 15, 21, 22.

p 1 Cor. 16. 17. Phil. 2. 30.

q 2 Cor. 9. 7. 1 Chr. 28. 9. & 29. 9.

Verses 8—14. The apostle comes to the main business of the epistle, to entreat for poor Onesimus; and he insinuates a multitude of the most powerful arguments, which should engage Philemon to grant his request, and be reconciled to his fugitive servant.

1. He might have used his apostolic authority, but he prefers the entreaty of love. *Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ, to enjoin thee that which is convenient,* and it would have been your duty in the present case implicitly to obey; *yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee,* waving all superiority, and pleading that love which Jesus hath shown to you, and I feel towards you, *being such a one as Paul the aged,* grown old in the service of our common Lord, *and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ;* therefore I cannot but be assured, whatever would be a comfort to me in these declining years, and serve to make my chain lighter, Philemon, for his Master's sake and mine, will not fail to grant. Inimitable is the manner in which the apostle introduces the point which he had in view. Having raised every tender sentiment of love and friendship in his bosom, he

2. Beautifully introduces in the most endearing light the subject of his request. *I beseech thee for my son,* one that now stands in that near relation to me,—and startle not at the name,—strange as it may appear,—the person is no other than *Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.* So mysterious are the ways of providence, that, though a fugitive from thee, divine grace has led him to my prison, there to become a partaker of the blessings of the gospel.

3. He suggests the happy change now wrought upon him, *who in time past was to thee unprofitable;* with penitent shame he hath acknowledged his former ill behaviour, over which I would cast a veil of oblivion; *but now* can speak of him as a different man, whose spirit and actions I am confident will correspond with his name, and he will be found *profitable to thee,* if received again into thy service; *and,* as I have proved by some experience, would have been most useful *to me. Note,* (1.) When we speak of the faults of penitents, it should be with tenderness, not severity. (2.) Wherever divine grace comes, it makes a blessed alteration. (3.) A Christian servant is a truly profitable member in every family.

4. His own love to this signal convert should engage Philemon's to him. *Whom I have sent again* back to thy service, *thou therefore receive him, that is mine own bowels;* most tenderly

beloved, and for whom I plead with all the affection that I should feel for my own child.

5. He had deprived himself of the very useful service which Onesimus would have afforded him, that he might restore him to his rightful master; referring it to Philemon whether he would send him back again to Rome or not. *Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel,* and done me those kind offices which I know thou wouldst have been happy to have afforded me thyself. *But without thy mind would I do nothing,* nor detain him longer here; *that,* if it shall please thee to do me the favour of sending him hither again to minister unto me, *thy benefit should not* appear to *be as it were of necessity, but willingly,* as a voluntary act of generosity and friendship.

15. For [r] perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; 16. Not now as a servant, but above a servant, [s] a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? 17. If thou count me therefore [t] a partner, receive him as myself. 18. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth *thee* ought, put that on mine account: 19. I Paul have written *it* with mine own hand, I will repay *it:* albeit I do not say to thee [u] how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides. 20. Yea, brother, [x] let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord. 21. [y] Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

r Gen. 45. 24. & 50. 20. Rom. 8. 28. 2 Cor. 4. 17.
s Mat. 23. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 2. Heb. 3. 1. & 13. 1. Col. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 12. 12, 13, 27.
t Jam. 2. 5. 2 Cor. 8. 23. Rev. 1. 9. Heb. 3. 14. 1 John 1. 3. 1 Cor. 12. 12, 15, 27.
u Tit. 1. 4. 1 Tim. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 4. 15. & 9. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 2.
x Ver. 7, 12. Phil. 2. 17, 28. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20. & 3. 7—9. 2 Cor. 7. 4—7.
y 2 Cor. 7. 6.

Verses 15—21. The apostle proceeds to suggest other arguments, to engage Philemon kindly to receive this fugitive.

1. The mercy God had showed him. *For perhaps he therefore departed for a season;* so tenderly does the apostle mention his fault in flying his master's service, since it was now so wonderfully, by God's good providence, overruled for good: *that thou shouldest receive him for ever,* as a servant for life, to dwell together for eternity: yet *not now as a* common *servant,* or slave, *but above a servant,* even as *a brother* in the gospel, *beloved* and dear; *especially to me,* who have been the happy instrument of his conversion: *but how much more to thee, both in the flesh,* as a member of thy family, become most faithful and industrious; *and in the Lord,* as equally a partaker in all the blessings of the Redeemer's grace and love. *Note,* (1.) God sometimes amazingly overrules our most perverse ways, to bring out of them the greatest good. Onesimus, under all the blessings of Philemon's ministry, and sharing all the ordinances of his holy family, continued abandoned, turns thief and runagate, and flies to Rome; there the Lord finds him, and makes him a monument of mercy. (2.) Though Christianity maintains in the strictest manner all due subordination of stations, yet really Christian servants will have especial respect and regard shown them by their masters, who, as members of the same body, esteem them as their beloved brethren.

2. The communion which subsisted between them, as fellow-heirs of the same kingdom. *If thou count me therefore a partner,* a partaker of the same grace, and an inheritor of the same glory with thee, *receive him as myself,* with a hearty affection and sincere reconciliation.

3. He becomes Onesimus' surety for any wrong Philemon had sustained. *If,* as I have reason to apprehend, *he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it,* and engage hereby to make you full satisfaction if demanded. *Albeit I do not say to thee how* deeply thou art indebted to me, as the instrument under God, and that *thou owest unto me* what is infinitely more valuable than all the wealth of the world, even *thine own soul also.*

4. This instance of his condescension to his request would give the apostle singular satisfaction, as a fresh proof of Philemon's fidelity. *Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord:* on thy own account, as well as for the sake of Onesimus, I ask it, that I may have rejoicing over thee, as a living member of Jesus. *Refresh my bowels in the Lord,* and give me this consolation in my bonds, for that Redeemer's sake in whose name I urge my request. *Note,* (1.) Christians are brethren, and, as such, should delight to serve each other. (2.) It is highly the people's duty to endeavour to comfort their ministers, and to do every thing which may give them joy, and encourage them under their labours and sufferings for the gospel's sake.

5. He concludes with expressing his confidence in Philemon, which laid the strongest obligations upon him not to disappoint his expectations. *Having confidence in thy obedience* to our Lord's command to forgive every injury, *I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say,* and show greater kindness to poor Onesimus than I have requested, exceeding even my desire.

22. But withal prepare me also a lodging: for [z] I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you. 23. There salute thee [a] Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus; 24. [b] Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers. 25. [c] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome to Philemon, by Onesimus a servant.

z Phil. 1. 25. & 2. 24. with Heb. 13. 23. 2 Cor. 1. 11. Acts 12. 5. Jam. 5. 16.
a Col. 1. 7. & 4. 12.
b See Acts 12. 12. Col. 4. 10, 14. Acts 19. 29. & 20. 4. & 27. 2. 2 Tim. 4. 10, 11.
c 2 Tim. 4. 22. Gal. 6. 18. Rom. 16. 20, 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Eph. 6. 23, 24. Phil. 4. 23. Col. 4. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 18. 2 Thes. 3. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 21. Tit. 3. 15. Heb. 13. 25. Rev. 22. 21.

Verses 22—25. Having finished his main business, he closes,

1. With the intimation of a visit shortly. *But withal prepare me also a lodging; for I trust that through your prayers I shall* be delivered from my present confinement, and *be given unto you,* as a fresh act of favour from God, who for your further edification will enable me once more to minister his blessed gospel among you. *Note,* (1.) Prayer is the effectual means to procure all mercies for ourselves, and for each other. (2.) To have God's ministers spared to labour yet longer among us, is a signal favour.

2. He sends the salutations of many who desired to be kindly remembered to him. *There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus,* sharing my honourable bonds for the same glorious cause; *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers.*

3. He concludes with his usual benediction. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,* in all its happy fruits, and eternally permanent effects, *be with your spirit,* with thee, and with all that are near and dear to thee, to bless, preserve, and keep you for his everlasting kingdom. *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT UPON THE

EPISTLE TO THE

HEBREWS.

Introduction.

THIS epistle, though without a name, is generally ascribed to the apostle Paul: In the primitive times it was ascribed to him, and the style and scope of it very well agrees with his spirit, whose main end and endeavour was to exalt Christ. And some think that the apostle Peter refers to this epistle, and proves Paul to be the penman of it, by telling the Hebrews, to whom he wrote, of Paul's having written to them, 2 Pet. iii. 15. And we read of no other epistle that he ever wrote to them but this. And though it has been objected, that since Paul put his name to all his other epistles, he would not have omitted it here; yet others have well answered, that he being *the apostle of the Gentiles*, who were odious to the Jews, might think fit to conceal his name, lest their prejudices against him might hinder them from reading and weighing it as they ought to do. As to the *scope* and *design* of this epistle, it is very evident it was clearly to inform the minds and strongly to confirm the judgment of the Hebrews in the transcendent excellency of the *gospel* above the *law*, and so to take them off from the ceremonies of the law, to which they were so wedded, of which they were so fond, that they even doted on them. And those of them that were Christians retained too much of the *old leaven*, and wanted to be purged from it; he wanted therefore to persuade and press the believing Hebrews to a constant adherence to the Christian faith, and perseverance in it, notwithstanding all the sufferings they might meet with in so doing. In order to this, he speaks much of the excellency of the *author* of the gospel, the *glorious Jesus*, whose honour he advances, and whom he justly prefers before all others, showing him to be all in all, and this in lofty strains of holy rhetoric. It must be acknowledged there are many things in this epistle hard to be understood: but the sweetness we shall find therein, will make us abundant amends for all the pains we take to understand it. And, indeed, if we compare all the epistles of the New Testament, we shall not find any of them more replenished with divine, heavenly matter, than this to the Hebrews.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter we have a twofold comparison stated. (1.) *Between the* evangelical *and* legal *dispensations, and the excellency of the gospel above that of the law is asserted and proved,* ver. 1—3. (2.) *Between the* glory of Christ *and that of the* highest creatures, *the angels, where the pre-eminence is given to the Lord Jesus Christ, and clearly demonstrated to belong unto him, from* ver. 4, *to the end of the chapter.*

1. GOD, who [a] at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2. [b] Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, [c] whom he hath appointed heir of all things, [d] by whom also he made the worlds; 3. Who, being [e] the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and [f] upholding all things by the word of his power, [g] when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4. Being made [h] so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. 5. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, [i] Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, [k] I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? 6. And again, when he bringeth in the [l] first begotten into the world, he saith, [m] And let all the angels of God worship him. 7. And of the angels he saith, [n] Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. 8. But unto the Son *he saith*, [o] Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever; a sceptre of * righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom. 9. [p] Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* [q] thy God, [r] hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. 10. And, [s] Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thine hands. 11.

a Num. 12. 6, 8. Gen. 3. 15. & 6. 3, 13—21. & 8. 15—22. & 9. 1—17. & 12. 1—3. & 13. 14—17. & xv, xvii, xviii, xxi, xxii. & 26. 2—5. & 28. 12—15. & 32. 24—30. & 35. 9—13. & 46. 2—4. & xlix. Exod. iii. to Deut. xxxiii. Is. i. to Mal. iv. 1 Pet. 1. 10—12. 2 Pet. 1. 21.

b Eph. 1. 10. Gal. 4. 4. 1 Pet. 1. 20. John 1. 14, 17. & 15. 15. Mat. 21. 37. & 11. 2. ch. 2. 3, 12. & 3. 1, 6. & 8. 6, 8. & 9. 15. Mat. iv. to Acts i.

c Ps. 2. 6—8. Is. 9. 6, 7. & 42. 1—7. & 49. 1—12. & 53. 10—12. Ps. 22. 27—31. & lxii, xlv, xxj, xcvi—c, cx, cxviii, lxxxix. Mat. 28. 18. Ps. 89 26—29. Luke 2. 11. John 3. 35. & 18. 8. & 16. 15. & 17. 2. Acts 2. 36. & 10. 36. Rom. 8. 17. 1 Cor. 8. 6. & 15. 27. Phil. 2. 9—11. Col. 1. 15, 18. ch. 2. 9. & 3. 3.

d Ps. 33. 6. John 1. 3. 1 Cor. 8. 6. Eph. 3. 9. Col. 1. 16, 17.

e Phil. 2. 6. Zech. 13. 7. Col. 1. 15. John 1. 14. & 14. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 4. 4, 6. Is. 9. Rom. 9. 5. & 1. 4.

f Col. 1. 17. Ps. 33. 9. Rev. 4. 11.

g Ch. 9. 12, 26. & 10. 12. & 12. 2. & 7. 26. Ps. 110. 1. & 89. 27. Eph. 1. 20—22. 1 Pet. 3. 22. & 1. 21. Rev. 5. 6, 12. & 3. 21. Mark 16. 19. Col. 3. 1. ch. 4. 14. & 8. 1. Rom. 8. 34.

h Eph. 1. 21. Phil. 2. 9, 10. Col. 1. 18. & 2. 10. ch. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Rev. 5. 11, 12.

i Ps. 2. 7. Acts 13. 33. ch. 5. 5.

k 2 Sam. 7. 14. 1 Chr. 22. 10. Ps. 89. 26, 27.

l Ps. 2. 7. Prov. 8. 24, 25. Rom. 8. 29. Col. 1. 15, 18. Rev. 1. 5.

m Ps. 97. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Luke 2. 9—14. Mat. 24. 31. & 25. 31. & xxviii. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

n Ps. 104. 4. & 103. 20. Is. 6. 2. Ps. 68. 17. Dan. 7. 10. 2 Kin. 6. 17.

o Ps. 45. 6, 7. & 93. 1, 2. & 72. 1—14. & cx, cxlv. Is. 9. 6, 7. & 32. 1, 2. Jer 23. 5, 6. Dan. 7. 14. Rev. 3. 21. Prov. 16. 12. Gen. 18. 25.

* Gr. *rightness*, or *straightness*.

p Heb. 7. 26. Mat. 3. 15. Luke 24. 26. Dan. 9. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 21.

q Ps. 89. 26. John 20. 17. Eph. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 3.

r Is. 61. 1. Ps. 2 6, Acts 2. 28. & 10. 38.

s Ps. 102. 25, 27. Exod. 20. 11. Ps. 24. 1. & 33. 6. Jer. 32. 17. Is. 42. 5. John. 1. 3.

t Is. 51. 6—8. Rom. 8. 20, 21, 22. Is. 65. 17. & 66. 22. & 34. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 7, 10, 13. Rev. 21. 4, 5.
u Mal. 3. 6. Jam. 1. 17. ch. 13. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 6. 16. Is. 9. 6, 7. & 41. 4.
x Ps. 110. 1. & 118. 22. Mat. 22. 44. Luke 20. 42. & 19. 12. Acts 2. 34, 35. 1 Cor. 15. 25, 26. ch. 4. 14. & 8. 1. & 7. 26. & 10. 12. Ps. 2. 6, 9. & xxi, cx, xci. Rev. xix, xx.
y Ps. 103. 20, 21. & 104. 4. & 34. 7. & 91. 11. Dan. 7. 10. Mat. 18. 10. Acts 5. 19. & 12. 7. & 16. 26.
z Rom. 8. 17. Gal. 3. 7, 9, 29. Eph. 3. 6. Tit. 3. 7. ch. 6. 12, 17. 1 Pet. 3. 7. Jam. 2. 5. Mat. 25. 34.

t They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a gar-
ment; 12. And as a vesture shalt thou
u fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years
shall not fail. 13. But to which of the
x angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies
thy footstool? 14. Are they not all
y ministering spirits, sent forth to minister
z for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Verses 1—14. The excellence of the gospel dispensation above the Mosaical opens this beautiful epistle. The apostle shows,

1. The different way in which God communicated his will to the church of old, and to his people at present. *God who at sundry times*, by degrees, with increasing clearness, *and in divers manners*, by types, visions, dreams, audible voices, and immediate inspiration, *spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days*, at the close of the Jewish economy, and in that dispensation of grace which is the last which will be ever vouchsafed to the sons of men, and under this title of the *last days* hath been foretold by the inspired penmen, God hath, I say, now *spoken unto us by his Son*, the most glorious messenger who was ever yet employed in communicating the revelation of his will to men: in nature one with the Father, in majesty co-eternal.

2. He enlarges on the surpassing excellence of this Son of God, who had appeared in the human nature. (1.) It is He *whom he hath appointed heir of all things*, as Mediator exalting him to the sovereign and universal dominion over the works of his hands, and especially giving him to be head over all things to his church, in and through whom every member of it can only be entitled to the eternal inheritance. (2.) *By whom also he made the worlds*, exerting his co-agency and co-operation with the Father, not as an instrument, but as the great Creator. (3.) *Who being the brightness of his glory*, Light of Light, and very God of very God, possessing the essential attributes of Deity; *and the express image of his person*, bearing his exact resemblance to every divine perfection, appears his visible representative. And, (4.) As he is the Creator, so he continues *upholding all things by the word of his power*, supporting and governing them by his providence. (5.) *When he had by himself purged our sins, Himself*, the great High-priest and Sacrifice, expiating the transgressions of his people, which the blood of bulls and goats, shed by the Levitical priests, could never take away, and by one oblation of himself, once offered, obtaining eternal redemption for us. (6.) When he had thus made the all-atoning sacrifice on the cross, *he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*, in virtue of his own blood entering into the holy place not made with hands, and, as a priest upon the throne, (Zech. vi. 13.) he is exalted to the highest dignity and glory in the human nature. (7.) He hath the pre-eminence not only above the greatest prophets, but over the highest of the heavenly hosts; *being made so much better than the angels*; in his character as Mediator, as well as in the transcendent excellence of his divine nature, he infinitely surpasses the most glorious of all created beings, *as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they*, even the name of *Son of God*, in a sense peculiar to himself, and which appears evident from the transcendent exaltation which in virtue of his sufferings he had now by right obtained.

3. In support of his argument, to prove the infinite pre-eminence of the incarnate Son above the highest of the angelic hosts, he brings the strongest proofs from those scriptures which the Jews admitted as of divine authority. *For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son*, the same in essential Deity; *this day have I begotten thee*, even from eternity, which to God is one permanent unsuccessive day; or this refers to his resurrection from the dead, whereby his eternal Sonship was manifested, (Rom. i. 4.) *And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son*, treated with peculiar and distinguishing love, and raised to the eternal throne of glory. *And again, when he bringeth in the First begotten*, the appointed heir of all things, *into the world*, at his miraculous conception, *he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*, and pay him that divine honour which is due to their Creator alone, and is the unalienable right of Deity. *And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire*; their highest honour and dignity is to be the servants of the great Jehovah, and as flames of fire, with such activity and powerful agency, to execute his will and pleasure. *But unto the Son*, as their eternal king, *he saith, Thy throne, O God*, who art the essential Jehovah, *is for ever and ever*, from everlasting unchangeably the same, and to eternity must endure: *a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom*. Thou hast the most indisputed title to reign; thy bosom is the seat of justice, and thy administration is marked with unsullied truth, holiness, and equity. *Thou hast loved righteousness*, fulfilling it in thy own person, and approving it in thy people, *and hated iniquity*, about to punish it with everlasting perdition. *Therefore God, even thy God*, thy covenant God, as the incarnate Mediator, *hath anointed thee* to the office of prophet, priest, and king, *with the oil of gladness*, with the most unmeasurable fulness of spiritual gifts and graces, *above thy fellows*, whether angels or saints, kings, priests, or prophets. *And thou, Lord, in the beginning*, before any creature yet had a being, by thy omnipotent creative power, *hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands*; all the creatures, spiritual or corporeal, animate or inanimate, from the highest to the lowest, own thee their great Creator. *They shall perish*, this visible creation of heaven and earth shall decay; *but thou remainest*, unchangeable, immortal; *and they all shall wax old as doth a garment*, the creatures of this lower world are mouldering daily, and nature's dissolution is at hand; *and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same*, immutably, eternally, *and thy years shall not fail*, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. *But to which of the angels said he at any time*, as he did to his incarnate Son, *Sit* thou *on my right hand*, enthroned in supreme majesty, *until I make thine enemies thy footstool*, and raise thee triumphant over every foe, when sin, Satan, death, and hell, shall be for ever put under thy feet? Such language belongs not to the highest of the angelic host: for *are they not all ministering spirits*, servants to the great Mediator, and *sent forth*, under his command, *to minister for them*, in every kind office, *who shall be heirs of salvation*, appointed to the eternal inheritance in virtue of their relation to their exalted Head? From the whole we may observe, 1. The transcendent glory of the Lord Jesus: (1.) In his divine nature. (2.) In his mediatorial capacity. The great Creator—the self-existent Jehovah—the eternal, immutable God—the object of adoration to the highest beings, angels as well as men—and reigning and to reign for ever and ever. 2. The honour and office of the angelic hosts; to adore their King, to obey his mandates with delight and vigour, and to serve those highly distinguished sons of men who are appointed to be heirs of salvation. 3. The dignity of God's children, standing in this high and holy relation to him, as adopted by his grace and designed for the enjoyment of his glory, attended by ministers of flame, and shortly to be conducted by them to their eternal home. 4. Vast and amazing as this visible creation now appears, the day approaches when, like the baseless fabric of a vision, all shall be dissolved, and by almighty power shall arise a new heaven and earth, to be the blessed abode of the redeemed. 5. Jesus must reign on his mediatorial throne till all his enemies are finally

subdued, and his triumphant people shall come to reign with him in glory everlasting.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter the apostle, 1. *Makes some application of the doctrine laid down in the foregoing, concerning the excellency of the person of Christ, both by way of exhortation and argument,* ver. 1—4. 2. *Enlarges further upon the pre-eminence of Christ above the angels,* ver. 5—7. 3. *He proceeds to remove the scandal of the cross,* ver. 10—15. 4. *To assert the incarnation of Christ, taking upon him not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and assigns the reason of his so doing,* ver. 16. to the end.

1. THEREFORE [a] we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should * let *them* slip. 2. For, if the word spoken [b] by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience [c] received a just recompence of reward; 3. [d] How shall we escape, if we neglect [e] so great salvation; which at the first [f] began to be spoken by the Lord, and was [g] confirmed unto us by them that heard *him;* 4. [h] God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and †gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

a Ch. 1. 1, 2. & 3. 6, 12. & 4. 1, 11. & 6. 6, 11. & 10. 38. & 12. 6, 15, 25 & 13. 9. Ps. 19. 9, 11. Prov. 3. 21,

* Gr. *run out as leaking vessels.*

b Deut. 33. 2. Acts 7. 53. Gal. 3. 19.

c Ch. 10. 28. Deut. 27. 26. Exod. 19. 21. & 22. 18, 28. & 31. 14. & 32. 27. Lev. 24. 14, 16. Num. 4. 5, 15, 20. & 15. 30, 32. & 25. 2, 7. Deut. 13. 5, 6. & 17. 2. & 18. 20. 2 Sam. 6. 6. 1 Kin. 21. 20—24. Zech. 13. 3.

d Ch. 10. 29. & 12. 25. Mat. 3. 7, 10, 12. & 8. 12. & 21. 40, 41. & 22. 7. & 23. 33, 37, 38. 1 Pet. 4. 17, 8. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9.

e Is. 45. 17. ch. 7. 25. John 3. 16—18, 36. Acts 2. 39. & 13. 26. Rom. 1. 26. Eph. 1. 13. Tit. 2. 11.

f Rom. 15. 8. Mark 1. 14, 15. Mat. iv. to Acts i. ch. 1. 2. Ps. 40. 9, 10.

g Mark 16. 15, 20. Luke 1. 2. & 24. 47, 48. Acts 1. 2, 3, 8. & i—xi.

h Mark 16. 17, 18, 20. Acts 2. 22, 43. & 14. 3. & 19. 11, 12. & 5. 12, 15. Rom. 15. 19. 1 Cor. 12. 4, 11, 28.

† Or *distributions.*

Verses 1—4. The apostle, as he proceeds, applies the doctrine which he had advanced.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, considering the infinite dignity and glory of the Speaker; eagerly attentive to his words, storing them up in our memory, and fixing them as principles of action in our hearts; *lest at any time we should let them slip,* and our treacherous memories, like leaking vessels, should suffer them to run out; or they should glide by us (παραρεῦμεν) as a stream unnoticed and neglected. *For if the word spoken by angels,* the law given to Moses on mount Sinai, *was stedfast* and valid, stamped with divine authority, and guarded with the most awful sanctions; *and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward,* as the righteous punishment inflicted by divine justice; *how shall we escape,* what aggravated guilt and ruin must be on us who have heard *the gospel, if we neglect so great salvation;* great inexpressibly, if we consider the depths of the miseries into which we are fallen, the wonderful means used to extricate us, or the infinite mercies, blessings, and benefits, accruing to us thereby; a salvation, *which* comes recommended in the strongest manner, as *at the first* it *began to be spoken by the Lord* of life and glory incarnate, *and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him,* the apostles and others, who, commissioned by him, proclaimed the glad tidings of his gospel through the world: *God also bearing them witness* to the divinity of that doctrine which they preached, *both with signs and wonders, and with divine miracles* of the most stupendous kind, *and gifts of the Holy Ghost,* the most astonishing and various, given *according to his own will,* for the confirmation of their testimony: an attestation far more excellent than was given to the law of Moses. *Note,* (1.) When matters of such eternal importance are at stake, as the salvation of an immortal soul, we can never be sufficiently careful and attentive. (2.) Whatever punishments God inflicts on sinners, they are no more than the just reward of their deeds. (3.) Neglect of the gospel is among the most atrocious crimes, and will be visited with the severest judgments.

5. For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the [i] world to come, whereof we speak. 6. But one in a certain place [k] testified, saying, [k] What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? 7. [l] Thou madest him ‡ a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: 8. [m] Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. 9. But we see Jesus, who [n] was made a little lower than the angels [o] for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that [p] he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

i Ch. 1. 4. & 6. 5. & 8. 6—13. Rev 11. 15. 2 Pet. 3. 13.

k Ps. 8. 4—6. & 144. 3. Job 7. 17. Is. 40. 17.

l Ps. 8. 5. Gen. 1. 26—29. & 2. 7—25. Ps. 2. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 20, 21. Phil. 2 6—11. Luke 24. 26, 46. Is. 53. 12. Acts 5. 31. Mat. 24. 47.

‡ Or *a little while inferior to.*

m Ps. 8. 6. Gen. 1. 28. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Mat. 28. 18. Eph. 1. 20—22. Phil. 2. 9—11. Col. 1. 18. & 2. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

ch. i. 2. Dan. 7. 14. Mat. 17. 27. John 3. 35. & 13. 3. & 17. 2.

n Is. 7. 14. & 11. 1. & 4. 2. & 53. 2—12. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. Phil. 2. 7, 8. Mat. 1. 17—25. Luke 3. 5—7. & 9. 58. Mat. i—xxvii. Mark i—xv. Luke i—xxiii. John i—xix.

o Or *by.* Phil. 2. 8, 9. John 5. 27. & 10. 17. Rom. 14. 9. Acts 2. 33. Ps. 21. 3—6. Is. 53. 10—12.

p 1 John 3. 16. John 12. 32. & 4. 9, 10. & 2. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Rev. 5. 9. 1 Tim. 2. 6. ch. 9. 14, 28. & 10. 12, 14. Rom. 5. 6—8, 10, 19. ver. 10—13.

Verses 5—9. The apostle returns to the comparison between the Mediator and the angelic hosts, showing his surpassing excellence.

For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak, that is, the gospel dispensation, and the church under the New Testament; not employing them as he did under the Mosaical economy. *But one in a certain place testified,* when contemplating the glories of creation, *What is man,* how despicable a worm, *that thou art mindful of him,* and shouldst send thy co-eternal Son to take man's nature upon him? *or* what is *the son of man,* a poor frail mortal, *that thou visitest him,* and in the person of the incarnate Saviour should raise the human nature to such distinguished and transcendent glory. *Thou madest him a little lower than the angels,* or *for a little while* (βραχυ τι) during his state of humiliation and sufferings unto death; *thou crownedst him with glory and honour,* raising him triumphant from the grave, *and* exalting him to the throne of Majesty on high, *didst set him over the works of thy hands,* bestowing on him absolute and universal dominion over every creature; *thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet;* not only all the enemies of himself and people, sin, Satan, death, and hell, but all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that also which is to come. *For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him,* angels, as well as others, being included within his absolute and universal empire. *But now we see not yet all things put under him,* either *man in general,* or any individual of the human species; so that these words appertain not to any of Adam's natural descendants; or *under Jesus Christ himself* at present, who hath not yet utterly subdued all his enemies, the time of his final conquest not being arrived. *But we see* this blessed *Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels,* during a while, *for the suffering of death,* that he might in the human nature die for the sins of the people; wherein he appeared inferior to these immortal spirits: we see him now *crowned with glory and honour,* on a throne, at the right hand of God, reigning

till every foe shall become his footstool: *that he by the grace of God*, of his mere sovereign love and mercy, *should taste death for every man*; not for every individual of the human species, but for Jew or Gentile, for sinners of every rank or degree, even for all those many sons whom God before the world ordained unto glory. *Note*, (1.) The fontal cause of our salvation is the sovereign grace of God: the meritorious cause is the death of our incarnate Redeemer. (2.) In Christ, man's nature is exalted above the angels; and we, by virtue of union with him, have obtained a more excellent name than they.

10. For [q] it became him, [r] for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing [s] many sons unto glory, to make [t] the Captain of their salvation [u] perfect through sufferings. 11. For both [x] he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them [y] brethren, 12. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13. And again, [z] I will put my trust in him. And again, [a] Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

q Gen. 18. 25. Exod. 34. 7. Ps. 11. 6, 7. Rom. 3. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 1. 24. & 2. 7. Eph. 2. 7. & 3. 10, 21. Luke 2. 14.
r Prov. 16. 4. Rom. 11. 36. 1 Cor. 10. 31. & 8. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 18.
s Is. 2. 3. Zech. 2. 11. Rom. 5. 19—21. Rev. 7. 4, 9.
t Acts 3. 15. & 5. 31. Phil. 2. 9. ch. 5. 9. & 6. 20. & 12. 2. Mic. 2. 13.
u Ch. 12. 2, 3. & 5. 8. Mat. 3. 15. Luke 24. 26, 46.
x Ch. 10. 10, 14. & 13. 12. John 17. 19. Gal. 4. 4. John 1. 14. Acts 17. 26
y Ps. 22. 22. & 18. 2. Mat. 28. 10. John 20. 17. Rom. 8. 29.
z Ps. 18. 2. & 91. 2. & 28. 8. & 22. 8. Is. 50. 7, 9. Heb. 12. 2. Is 12. 2.
a Is. 8. 18. & 49. 6. & 53. 10—12. & 55. 5. John 10. 29. & 17. 6, 9, 11, 12.

Verses 10—13. The cross was the offensive doctrine at which the Hebrews stumbled. The apostle therefore shows the excellence of this method of salvation: how glorious to God: how effectual for us.

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, it was most suitable and becoming, and served most eminently to display the glory of all his divine perfections, *in bringing many sons unto glory*, even the multitude of the redeemed whom he had chosen in Christ Jesus, *to make the Captain*, (αρχαγον) Leader and Author, *of their salvation perfect through sufferings*, completely fitted and consecrated thereby for the execution of his mediatorial office, having made full satisfaction to the divine justice for the sins of his people. *For both he that sanctifieth*, the Redeemer himself, who saves them from the guilt and power of sin, *and they who are sanctified* by his blood and Spirit, *are all of one* blood, receiving the human nature from one common parent; and, as included in the same covenant of redemption, have one Father, even God: *for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren*, but condescends to own the endearing relation, *saying*, Psalm xxii. 22. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren*, opening to them all the glories of divine grace displayed in the gospel: *in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee*, celebrating the wonders of thy love to thy peculiar people, Matt. xxvi. 30. *And again*, Ps. xviii. 2. *I will put my trust in him*, confident of his support under all my sufferings, and that they shall be effectual to the salvation of my people. *And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me*, as the travail of my soul, for whom I am ready to undergo every affliction, that I may at last be able to present them before the presence of his glory with exceeding great joy. *Note*, (1.) God hath *many* sons whom he hath decreed to bring unto glory; and though they be few in any one age or place, yet when collected, they will be an innumerable multitude. (2.) We must be his children by adoption and grace, before we can receive the heavenly inheritance. (3.) In the method God hath taken to save sinners, by the incarnation of his Son, he hath acted eminently as *became him*, that in the most amazing exercise of grace, he might withal make the most signal display of his justice and inexorable hatred of sin. (4.) The way to glory is through sufferings: the Head and the members must walk in the same steps; and, since he hath gone before, he hath consecrated the cross, and to bear it is our honour, and will prove in the issue our unspeakable advantage. (5.) Christ is our elder brother; with what endearing affection ought we then to regard him, considering what he is to us, and what he hath done for us!

14. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, [b] he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death [c] he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15. [d] And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16. For verily † he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* [e] the seed of Abraham. 17. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made [f] like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18. [g] For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

b Ver. 11. Is. 7. 14. & 11. 1. John 1. 14. Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 8. 3. Phil. 2. 7, 8.
c John 12. 31. Col. 2. 15. 1 John 3. 8. Is. 25. 8. Hos. 13. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 15. 54, 55.
d Luke 1. 74, 75. Rom. 8. 15. 2 Tim. 1. 7. Is. 49. 24—26.
† Gr. *he taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold.*
e Mat. 1. 1—16. Luke 3. 23—34. Gal. 3. 16. Gen. 22. 18.
f Ver. 11, 14, 16. Phil. 2. 7, 8. John 1. 14. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4, 5. ch. 4. 15. & 5. 1, 2. & 8. 3. & 9. 14, 28. & 10. 10, 12, 14. & 13. 12.
g Luke 24. 26, 46. & 4. 1—13. ch. 4. 15, 16. & 7. 25, 26.

Verses 14—18. By Christ's incarnation was the redemption of his people to be accomplished.

Forasmuch then as the children, whom the Lord hath given him, *are partakers of flesh and blood*; and as in the human nature sin had been committed, in this nature it must be expiated; therefore *he also himself likewise took part of the same*, made exactly in the likeness of sinful flesh, and one with them; *that through death*, giving himself to suffer in their stead, and bearing their sins in his own body on the tree, *he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil*, by whose malice death first entered into the world, *and* who is the executioner of God's wrath upon sinners; but his dominion is now broken, and his kingdom overthrown, by the death and resurrection of Jesus, who died and rose again, that he might *deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage*, the sting of death, which is sin, being taken out of their consciences, and all their dismal apprehensions of the consequences of death being utterly removed. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham*, assuming the human nature as a descendant from Abraham after the flesh. *Wherefore*, we may infer from hence, that *in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren*, sin only excepted; *that*, experiencing in his own person all the infirmities and miseries incident to the human nature, *he might be a merciful and faithful High-priest*, touched with tender sympathy towards them, and with all fidelity discharging his office, *in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people*, by the fullest satisfaction paid to the divine justice, and appearing, as their great High-priest, in the presence of God, with his own all-atoning blood; *for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he* knows what sore temptations beset his people, can tenderly feel for them, and *is able to succour them that are tempted*, and make them with himself triumphant over all their enemies. *Note*, (1.) Christ is very man, as well as very God: it was as necessary

that he should suffer in our nature, as it was essential to the efficacy of those sufferings, that he should be God incarnate. (2.) Satan, sin, and death, are all vanquished! Since the Saviour bled, they have no more power to hurt his redeemed people; and we may now triumph over them, since life and immortality are before us, through our crucified Jesus. (3.) Christ hath made reconciliation between the offended God and the sinful soul: since he hath offered the atonement, justice is satisfied, and grace enthroned. (4.) It is our comfort, under all our present trials and sufferings, that we have one to go to, who hath felt all our sorrows, knows our infirmity, and hath new power great as his love to succour and save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter the apostle applies what he had said in the chapter foregoing concerning the priesthood of Christ. 1. *In a serious pathetic exhortation, that this great High-priest that was discovered to them, might be seriously considered by them,* ver. 1—7. *and then adds many weighty counsels and cautions from* ver. 7. to the end.

1. WHEREFORE,[a] [b] holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider [c] the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2. Who was [d] faithful to him that [e] appointed him, as also [f] Moses *was faithful* in all his house. 3. [g] For this *man* was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4. For every house is builded by some *man;* but he that [h] built all things *is* God. 5. And [i] Moses verily *was* faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 6. But Christ, [k] as a Son over his own house; [l] whose house are we, [m] if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

a Ch. 1. 8. & 2. 9, 10, 14, 17, 18.
b 1 Cor. 1. 2, 9. 2 Cor. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 1. & 4. 1. Phil. 3. 14, 15. Col. 1. 2, 13. 2 Tim. 1. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 3, 10. 1 Thes. 2. 12. 2 Thes. 2. 14.
c Rom. 15. 8. Mat. 15. 24. ch. 2. 17. & 4. 14. & 5. 5. & 6. 20. & 8. 1. & 9. 11. & 7. 26. & 10. 21, 22.
d Ch. 2. 17. & 5. 9. & 7. 28. & 10. 23. Is. 52. 13. John 8. 29.
e Gr. *made.* 1 Sam. 12. 6.
f Ver. 5. Num. 12. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 15.
g Ver. 1—5, 8—10. ch. 2. 9. Zech. 6. 12. Mat. 16. 18.
h Is. 42. 5. ch. 1. 2, 10. Eph. 3. 9. & 2. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 17.
i Num. 12. 7. Exod. 14. 31. Deut. 3. 24. Josh. 1. 2. & 8. 31. Deut. 18. 15, 18.
k Ps. 2. 6, 7. 1 Tim. 3. 15, 16. Is. 9. 6, 7. ch. 4. 14. & 10. 21. John 8. 35, 36. Zech. 6. 12. Mat. 16. 18. & 10. 25.
l 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eph. 2. 19—22. 1 Tim. 3. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 5. Eph. 4. 12, 13. Col. 1. 27.
m Mat. 10. 22. & 24. 13. Gal. 6. 9. Col. 1. 23. ch. 4. 14. & 10. 23, 35. & 12. 1. & 6. 11.

Verses 1—6. We have here the application of the foregoing considerations. The excellency of our great High-priest should draw up our hearts in all holy affection and humble adoration to him.

Wherefore, holy brethren, renewed in the spirit of your minds, *partakers of the heavenly calling,* admitted to all the blessings and privileges of the gospel, *consider the Apostle and High-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus,* sent of God, appointed to his office on purpose to make reconciliation, and whom we profess to believe in as the author of all blessedness: consider his transcendent dignity, and the characters he bears towards us.

1. With what fidelity he discharged his trust as a prophet. *Who was faithful to him that appointed him,* revealing to us all his Father's will; *as also Moses,* who was his eminent type, *was faithful in all his house;* communicating to the church in the wilderness, among whom Christ in the divine Shechinah dwelt, as in his own house, all the statutes and ordinances delivered unto him.

2. How far superior he is to Moses, as the builder of his own church. *For this man,* (οὗτος) this incarnate Jesus, *was accounted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.* The master, owner, and builder of the house must needs be far above any member of the family which inhabits it; and Moses, though so distinguished, was but one of the many faithful in the church, of which the Lord Jesus is the maker and builder, therefore must be far inferior to him. *For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things,* and regulated, furnished, and set in order every thing pertaining to his church, whether under the Jewish or evangelical dispensation, *is God,* even that Jesus who shares all the incommunicable attributes of Deity, and is *very God,* as well as very man.

3. Moses was but a servant; Christ is the Son over his own house. *And Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant* merely, *for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;* to foretell and prefigure in the rites enjoined by him, according to divine command, the great things that under the gospel should be more fully and clearly revealed. *But Christ* is infinitely his superior, *as a Son over his own house,* the church erected by him, and purchased by his blood: *whose house are we* that believe, the happy members of his family, *if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope,* which the gospel inspires, *unto the end,* which will prove the reality of our professions, and our assured interest in all the blessings of his holy family. *Note,* (1.) Christ is the glorious object, who should ever be in our eye: the more we consider him, the more shall we honour, love, and serve him. (2.) Those who are brethren in Christ, and truly partakers of the heavenly calling, will prove it by the holiness of their walk and conversation. (3.) They who are living members of Christ never fail, but hold fast their confidence and rejoicing of hope steadfast unto the end.

7. Wherefore [n] (as the Holy Ghost saith, [o] To-day if ye will hear his voice, 8. [p] Harden not your hearts, [q] as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9. [r] When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. 10. [s] Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart; and they have not known my ways. 11. So I [t] sware in my wrath, * They shall not enter into my rest.) 12. [u] Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13. But [x] exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; [y] lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14. For we are made [z] partakers of Christ, [a] if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; 15. While it is said, [b] To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. 16. [c] For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit [d] not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. 17. But with whom was he grieved forty

n 2 Sam. 23. 2. Mat. 22. 43. Acts 1. 16. & 2. 30. ver. 15. ch. 4. 7.
o Ps. 95. 7—11. ver. 15. ch. 4. 7. Prov. 27. 1. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Luke 19. 9. Ps. 119. 59, 60. Eccl. 9. 10. Prov. 8. 17. Is. 55. 6. ch. 2. 3. & 12. 25.
p 2 Chr. 30. 8. Jer. 4. 4, 14. & 6. 8. Ezek. 18. 30, 31. & 33. 11. ver. 12, 13. ch. 12. 25.
q Exod. 17. 2, 7. Num. 14. 22, 27. & 20. 13. Deut. 6. 16. & 29. 3, 4.
r Ps. 78. 40, 41, 56. 1 Cor. 10. 9.
s Ps. 95. 10. Exod. 11. 11, 12. & 15. 24. & 16. 2, 3, 7. & 17. 2, 3. & 32. 7, 8. Num. 11. 1, 4. & 14. 2—4, 11, 22. & 16. 3, 19, 41. & 20. 3. & xxi. & 25. 1—3. Deut. 9. 7. & 29. 4, 5. Neh. 9. 16, 17. Is. 63. 10. Acts 7. 42, 44. Ps. lxxxviii,cvi. Ezek. xx.
t Ver. 18, 19. ch. 4. 3, 9, 11. Ps. 95. 11. Num. 14. 20, 21, 23, 30, 35.
* Gr. *if they shall enter.*
u Ch. 2. 1—3. & 4. 1, 11. & 10. 23. & 12. 1, 15. Jer. 17. 9. Rom. 7. 5. Is. 7. 9. John 3. 18, 36.
x Ch. 10. 24. 1 Thes. 5. 14. Ps. 32. 7. Is. 55. 5. see ver. 7.
y Jer. 17. 9. Prov. 28. 26. Rom. 7. 11. Eph. 4. 22. ch. 12. 1. Jam. 1. 14.
z Eph. 5. 30. Rom. 8. 17. ch. 1. 9. & 4. 3. & 6. 12.
a See ver. 6. ch. 6. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Jude 1. Prov. 10. 25.
b See ver. 7, 8, 13. ch. 4. 7. Ps. 95. 7—11.
c See ver. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 10. 5—12. Num. 14. 2—4, 11, 22. & 26. 65.
d Deut. 1. 36, 38. Rom. 11. 4, 5.

[e] Num. 14. 11, 22, 29, 37. & 26. 65. Ps. 106. 24—26. 1 Cor. 10. 5—12. Jude 5.
[f] Num. 14. 2—4, 11, 30. Deut. 1. 34, 35.
[g] Num. 20. 12. Deut. 1. 32. John 3. 18, 36. Mark 16. 16. 1 John 5. 10. Is. 7. 9. 2 Chr. 20. 20.

years? *was it* not with [e] them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? 18. And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, [f] but to them that believed not? 19. So we see that [g] they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Verses 7—19. As it is not nominal profession, but persevering fidelity, which can prove the truth of our relation to Jesus, the apostle proceeds to caution and warn them by former examples.

Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, Psal. xcv. 7. *To-day if ye will hear his voice*, without delay, or trifling with God's patience any longer, *harden not your hearts* against all the calls and warnings of God, *as* your fathers did *in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when*, by their murmurings, unbelief, and disobedience, *your fathers tempted me, proved me*, how mindful I am of my promise, and how long-suffering; *and saw my works forty years;* receiving the strongest evidences of my faithfulness, power, and grace. *Wherefore*, wearied out with their perverseness, and incorrigible ingratitude and infidelity, *I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart*, stubborn, and wilfully rebellious; *and they have not known my ways;* they delight not in them, and choose their own delusions. *So I sware in my wrath*, justly offended by their continued impenitence, *they shall not enter into my rest*, the land of promise, the type of that eternal rest which remaineth for the faithful above. *Note*, (1.) Whilst the day of life and hope is prolonged, we are called to seize and improve the precious moment on which eternity depends. (2.) Continued hardness of heart against the calls of grace, and the warnings of providence, must infallibly issue in everlasting ruin. (3.) God bears long, but he will not bear always. He will swear in his wrath, that the incorrigible shall not enter into his rest.

The example which he had quoted, the apostle applies,

1. For their caution. *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you*, as was in them, *an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Note*, (1.) Unbelief is the damning sin. (2.) There may be much heart unbelief under the most specious professions of faith. (3.) Where unbelief prevails, departure from God our Saviour necessarily follows. (4.) It calls for all our watchfulness and prayer, that our souls do not suffer shipwreck on this fatal rock.

2. He suggests the means of preventing the so much to be dreaded evil. *But exhort* and encourage *one another daily, while it is called To-day;* improve every opportunity during this fleeting moment of life, to excite each other to watchfulness and holy diligence; *lest any of you*, who have made profession of the gospel, *be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*; your consciences lulled asleep, and your souls perverted and seduced from the simplicity of the gospel. *Note*, (1.) Christian brethren should maintain a holy jealousy over each other. (2.) Since the time is so short we need be earnest to redeem it for the best purposes. (3.) Sin comes with a most alluring aspect, and lurks often under the most specious appearances. (4.) Wherever sin gains possession of the heart, hardness and insensibility naturally follow; so that they who are in the most fatal danger are the least apprized of it.

3. He encourages them to end well as they had begun. *For we are made partakers of Christ*, or, *we have been* admitted to all the blessings and privileges which spring from vital union with him; *if we hold the beginning of our confidence* (ὑποστάσεως) or *subsistence* in him, *steadfast unto the end*, and perseveringly abide in this holy fellowship, without which our former professions would be proved hypocritical and insincere. *Note*, (1.) Every believer is a partaker of Christ, and all things are ours if we are his; his grace, merit, righteousness, and Spirit. (2.) To prove our union with Christ real, we must continue faithfully attached to him unto the end.

4. He returns to the subject he began with, to fortify them against apostasy. Improve the present moment, *while it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation;* to-morrow you may be launched into eternity, and time be to you no more. *For some, when they had heard*, notwithstanding every warning, *did provoke* God to abandon them; *howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses;* Caleb and Joshua, and those under twenty years of age, still survived. *But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned*, who bore the righteous vengeance due to their iniquities, *and whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest*, nor possess the promised Canaan, *but to them that believed not*, and rejected their own mercies? *So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Note*, (1.) Unbelief of God's promises is among the most common and highly provoking iniquities. (2.) They who wilfully reject the counsel of God against their own souls, have only themselves to blame for their ruin. (3.) Far the greater part of mankind, yea, of professing Christians, live and die in their sins. The remnant that is saved is very small; two only out of the myriads of Israel entered into the land of rest. (4.) Such fearful instances should awaken in us a holy jealousy to make our calling and election sure.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle, 1. *Inculcates on the Hebrews holy jealousy*, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He shows the excellence of the gospel rest above the earthly Canaan*, ver. 3—10. *Then*, 3. *Concludes with proper and powerful arguments and motives to faith and obedience.*

1. LET [a] us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his [b] rest, any of you should seem [c] to come short of it. 2. For [d] unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; [e] but * the word preached did not profit them, † not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. 3. For [f] we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, [g] As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were [h] finished from the foundation of the world. 4. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, [h] And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. 5. And in this *place* again, [i] If they shall enter into my rest. 6. Seeing therefore [k] it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom ‡ it was first preached [l] entered not in because of unbelief: 7. (Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, [m] To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. 8. For [n] if || Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another

[a] Ver. 11. ch. 12. 15. & 2. 1, 3. 2 Cor. 6. 1. Rom. 11. 20, 21. ch. iii.
[b] Acts 13. 32, 33, 38, 39. Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 4. 5, 6.
[c] Ch. 12. 15. Mat. 25. 10. Luke 13. 25, 35.
[d] Ch. 2. 3. & 12. 25. Acts 2. 39. & 3 26. & 13. 46. & ii, xi.
[e] Ch. 3. 12, 18, 19. Rom. 14. 23. Heb. 11. 6. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13. 2 Thes. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 18, 21.
* Gr. *the word of hearing.*
† Or *because they were not united by faith to.*
[f] Rom. 5. 1, 2. & 10. 10. Is. 28. 16. & 45. 22. ch. 3. 14. Luke 14. 22, 23.
[g] Ps. 95. 11. ch. 3. 11, 18. Num. 14. 21, 23, 30.
[h] Gen. 1. 31. & 2. 1, 2. Exod. 20. 11. & 31. 15, 17.
[i] Ps. 95. 11. ch. 3. 11.
[k] Ch. 3. 16. Rom. 9. 6—8. & 11. 1, 2, 5, 7. 2 Tim. 2. 19. John 10. 27—29.
‡ Or *the gospel was first preached.*
[l] Ch. 3. 18, 19. Rom. 11. 20, 25. John 3. 18, 36. 1 John 5. 10.
[m] Ps. 95. 7. ch. 3. 7, 15.
[n] Josh. i—xxi. Neh. 9. 22, 24. Ps. 78. 55. & 105. 44. & 135. 12. Acts 7. 45.
|| That is, *Joshua.*

* Or *keeping of a sabbath.*
o Ver. 1, 3. Gal. 4. 4—6. & 5. 1. Is. 11. 10. Zeph. 3. 17. Ezek. 34. 14, 25. John 3. 36. Acts 15. 10. Rev. 11. 15. & 7. 14—17. & 14. 13. & 21. 3, 4. Is. 57. 2. & 60. 19, 20.
p See ch. 1. 3. & 4. 14. & 8. 1. & 10. 12.
q John 19. 30. Rev. 1. 18. Luke 24. 26, 46. or 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2.
r Ver 3, 4. Gen. 2. 1, 2. Exod. 20. 11. & 31. 17, 19.

* day. 9. There remaineth therefore a * [o] rest to the people of God. 10. For [p] he that is entered into his rest, he also [q] hath ceased from his works, [r] as God *did* from his.)

Verses 1—10. The apostle, in the view of the foregoing observations,

1. Exhorts them to holy jealousy. *Let us fear therefore* for ourselves, *lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest,* into a state of happy peace with God here, and the eternal enjoyment of him hereafter, *any of you should seem to come short of it:* overcome by temptation, apostatizing from your professions, or faltering in your Christian course; so as, like Israel of old, to fail of the promised inheritance. *For unto us was the gospel preached,* clearly and plainly, *as well as unto them,* more obscurely in types and figures: *but the word preached did not profit them,* to any saving purpose; *not being mixed with faith in them that heard it,* and therefore never incorporated with their hearts, as the food, when digested, affords nourishment to the body. Nor will the gospel profit us any more than it did them, unless it be received by faith into the soul. *Note,* (1.) The same gospel in substance was preached under the Old Testament as well as the New; and only by faith then, any more than at present, could any man be justified and saved. (2.) The word is preached to multitudes who never profit thereby; for unless the Lord gives the discerning ear, and enables us to mix it with faith in our hearts, we hear in vain. (3.) It is a dreadful thing to hear of gospel grace, and yet to come short of it, and perish in our sins. (4.) The way to insure our entrance into the promised rest, is by constant watchfulness and holy caution. They who do not fear will fall.

2. He shows the surpassing excellency of that spiritual rest, to which, under the gospel, believers are admitted. *For we who have believed do enter into rest,* through Christ, having present peace with God by virtue of our union with our exalted Head, and are already sat down with him in heavenly places. *As he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, If they shall enter into my rest;* which implied a promise, that true believers should enter into rest; *although the works were finished from the foundation of the world,* and a sabbatical rest enjoined in consequence thereof. Yet the rest here spoken of is different from that: *For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise,* Gen. ii. 2. *And God did rest the seventh day from all his works,* hallowing it for ever after as a day of holy rest; but this was not the rest concerning which God swore unto the Israelites. *And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest;* As I live, saith the Lord, they shall not; which being spoken by David to the people of his own days, could not refer to the land of Canaan, of which for some hundreds of years they had been in possession. *Seeing therefore it remaineth, that some must enter therein,* as is implied in the very threatening: *and they to whom it was first preached,* the generality of them, at least, *entered not in* to the typical rest of Canaan, *because of* their *unbelief: Again he limiteth,* and fixes *a certain day* to come, saying in David, Psal. xcv. 7, 8. *To-day, after so long a time* had elapsed from their settlement in Canaan: *as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts,* and ye shall enter into the promised rest. Now this must be different from the possession of the land of Canaan: *For if Jesus,* Joshua, *had given them rest,* and none farther was to have been expected, *then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day,* as he doth in that Psalm. Since then neither the sabbath nor the land of Canaan are meant in this passage of scripture, *there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God;* a rest into which the spiritual Joshua should bring his faithful followers; a present, a spiritual rest, through faith in Jesus Christ, far preferable to either of these, and this is the earnest and foretaste of an eternal rest in glory everlasting. *For he that is entered into his rest,* the Lord Jesus Christ, since his ascension into heaven, having finished the work of his people's salvation which he had undertaken, *he also hath ceased from his own works,* having nothing more to do or suffer as the meritorious cause of their acceptance with God, all being finished on the cross; therefore he rests in glory, *as God did* rest *from his* works of creation: and all who believe in Jesus rest with him in the present enjoyment of the divine favour, and in their title to divine blessedness.

11. [s] Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of † unbelief. 12. For [t] the word of God *is* [u] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13. [x] Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom [y] we have to do. 14. [z] Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us [a] hold fast *our* profession. 15. For we have not an high priest [b] which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* [c] without sin. 16. [d] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

† Or *disobedience.*
s See ver. 1. ch. 3. 19. Mat. 7. 13. & 11. 12, 28. Luke 13. 24.
t John 1. 1. 1 John 5. 7. Rev. 19. 13. or John 6. 63. Ps. 147. 19. & 119. 11.
u Eccl. 12. 11. Is. 11. 4. & 49. 2. & 55. 11. Jer. 23. 29. Acts 2. 37. 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. 2 Cor. 2. 16. & 10. 4, 5. Eph. 6. 17. Rev. 1. 16. & 19. 21. Rom. 2. 16.
x Job 26. 6. & 34. 21. Ps. 33. 13—15. & 34. 15. & 90. 8. & 139. 11, 12. Prov. 15. 3, 11. Jer. 23. 23, & 17. 10. John 21. 17. Rev. 2. 23.
y John 5. 22, 28. Acts 17. 31. Rom. 14. 9—12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 20. 12. Eccl. 12. 14.
z Ch. 3. 1. & 2. 17. & 7. 26. & 5. 10. & 6. 20. & 8. 1. & 9. 11, 24. & 10. 21. & 13. 20. Ps. 110. 4.
a Ch. 3. 6, 14. & 6. 11. & 10. 23. & 12. 1, 12. & 13. 7—9.
b Ch. 2. 17, 18. Is. 53. 4, 5. Luke 22. 28. Phil. 2. 7, 8.
c 2 Cor. 5. 21. ch. 7. 26. & 9. 28. 1 Pet. 2. 22. 1 John 3. 5. Dan. 9. 24.
d Eph. 2. 18. & 3. 12. ch. 10. 19—22. Mat. 7. 7—11. John 16. 23, 24. Is. 55. 6. Amos 5. 4.

Verses 11—16. Such a glorious rest being promised,

1. The apostle exhorts them to secure a part therein. *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest,* in opposition to every discouragement and difficulty from sin, Satan, and the world, which may be laid in our way, considering the awful examples abovementioned, *lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief* and perish in their sins. *Note,* The way to heaven is strait, and the gate narrow; we must *strive* if we would enter in; the slothful never went to glory.

2. He enforces his exhortation by the strongest argument. *For the word of God,* the uncreated Word, the Son, our Lord, and shortly to be our Judge, *is quick,* having life in and of himself, *and* the author of it to all his creatures; *powerful* in agency, *and* omnipotent: *sharper than any two-edged sword,* in his gospel word brought home to the conscience by the operation of the Holy Ghost: *piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow:* entering into the inmost recesses of the heart, carrying the deepest conviction, and working effectually to bring the whole inner man into obedience to himself; *and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart:* intimately acquainted with every secret of the soul. *Neither is there any creature,* in heaven or in earth, *that is not manifest in his sight:* nor can their inmost thoughts be hid from him: *but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we*

have to do, (γυμνα και τετραχηλισμενα.) As the sacrifices were flayed, laid open, and their entrails inspected with nicest care; so distinctly is every imagination of our hearts bare and exposed to him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and at whose bar we must shortly give an account. How awakening a consideration! and what watchfulness and diligence should it excite in us, that we may be found of him in peace, and enter among his faithful ones into the promised rest.

Some by the word of God suppose the written word is meant, whose quickening, powerful, piercing, discerning efficacy is so great: and this, no doubt, is included, as being the instrument which the Lord makes use of; but I conceive the context and expressions show that Christ personally is here described and spoken of.

3. He returns to the consideration of the priesthood of Christ, mentioned (Chap. iii. 1.) as an encouraging motive to quicken their diligence, considering the power and grace which were engaged for their support. *Seeing then that we have a great high-priest,* whose excellence is so superlative; and *that,* having offered the all-atoning sacrifice, *is passed into the heavens,* into the holiest of all, to the immediate presence of God; even *Jesus, the Son of God,* one in essence with the Father, and as Mediator exalted to the highest dignity and glory, able to succour and save his people to the uttermost; therefore *let us hold fast our profession,* unwavering; *for we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but* one who tenderly sympathizes with every pang we feel in body or soul, and *was in all points tempted like as we are,* only *without sin.* His love and compassions therefore being great as his power, we may confidently expect salvation to the uttermost, and comfortably labour when we are assured it shall not be in vain in the Lord. *Note,* (1.) Christ is passed into the heavens, and for his people appears in the presence of God, to plead their cause, and insure their salvation. (2.) It is an unspeakable comfort to us under every temptation, that Jesus hath endured it before us, knows our weakness, feels for our distress, and will proportion his grace to our necessities. (3.) This should embolden us under the severest conflicts to hold fast our profession, nor ever to be moved away from the hope of the gospel, seeing he is near that strengtheneth us.

4. The glorious high-priesthood of Jesus should encourage us to draw near to God in prayer. *Let us therefore,* having such an all-prevailing advocate, *come boldly to the throne of grace,* where our reconciled God in majesty and love unspeakable appears, inviting our applications, with humble reverence, and filial confidence, *that we may obtain mercy,* and pardons multiplied from day to day, *and grace to help in* every *time of need;* in time, manner, measure, vouchsafed according to our danger, trials and distresses, till he shall land us safe on the shores of eternal rest. *Note,* (1.) They who know the inestimable privilege of having a throne of grace to go to, will not fail to be found there often upon their knees. (2.) There is nothing we can want of which we are not assured of a supply, when by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving we make our requests known to a reconciled God. (3.) All our hopes of mercy or grace arise purely from the great high-priest, who lives to make intercession for us; for in him God is always well pleased, and with us for his sake. (4.) Humble boldness becomes a child of God when approaching that throne where grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter the apostle continues his discourse upon the priesthood of Christ, a sweet subject, which he would not so soon dismiss. And here, 1. *He explains the nature of the priestly office in general,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The proper and regular call there must be to this office,* ver. 4—6. 3. *The requisite qualifications for the work,* ver. 7—9. 4. *The peculiar order of the priesthood of Christ; it was not after the order of Aaron, but Melchisedec,* ver. 6, 7, 10. 5. *He reproves the Hebrews, that they had not made those improvements in knowledge, as might have made them capable of looking into the more abstruse and mysterious parts of scripture,* ver. 11—14.

1. FOR [a] every high-priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: 2. [b] Who * can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. 3. [c] And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. 4. [d] And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron. 5. So also [e] Christ glorified not himself to be made an high-priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. 6. As he saith also in another *place,* [f] Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7. Who in the days of his [g] flesh, when [h] he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and [i] was heard † in that he feared; 8. [k] Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9. And [l] being made perfect, he became [m] the author of eternal salvation unto all them [n] that obey him; 10. [o] Called of God an high-priest after the order of Melchisedec.

a Ch. 2. 17. & 8. 3, 4. & 7. 27. & 9. 9. & 10. 11. & 4. 14. with Exod. xxviii. Lev. i—xxvi.
b Ch. 2. 18. & 4. 15. with Num. 15. 22—29. ch. 7. 28.
* Or *can reasonably bear with.*
c Lev. 4. 3. & 9. 7. & 6. 6, 17. ch. 7. 27.
d 2 Chr. 26. 16, 18. 1 Sam. 13. 9. 2 Sam. 6. 6, 7. with Exod. 28. 1. 1 Chr. 23. 13. Jer. 23. 32.
e John 8. 54. with Ps. 2. 7. ch. 1. 5. Acts 13. 33. Prov. 8. 23—31. Mic. 5. 2. John 1. 14. & 3. 16. Rom. 8. 3.
f Ps. 110. 4. & 6. 20. & 7. 3, 15, 17. ver. 10.
g Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. Mat. 8. 20. 2 Cor. 8. 9.
h Ps. xxii. lxix. & 4. 11—13. Mat. 26. 38—42, 53. & 27. 46, 50. John 17. 1. Mark 14. 36. John 12. 27.
i Luke 22. 43. Ps. 22. 21. John 11. 42. Mat. 27. 47.
† Or *for his piety.*
k Phil. 2. 6—8. ch. 1. 5, 8. & 3. 6. & 2. 10. Zech 13. 7. Mat. 3. 15. & 5. 17.
l Luke 13. 32. ch. 2. 10. Dan. 9. 24. John 17. 4.
m Ch. 12. 2. Ps. 68. 18. Is. 45. 17, 22, 24, 25. & 55. 4. & 49. 6. Mat. 1. 21. 1 Thes. 1. 10.
Ps. 72. 17. John 10. 28. ch. 9. 12. & 10. 10, 14. m Is. 1. 19. & 55. 3. Zech. 6. 15. Is. 62. 12. Luke 1. 74, 75. Tit. 2. 14. o Ver. 6. ch. 6. 20. & 7. 3. 15 17. Ps. 110. 4.

Verses 1—10. We have here,

1. An account of the sacerdotal office in general. *For every high-priest taken from among men,* under the legal dispensation, *is* of the same nature with his brethren, and *ordained for men in things pertaining to God,* on their behalf to minister in holy things, *that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins,* according to the law, as the type and figure of him who in his own person, as both high-priest and sacrifice, should, in the fulness of time, offer the true atonement, and make the perfect reconciliation for sin, causing the persons and prayers of his people to be accepted by the Father; *who can* bear with, and *have compassion on the ignorant,* sympathizing with them; *and* having pity *on them that are out of the way;* desirous to bring them back again to God, and peace of conscience; *for that he himself is also compassed with infirmity,* and liable to every affliction under which his brethren groan. *And by reason hereof,* since he himself is a poor infirm creature, and guilty sinner as well as others, *he ought, as for the people, so for himself, to offer* an atoning sacrifice. But herein the surpassing glory of the great High-priest of our profession most eminently appears; for while, as partaker of the human nature, with infinitely greater compassion, he feels for the erring and the ignorant, and stands to offer his all-prevailing sacrifice for them,

he doth it purely on their account, not on his own, being himself without sin.

2. A divine appointment was necessary for the office of priesthood. *And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron,* appointed thereto by the Lord's immediate order and authority. *So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high-priest,* assuming that honour in his human nature without a divine warrant; *but he* was solemnly called and qualified for this office by him *that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee;* intimating the dignity of his person who was to be invested in the pontifical office. *As he saith also in another place,* Ps. cx. 4. *Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec;* an order prior and superior to that of Aaron, Christ having an eternal and unchangeable priesthood, ever living and alone sufficient to manage all the concerns of his people. *Note,* (1.) Before we presume to minister in holy things, we must produce a divine call, lest intruding into an office for which we have no commission, we should expose ourselves to shame as intruders, instead of reaping honour by the service. (2.) The High-priest which God hath himself appointed, we may be assured he will accept, and all our oblations in his hand shall be received as sacrifices of a sweet smell.

3. We are told how he executed his office, and how effectual it was on the behalf of his people. *Who in the days of his flesh, when* here below oppressed with manifold and severe sufferings, *he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears,* especially in his agonizing struggle in the garden, looking up *unto him that was able to save his soul from death,* and those terrors which distressed his innocent soul; *and was heard,* in the support ministered to him, and in his glorious resurrection from the dead, because he feared, and with holy reverence submitted to his Father's will. *Though he were a son,* the eternal Son of the Father, and one with him in nature and perfections, *yet* having condescended to take our nature upon him, *learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;* approving himself cheerfully submissive to his Father's will, and yielding himself up to death, even the death of the cross. *And being made perfect,* fully accomplishing by his obedience and sufferings the work which he had undertaken, and thereby being consecrated for the exercise of his priesthood in heaven, *he became the author of eternal salvation;* purchasing it by his blood, securing it by his advocacy, and applying it by his Spirit to the souls of his people; a salvation not only from present guilt and corruption, but including all the blessings of glory everlasting, which are secured *unto all them that obey him,* and follow him as the Captain of their salvation; *called of God,* and fully qualified for his office, as *a high-priest after the order of Melchisedec,* ever living to make intercession for his people, and therefore a Saviour unto them to the uttermost. *Note,* (1.) God's adopted sons, like their great Head, are to expect sufferings, and under them to learn obedience and submission. (2.) None ever in the human nature endured any thing like what the Son of God hath suffered voluntarily for our sake: how then dare we murmur or complain! (3.) In his agony the Saviour prayed, to teach us whither we should look under all our distresses; and if with faith and fervour, as he did, we cry, we shall as assuredly be heard and delivered. (4.) The salvation which the Son of God hath obtained for us, is complete and everlasting. He hath borne the penalty of sin, and fulfilled the righteousness of the law, that we might have all the benefit, and be entitled to the eternal reward of glory. (5.) All who hope to reign with him, desire to be ruled by him; and cheerfully yielding themselves to his holy will, take up their cross, and follow the Captain of their salvation; and, unless we do this, our hope in him is but delusion.

p Mat. 13. 15. John 16. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. 2 Pet. 3. 16

11. [p] Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. 12. [q] For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; [t] and are become such as have need of [r] milk, and not of strong meat. 13. For every one that useth milk [t] *is* unskilful in the [r] word of righteousness; for he is [s] a babe. 14. But strong meat belongeth to [‖] them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of [*] use [t] have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

q 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. ch. 6. 1. & 10. 32. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 9. 1 Tim. 3. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 18—21.

† Gr. *hath no experience.*

r Rom. 1. 16, 17. & 3. 21. 2 Cor. 3. 9. & 5. 18—21. Eph. 1. 13. Tit. 2. 11—14.

s 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. & 14. 20. Eph. 4. 14. 1 Cor. 13. 11.

‖ Or *perfect.*

* Or *of a habit* or *perfection.*

t 1 Cor. 2. 6, 15. & 3. 1. & 13. 11. Eph. 4. 13, 14. Philem. 15.

Verses 11—14. The apostle pauses for a moment, and stays the farther consideration of the subject which he was upon, to introduce a needful rebuke of their dulness and inattention to the great things of God's word. Having mentioned the second time that remarkable personage, Melchisedec, he observes, *Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered,* difficult to be understood in themselves, and the more so to you, *seeing ye are dull of hearing,* slothful and negligent to search into the sacred oracles, that you might become more deeply acquainted with their important contents. *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers,* considering all the means and advantages which you have enjoyed, *ye have need,* so little progress have ye made in the school of Christ, *that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God,* as the child must learn his letters in order to spell and read; *and* rather declining than advancing in knowledge, *are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat,* as babes at the breast, instead of that state of manhood to which you should ere this have arrived. *For every one that useth milk,* and cannot relish or digest any thing beyond the first principles of the doctrines of Christ, *is unskilful* and unexperienced *in the word of righteousness,* in the gospel, where Christ's divine righteousness is revealed, and we are taught how to walk and please God; *for* such a one *is a babe* in understanding. *But strong meat,* the sublimer doctrines of truth, *belong to them that are of full age,* and may, comparatively, be styled perfect men, (τελειων) *even those, who by reason of use,* being experimentally acquainted with the blessed gospel, *have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil,* accurate to discover truth and detect error, and as eager to embrace and pursue the one, as to detest and avoid the other. *Note,* (1.) They who have long enjoyed the richest advantages, are expected to show proportionable improvement in grace and knowledge. (2.) It is a great grief to ministers, and the sin and shame of their people, that, after years of labour, many of them have yet to learn the first principles of gospel truth. (3.) The scripture is suited to every state; there is milk for babes, and strong meat for men; it is the wisdom of a minister to be able to divide to every man his portion in due season. (4.) The word of God contains mysteries, wherein the most deep-read and experienced have much to learn, whilst the grand truths are plain and obvious, and such as the weakest capacities may comprehend.

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter the apostle exhorts the Hebrews to make a better proficiency in religion than they had done, as the best way to prevent apostasy, the dreadful nature of which he sets forth, ver. 1—8. *And then expresses his good hopes concerning them, that they would persevere in faith and holiness, and sets before them the great encouragement they have from God, both with respect to their duty and happiness, from* ver. 9. *to the end.*

1. THEREFORE, [a] leaving * the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the [b] foundation of [c] repentance from [d] dead works, and of faith toward God, 2. [e] Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of [f] resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3. [g] And this will we do, if God permit. 4. For [h] *it is* impossible for those who were [i] once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5. And [k] have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6. If they shall fall away, [l] to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they [m] crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame. 7. [n] For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them † by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8. [o] But that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end *is* to be burned.

a Phil. 3. 12—15. ch. 5. 12—14. Eph. 4. 13, 14. 1 Cor. 14. 20. & 2. 6.
* Or *the word of the beginning of Christ.*
b Eph. 2. 20. 1 Cor. 3. 10, 11. Mat. 7. 24.
c Is. 55. 3, 7. Mark 1. 14. Acts 2. 38, 39. & 3. 19. & 20. 21. 1 Pet. 1. 21. John 14. 1. & 20. 31. 1 John 5. 9—13.
d Ch. 9. 14. Gal. 5. 19—21. Mat. 15. 19. Rom. 1. 28—32. & 3. 10—19. & 7. 5. & 6. 21, 23. & 8. 6. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Rev. 3. 1.
e Acts 19. 4—6. & 8. 16, 17. Mat. 28. 19. & 19. 15. with Lev. i—xvi.
f See 1 Cor. xv. Mat. 25. 30—46. Rev. 20. 11—15.
g Ver. 1. Acts 18. 21. Jam. 4. 15. 1 Cor. 4. 19. & 16. 7.
h Ch. 10. 26, 27, 29. Mat. 12. 31, 32. 45. 2 Pet. 2. 20. 1 John 5. 16. ch. 12. 15.
i Ch. 10. 32. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. Num. 24. 3, 15, 16. & 23. 10. Mat. 7. 22. Luke 10. 19. 1 Cor. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 12. ch. 2. 4.
k Mark 4. 16. & 6. 20. 1 Cor. 12. 10. Gal. 3. 2, 3, 5. ch. 2. 4, 5.
l See letter h.
m Ch. 10. 29.
n Is. 3. 10. & 55. 10—13. Song 8. 11—12. Mat. 18. 12. & 25. 29. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Gal. 6. 9, 10.
† Or *for.*
o Is. 5. 6—24. Ezek. xv. Jer. 26. 6. & 14. 22. Mark 11. 14, 21. Mat. 25. 41. ch. 10. 27. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9.

Verses 1—8. The apostle here,

1. Exhorts the Hebrews to advance in spiritual attainments. *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection*, to a more advanced state of grace and understanding; *not laying again the foundation*, and continuing still to insist on the first principles of the Christian doctrine, but proceeding to greater heights in heavenly wisdom. The principles I speak of are those, [1.] *Of repentance from dead works*, implying a sense of the evil and danger of sin, the wages of which is death, an abhorrence of it, and real conversion of heart from the love and practice of all iniquity. *And* [2.] *Of faith towards God*, since all who come to him must believe his being, attributes, and perfections; and especially that he is our reconciled God in the Son of his love Christ Jesus. And these two principles *of* Christianity were typified under the Mosaical dispensation by *the doctrine of baptisms*, or divers washings prescribed to the temple worshippers, which signified the purification of the conscience, through faith in the blood of Jesus, and by the power of his Spirit, *and of laying on of hands* upon the head of the sacrifice, with penitent confession of sin, in token of transferring their guilt to their substitute. [3.] *And of the resurrection of the dead*, which may be reckoned another first principle of Christianity. *And* [4.] *Of eternal judgment*, when every man must appear to give an account at God's bar, and to receive his sentence to be happy or miserable for ever, in body and soul, according to his deeds. These having been so often insisted upon, we design to leave them to your serious reflection, and pass on to sublimer things. *And this we will do if God permit. Note*, (1.) When the foundation of religion is laid, the superstructure must be raised in an increase of knowledge, grace, and holiness. (2.) All we purpose must be undertaken in dependence upon God's support, for without him we can do nothing aright.

2. To quicken them to diligence, he sets before them the fearful case of apostates. *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened*, and so far received the knowledge of the truth as to make profession of it, *and have tasted of the heavenly gift*, in some superficial impressions made upon their consciences, though their heart hath remained unchanged; *and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost*, in some of his miraculous operations, *and have tasted of the good word of God*, receiving it, as the stony-ground hearers, for a while with joy, *and*, of *the powers of the world to come*, enabled to perform many wonderful works; *if*, after all this, *they shall fall away* from the gospel to Judaism, or heathenism, the case is desperate, it is impossible *to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh*, approving the wickedness of those who nailed him to the tree as an impostor, *and put him to an open shame*, by assenting to the black calumnies of his murderers, turning from him as a deceiver, and renouncing his gospel as an untruth; for such apostasy, being a sin against the very remedy, cannot but be necessarily fatal. *Note*, (1.) Hypocrites may go far and come short of heaven: they may have many right notions in religion, make a fair profession, feel pangs of conviction, and transient flashes of joy under the ordinance; yea, they might have possessed even the power of miracles, and yet never have been partakers of the grace of God in truth. (2.) Satan will often seek to distress the souls of the sincere, when under darkness or temptation, with these terrible declarations: let it therefore be remembered, that it is never impossible to renew those unto repentance, in whom the Lord still awakens a desire to repent and turn to him.

3. The different states of the gracious soul and the apostate are here described. *For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God*, so the faithful heart, watered with the dew of divine influences from the Lord, brings forth the fruits of righteousness, which by Jesus Christ are acceptable and well pleasing to God, who blesses his own work, and gives a more abundant increase of every holy and gracious disposition. *But that* ground *which*, after all the culture bestowed upon it, still *beareth thorns and briers, is rejected* by the owner as barren *and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned:* so where, amidst means of grace, unbelief and hardness of heart remain, and after all their professions men turn aside to error in principle, and ungodliness in practice, such are in God's sight reprobate, his curse lieth upon them, which soon shall be fearfully executed; when, cast into the belly of hell, they shall lie down in everlasting burnings, and none can quench them.

9. But, beloved, [p] we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. 10. For [q] God *is* not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11. And we desire that every one of you do [r] shew the same diligence, [s] to the full assurance of hope unto the end: 12. [t] That ye be not slothful, but [u] followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. 13. [x] For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, 14. Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying

p Ch. 10. 39. & 3. 1. ver. 10. Phil. 1. 6, 7. with ver. 4—6.
q Deut. 32. 4. Ps. 20. 3. Prov. 14. 31. Mat. 10. 42. & 25. 40. Mark 9. 41. John 13. 20. Rom. 13. 8. & 15. 26. 1 Cor. 16. 15. 1 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7. ch. 10. 32—34. & 13. 3. Rev. 2. 2.
r Rom. 12. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Pet. 1. 10. & 3. 18. Phil. 3. 8—15. 1 Tim. 6. 11, 12.
s Ch. 3. 6, 14. & 10. 22, 35. Col. 2. 2. Gal. 5. 5. Phil. 1. 6.
t Rom. 12. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Pet. 1. 4—10. ch. 5. 11.
u Ch. 12. 1, 2. & 13. 7. & 11. 8, 13. Song 1. 8. Ps. 45. 16, 17.
x Gen. 22. 16, 17. & 17. 7. & 12. 3. Ps. 105. 9. Mic. 7. 20. Luke 1. 73. Ezek. 16. 8.

I will multiply thee. 15. And so, [y] after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16. For men verily [z] swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. 17. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the [a] heirs of promise [b] the immutability of his counsel, ‡ confirmed *it* by an oath: 18. That by two immutable things, [c] in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have [d] a strong consolation, [e] who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19. [f] Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail, 20. Whither [h] the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, [i] made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

y Gen. xii—xxi. Rom. 4. 17—20. & 2. 7. ch. 10. 36, 37. Hab. 2. 3, 4.
z Gen. 14. 22. & 21. 23. & 31. 53. & 24. 3. Exod. 22. 11. Deut. 6. 13. Jer. 4. 2.
a Ver. 12. ch. 11. 7, 9. Gal. 3. 29. Rom. 8. 17. 1 Pet. 3. 7. Mat. 25. 34.
b Ps. 33. 11. Prov. 19. 21. & 21. 30. Jam. 1. 17. Rom. 11. 29. Job 23. 13. Mal. 3. 6.
‡ Gr. *interposed himself by an oath.*
c Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Deut. 32. 4. Tit. 1. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 13. Rom. 3. 3, 4.
d Is. 40. 1, 2. & 49. 13. & 51. 3, 12. & 54. 1—17. 2 Cor. 1. 3—5. 2 Thes. 2. 16, 17.
e Num. 35. 11. Gen. 19. 14, 17. Is. 45. 22. & 60. 8. & 55. 3, 7. Ezek. 33. 11. Zech. 9. 12. Mat. 11. 28. Rom. 8. 24. 1 Tim. 1. 1. ch. 12. 1, 2, 22—24.
f See ver. 11. Ps. 130. 7. & 42. 11. & 43. 5. Jer. 14. 8. & 17. 7, 17.
g Lev. 16. 15. ch. 9. 3, 7, 24, 25. & 10. 19, 20.
h John 14. 2. ch. 1. 3. & 4. 14. & 8. 1. & 9. 24. Rom. 8. 34. John 12. 24. Rev. 3. 21. Eph. 2. 5, 6.
i Ch. 3. 1. & 9. 11. & 5. 6, 10. & 7. 1—17. Ps. 110. 4. Gen. 14. 17—20.

Verses 9—20. The apostle from the most awful warnings, passes on to the most powerful encouragements to steadfastness and perseverance.

1. He professes his good opinion of them in general, at least. *But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak,* that ye will never prove apostates, but are actually partakers of those blessings of justification, adoption, and grace, which cannot but issue in eternal glory.

2. He suggests the reason on which his confidence was built. *For God is not unrighteous* or unfaithful *to* his promises, and therefore will not *forget your work and labour of love,* the genuine principle of all holy obedience, and assured proof of your interest in all the blessings of the everlasting covenant: *which* love *ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do* continue to *minister* unto them under all their afflictions. *Note,* (1.) Our love to God must appear in every work and labour of love for the good of his people. (2.) They who give genuine proofs of their faith unfeigned, by a conversation such as becometh godliness, will find God faithful to his promises, and their bounteous rewarder.

3. He exhorts them to persevere. *And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence,* in every good word and work, your fruits of righteousness abiding and abounding, *to the full assurance of hope unto the end,* growing up to a more satisfied confidence of your interest in the eternal blessedness, and carried as a ship under full sails into the port of eternal rest. See therefore *that ye be not slothful, but* diligent in every means of grace, and in the duties of your calling, as *followers of them, who* have trod before this holy path, and *through faith and patience,* amidst every trial, persevering unto the end, are now gone to *inherit the promises* in glory everlasting. *Note,* (1.) If we have good hope through grace, we should seek to grow up to the full assurance of hope unto the end. (2.) Diligence in religion, as in every thing else, is the only way to thrive. (3.) The examples of those who are gone to glory before us should encourage and quicken us to follow them. (4.) Where faith and patience are implanted in the heart, there perseverance is the necessary fruit.

4. The faithfulness of God to his promises should engage their fidelity to him. *For when God made promise to Abraham,* (Gen. xxii. 16, 17.) concerning the Messiah his future seed, *because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,* to give him the strongest assurance of the fulfilment of the promise, *saying, Surely,* as I live, my being and perfections are engaged to accomplish my word, *blessing, I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee,* so that thou shalt be a father of many nations, and on thy spiritual seed shall thy blessing descend to the latest ages. *And so after he had patiently endured,* through manifold afflictions, *he obtained the promise* of a son, the pledge of that Messiah, who should descend from him, and at last departed himself in the faith, and entered the eternal world of glory. *For men verily swear by the greater,* solemnly appealing to God as the witness of truth and the avenger of falsehood, *and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife,* this being judged the most solemn and decisive evidence, which can be given to silence doubt, and terminate dispute. *Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath,* in condescension to our weakness, and to give us the utmost satisfaction with regard to the unchangeableness of his purposes of grace towards his people, and of the certainty of the accomplishment of every promise he had made, whatever difficulties might seem to prevent it: *that by two immutable things,* the promise and oath of God, *in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation,* filled with the sweetest delight, and supported under all our trials, *who have fled for refuge,* as the manslayer to the appointed city, (Numb. xxxv. 11, 12.) with eagerness, under an awakened sense of our guilt and danger, *to lay hold upon the hope set before us,* even Christ, the rock of his people's confidence: *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil,* Christ, the object of our hope, being ascended into heaven, thither the grace of hope follows him, keeping the soul unmoved amidst all the storms of temptation: *whither the forerunner,* our representative, *is for us entered, even Jesus,* the exalted Saviour, gone to prepare a place for us, *made a high-priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Note,* (1.) In Christ there is a refuge provided for the chief of sinners, and all who flee to him shall not only be safe but happy! (2.) Since the promises are confirmed by two such immutable things as the counsel and oath of God, with what confidence ought we to trust upon them! (3.) In this tempestuous world we should be hourly exposed to shipwreck, if hope did not enable us to ride out the storm, having cast anchor within the veil. (4.) Where our forerunner is entered for us, we must follow. Is he in heaven? then shall we be shortly with him where he is, that we may behold and share his glory.

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter, 1. *We have a more particular account of Melchisedec,* ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *The excellency of his priesthood above that of Aaron,* ver. 4—11. 3. *An accommodation of all to Christ, to show the superior excellency of his person, office, and covenant, from* ver. 11. to the end.

1. FOR this [a] Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2. [b] To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation [b] King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; 3. Without father, without mother, * without descent, having neither

a Gen. 14. 17—20.
b With Is. 32. 1, 2. & 9. 6, 7. Ps. 45. 6, 7. & 72. 1—17. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 33. 15, 16. Mic. 5. 2. Eph. 2. 14.
* Or *without pedigree.*

beginning of days, nor end of life; but made [c] like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.

c Is. 7. 14. Jer. 31. 22. Luke 1. 34, 35. Ps. 2. 7. John 1. 14. Rom. 8. 3. 1 Tim. 1. 17. ver. 17, 25—28.

Verses 1—3. Thrice had the apostle quoted the testimony borne to the Son of God out of the Psalms, as a high-priest after the order of Melchisedec: of this remarkable person he here gives an account, and we may herein trace the resemblance he bore to his great antitype.

1. His name was Melchisedec, or king of righteousness, the figure of him on whose shoulders the universal government should rest, who, with the most distinguished rectitude, should administer the affairs of his kingdom, and is the author of everlasting righteousness to his people.

2. He was *king of Salem*, that is, of *peace*. So is Christ eminently the prince of peace, having procured it for us by his blood, applying it by his Spirit, and setting up his throne of peace within our hearts.

3. He was said to be *a priest of the most high God*. So was Jesus consecrated to this office by his Father, and through his sacrifice alone can we obtain reconciliation and acceptance with God.

4. He blessed Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, as his superior. And as Abraham gave him a tenth of all, he must needs be a priest of a higher rank and order than Levi, or Aaron, who descended from this patriarch; and thus hath our incarnate Lord a priesthood infinitely excelling the Aaronical, and of far more extensive influence, ministering in behalf of Gentiles as well as Jews.

5. Melchisedec's original is entirely concealed; no mention is made of his father or mother, of his birth or death, that he might more strikingly represent the Son of God, who abideth a priest continually, appointed to his office before the worlds were, and to the end of time continuing to exercise it on the behalf of his people, without predecessor, partner, or successor, alone appearing before the throne, and ever living to make intercession for us.

4. Now, consider [d] how great this man *was*, unto whom even the [e] patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. 5. And verily [f] they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to [g] the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: 6. But he, whose † descent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that [h] had the promises. 7. And, without all contradiction, [i] the less is blessed of the better. 8. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed [k] that he liveth. 9. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, [l] payed tithes in Abraham. 10. For he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him.

d Gen. 14. 20. ver. 2, 6, 8.

e Acts 2. 29. & 7. 8.

f Num. 18. 26. Deut. 18. 1. Josh. 14. 2. 2 Chr. 31. 5, 6. Neh. 13. 10—12.

g Mark 10. 15. John 10. 34. Rom. 3. 21.

† Gr. *pedigree.*

h Gen. 12. 2, 3. & 13. 14—17. Rom. 4. 13. Gal. 3. 16.

i Gen. xxvii, xlix. Deut. xxxiii. Eph. 1. 3. with ch. 1. 4.

k Ver. 3, 16.

l Gen. 14. 20. Acts 7. 8.

Verses 4—10. To guard the Hebrews from their attachment to the abolished priesthood of Levi, and lead them to the great High Priest of their profession, Christ Jesus, he shows his surpassing excellence above Aaron or his sons. (1.) Because they, being in Abraham's loins, paid tithes to Melchisedec; and though commissioned afterwards to receive tithes of their brethren, yet virtually now, as included in their father, they paid tithes to this priest of God, acknowledged him as their superior, who was but the type of our Lord. (2.) Because the less is blessed by the greater; and herein therefore Abraham himself, though favoured with such distinguished promises, was inferior to Melchisedec, and much more must his sons be who should descend from him; and how much more excellent still than they must he then be, of whom Melchisedec was only the representative? (3.) They were all dying men, and the succession and descent of the sons of Levi are well known, but Melchisedec's generation is concealed; we only hear of him that he liveth, as the figure of him who really hath an unchangeable priesthood, and actually lives for ever to intercede on the behalf of his people. *Note*, If Abraham's paying tithes was reckoned the act of those who were then in his loins, and imputed to them as done by their covenant-heads, we see how Adam's sin, and Christ's righteousness, are severally imputed to the natural descendants of the one, and the spiritual seed of the other.

11. [m] If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise [n] after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? 12. For the priesthood being [o] changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave [p] attendance at the altar. 14. For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang [q] out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. 15. And it is yet far more evident; [r] for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest; 16. Who is made, not after [s] the law of a carnal commandment, but [t] after the power of an endless life. 17. For he testifieth, [u] Thou *art* a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec. 18. [t] For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. 19. [u] For the law made nothing perfect, ‡ but the bringing in of [x] a better hope *did;* by the which we [y] draw nigh unto God. 20. And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made priest;* 21. (For those priests were made ‖ without an oath; but this with an oath, by him that said unto him, [z] The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec;) 22. By so much was Jesus made [a] a surety of [b] a better testament. 23. And [c] they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue

m Ver. 18, 19. ch. 10. 1, 2. & 8. 7, 8, 10. Gal. 3. 21.

n Ps. 110. 4. ch. 5. 6, 10. & 6. 20. ver. 3. 15, 17, 21. Gen. 14. 17—20. with Exod. xxviii. Lev. i—xvi, xxiii. Num. xv, xxviii, xxix.

o Gen. 49. 10. Is. 7. 14. & 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. & 33. 15, 16. Mat. 1. 3, 16. Luke 3. 33. Rom. 1. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 8. Rev. 5. 5. & 22. 16.

p Ps. 110. 4. ch. 6, 10. & 8. 10. ver. 3. 11, 17, 21.

q Ch. 9. 9, 13. & 10. 1. Col. 2. 14, 20. Eph. 2. 15. Gal. 4. 3, 9.

r Ver. 3, 17, 21, 25, 28. Rev. 1. 18.

s Ps. 110. 4. ch. 3. 6, 10. & 6. 20. ver. 1—3, 21. Gen. 14. 17—20.

t Ver. 11, 12, 19. ch. 8. 7, 8, 13. & 10. 1—9. Gal. 4. 9. Rom. 8. 3. Ps. 51. 16. Is. 1. 11—16. & 66. 3.

u Ch. 10. 1, 2, & 9. 9. Acts 13. 39. & 15. 10. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 2. 16 & 3. 21, 24.

‡ Or *but it was the bringing in.*

x Ch. 11. 40. & 2. 3, 4. & 4. 14. ver. 3, 20—28. Gal. 2. 16. Rom. 8. 3. John 1. 17. ch. 8. 2, 6. 1 Tim. 1. 1. Col. 1. 27.

y Eph. 2. 13, 18. & 3. 12. ch. 4. 16. & 6. 18—20. & 10. 19—22. John 14. 6.

‖ Or *without swearing of an oath.*

z Ps. 110. 4. see ver. 11, 17, 28.

a Ps. 40. 6—8. Is. 53. 4—6, 10—12. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Mat. 20. 28. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18.

b Ch. 8. 6. & 9. 15. & 12. 24. & 11. 40.

c 1 Chr. vi, xxiv. Ezra 2. 36—39. Neh. 7. 39—42. & 10. 2—8. & 11. 10—14. & 12. 10—21.

by reason of death: 24. But this *man*, [d] because he continueth ever, hath an * unchangeable priesthood. 25. Wherefore [e] he is able also to save them † to the uttermost that come unto God by him, [f] seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. 26. [g] For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, [h] and made higher than the heavens; 27. Who needeth not daily, as [i] those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. 28. For the law maketh men high priests [k] which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* [l] the Son, who is ‡ consecrated for evermore.

d Is. 9. 6, 7. I Tim. 1. 17. Rom. 9. 5. & 6. 9. Rev. 1. 18. John 12. 34. with ver. 1, 3, 17, 21, 25, 28. Ps. 110. 4. ch. 13. 8.

* Or *which passeth not from one to another.*

e Is. 45. 22. & 63. 1. John 10. 7, 9, 10. & 14. 6. Eph. 2. 13, 18. 1 Tim. 2. 5. John 6. 37, 40—57.

† Or *evermore.*

f Rom. 8. 34. ch. 9. 24. 1 John 2. 1, 2. Rev. 8. 3, 4.

g Exod. 28. 36. & 29. 1. Lev. viii, ix, xxi. & 22. 4—6. Is. 53. 9. Luke 1. 35. Acts 3. 14. & 4. 27. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22. & 1. 19. ch. 9. 12, 14.

h Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51. Acts 1. 9. & 3. 21. Rom. 8. 34. ch. 1. 3. & 4. 14, 15. & 2. 10. & 8. 1. & 9. 24. & 10. 12—14. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Eph. 1. 20—22.

i Lev. 9. 7. & 4. 3. & 16. 6, 11. Rom. 6. 10. ch. 1. 3. & 5. 3. & 8. 3. & 9. 7, 12, 28 & 10. 12, 14. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 8. 18. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Ch. 2. 10. & 4. 14. & 5. 6, 9, 10. & 7. 3, 17, 21, 25. Ps. 110. 4.

k Ch. 5. 1, 2. Lev. 4. 3. & 9. 7. & xxi.

‡ Gr. *perfected.*

Verses 11—28. Had perfection been by the Levitical priesthood, so that the consciences of the worshippers had thereby been fully purged from sin, and had the state of the church under the legal dispensation been complete, there could be no need that a newer and higher order of priesthood should afterwards be instituted, after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron; and such a change of the priesthood implied a change of the whole ceremonial law, which was inseparably interwoven therewith; both law and priesthood therefore were to be abolished, in order to introduce another dispensation, more excellent and glorious than the former, even that of the gospel. That such a change of the priesthood and law is made, is evident.

1. Because our Lord, the priest who should arise after the order of Melchisedec, sprung from the tribe of Judah, not from Levi, and therefore, according to the law, was forbidden to officiate at the altar.

2. The priesthood of Christ was of an entirely different nature from that of the sons of Levi. They *were made after the law of a carnal commandment*, which settled their succession, appointed the rites of their consecration, and those who filled the office were dying men; but Christ is made a high priest of a more excellent kind, *after the power of an endless life*, acting without either partner or successor, living to discharge his office in the behalf of his people for ever and ever.

3. The efficacy of the gospel priesthood was far superior to that under the law, which was abrogated because of its weakness and unprofitableness, being insufficient to purge the conscience from guilt, or to secure unto the sinner justification to life, making nothing *perfect*, and was designed merely to lead us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But Christ hath brought in a *better hope;* his own sacrifice and abiding priesthood give boldness and access to God, and sure hope of favour and acceptance before him.

4. The superior excellence of Christ's priesthood appears in the manner of his consecration; The Levitical priests were made without an oath, but he with an oath, to denote the immutability, efficacy, and eternity of his sacerdotal character. *By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament*, or *covenant*, having undertaken completely to answer all divine requirements on the behalf of his redeemed, that he might secure to them the accomplishment of all the promised blessings, a covenant far better than the Mosaical, both in the clearness of the light which accompanies its administration, and the extensiveness of its efficacy, as reaching to Gentiles as well as Jews.

5. The Aaronical high-priests, as mortal men, were many, succeeding each other, as death removed them from their office, but this glorious person, whom Melchisedec typified, hath an unchangeable priesthood that never passes from him, because he liveth for ever to discharge his sacerdotal functions; *wherefore*, we may assuredly conclude, that Jesus *is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them;* and therefore they can be in no circumstances of distress or danger from which he cannot deliver them; and his exaltation at the right hand of God is on purpose for their benefit, that he may so manage all their affairs as effectually to secure their final salvation, whilst coming to God by him they receive continual pardon, grace, and strength, to preserve them unto the end.

6. Christ appears transcendently glorious above all other priests in his moral qualifications. *For such an high-priest became us*, and no other could have stood us any stead, but one who is *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners*, both in nature and practice, *and made higher than the heavens*, in dignity above the angelic host, or rather in purity of nature, excelling them. *Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests* of the Levitical order, *to offer up sacrifices first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people*, on the great day of atonement; for Christ, having no sin of his own to expiate, needed no sacrifice; and as to his people's iniquities, his own sacrifice was available for ever; *for this he did once, when he offered up himself* without spot to God, as their everlasting propitiation. *For the law maketh men high-priests which have infirmity*, and being sinners as well as others, must offer for themselves as well as the people; *but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son* high-priest, *who is consecrated for evermore*, or *perfected*, who being in nature sinless and impeccable, never could need a sacrifice for himself, but having offered one of eternal efficacy on the behalf of his people, lives for ever to plead it in the presence of God, that they might reap the unutterably blessed fruits of it in their final and everlasting salvation.

CHAP. VIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter the apostle pursues his former subject, the priesthood of Christ. And, 1. *He sums up what he had already said,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *He sets before them the necessary parts of the priestly office,* ver. 3—5. *And,* 3. *Largely illustrates the excellency of the priesthood of Christ, by considering the excellency of that new dispensation of the covenant of grace for which Christ is the Mediator,* ver. 6. to the end.

1. NOW of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: [a] We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; 2. [b] A minister * of the sanctuary, and of [c] the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

a Ch. 1. 3, 13. & 3. 1. & 4. 14. & 5. 6, 10. & 6. 20. & 7. 3, 11, 17, 21, 26, 28. & 9. 11, 24. & 10. 12. & 12. 2. Col. 3. 1. Eph. 1. 20. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Ps. 110. 1, 4, 5, 7.

b Exod. 30. 10. Lev. 16. 15. ch. 9. 8, 11, 24. & 10. 21. Rom. 15. 8.

* Or *of holy things.*

c Ch. 9. 11. John 1. 14. Mat. 1. 20. Luke 1. 35.

Verses 1, 2. We have here a summary of the foregoing observations: *Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: we have such an high-priest,* so great and glorious, *who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,* invested with all power and authority to secure all blessedness for his people in time and in eternity; *a minister of the sanctuary,* officiating as our high-priest in heaven, which the Jewish sanctuary typified, *and of the true tabernacle* in his human nature, of which the earthly tabernacle was the figure, *which*

God pitched and not man, having prepared for him a body, wherein the fulness of the Godhead should reside. And with what confidence should this inspire us, when we consider who now ministers for us before the throne of God!

3. [d] For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. 4. For [e] if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: 5. Who serve [f] unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: [g] for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. 6. [h] But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better † covenant, which was established upon better promises. 7. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8. For, finding fault with them, he saith, [k] Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 9. [i] Not according to the covenant [m] that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; [n] because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will ‡ [o] put my laws into their mind, and write them ‖ in their hearts: and [p] I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 11. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, [q] Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 12. [r] For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. [s] Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

[d] Exod. xxviii, xxix. Lev. xvi. with ch. 5. 1. & 7. 27. & 9. 14. & 10. 11. Eph. 5. 2, 25. Tit. 2. 14. Mat. 20. 28 1 Tim. 2. 6.
[e] Ch. 7. 11. & 12. 25. & 1. 3. with Lev. i—xvi. 1 Chr. xxiv.
[f] Col. 2. 17. ch. 9. 9, 23. & 10. 1.
[g] Exod. 25. 40. & 26. 30. & 27. 28. Num. 8. 4. Acts 7. 44. 1 Chr. 28. 19.
[h] 2 Cor. 3. 6—11. Gal. 3. 10—29. ch. 7. 16, 22. & 9. 15.
† Or *testament.*
[i] Ch. 7. 11—18. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 3. 21.
[k] Jer. 31. 31—34. & 33. 14. & 32 40. Ezek. 37. 26. Is. 55. 3, 7. ch. 10. 16. Acts 3. 26. & 13. 46. 1 John 2. 7, 8.
[l] John 1. 17. 2 Cor. 3. 6—11.
[m] Exod. xii—xiv, xix. Deut. 1. 31. Hos. 11. 1, 3. Deut. 5. 2, 3. & 24. 1.
[n] Jer. 11. 7, 8. & 22. 9. Deut. 29. 25. & 32. 15. Judg. 2. 11. 2 Kin. 17. 15—20. Neh. 9. 26, 27. Ps. 78. 10, 57.
‡ Gr. *give.*
[o] Deut. 30. 6. Jer. 31. 33. & 32. 40. Ezek. 11. 19, 20. & 36. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 3. 3. & 5. 17. Ps. 40. 8. Jam. 1. 18, 21. 1 Pet. 1. 23.
‖ Or *upon.*
[p] Exod. 19. 5, 6. Ps. 50. 7. & 81. 8, 10. Jer. 24. 7. & 30. 22. & 32. 38, 40. Ezek. 11. 20. & 37. 27. & 36. 28. Hos. 1. 10. & 2. 23. Zech. 8. 8. & 13. 9.
[q] Jer. 31. 34. Is. 54. 13. Ezek. 28. 26. & 34. 30. & 39. 28. John 6. 45. 1 Cor. 2. 10. 1 John 2. 20, 27. & 5. 20. & 2. 13, 14. Joel 2. 28. John 7. 39.
[r] Jer. 31. 34. & 33. 8. & 50. 20. Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. Mic. 7. 18, 19. Acts 10. 43. & 13. 39. Rom. 11. 27. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. ch. 10. 16, 17. Rev. 1. 5. 1 John 1. 3, 7, 9. & 2. 1, 2.
[s] Ch. 7. 11, 12, 18, 19. & 9. 9, 10.

Verses 3—13. The apostle proceeds,

1. To set forth the office of the high-priest, and Christ's conformity thereto. *For every high-priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices*, the blood of which he afterwards carried into the holy place: *wherefore it is of necessity that this* glorious person *have somewhat also to offer*, a sacrifice suitable to his dignity, with the blood of which he might appear within the veil, before the throne of God in glory. *For if he were on earth*, and had continued here below, *he should not be a priest*, nor could have discharged that most peculiar part of his pontifical office, the appearing within the veil with the blood of the sacrifice, *seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law*, and none of any other tribe but that of Levi could be admitted there; *who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things*, that priesthood and service being entirely typical of Christ, *as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See (saith he) that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.* Necessary therefore was it that Christ, having offered his own body a sacrifice on the cross, should, with the blood which he had shed, appear in the presence of God, and discharge that glorious high-priesthood whereunto he had been appointed.

2. He shows the transcendent excellency of Christ's ministry above that of the sons of Aaron, as being *the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises.* The covenant of grace, as revealed in the gospel, far exceeding the Sinai covenant, whether considered as a *political covenant of peculiarity*, and insuring to the people temporal blessings, merely as the fruit of an external obedience to the letter of the law; or if we admit its latitude to be more extensive, and that *it included spiritual and eternal blessings*; yet as that dispensation was clothed with darkness and terror, the gospel far exceeds it, as containing a more clear revelation of God's grace, extending its promises to Gentiles as well as Jews, being accompanied with a more abundant measure of the Spirit, and more particularly and fully leading the soul to seek and expect, not so much temporal, as spiritual and heavenly blessings. *For if that first covenant*, entered into with the Jews at Sinai, *had been faultless*, (for, however well suited to answer the purposes of God at that time, yet it was deficient, and wanted much of that light and clearness, with which afterwards God intended to reveal his designs of grace,) could that have been sufficient to accomplish the great ends God had in view, *then should no place have been sought for the second*, as we find was the case. *For God finding fault with them*, and reproving the Jews by the prophet Jeremiah, *he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make*, or finish, *a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah*, a covenant of absolute promises, and sure to all the spiritual Israel, Gentiles as well as Jews: *not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant*, but unfaithfully departed from it, *and I regarded them not, saith the Lord*; withdrew my favour from them, and no longer, as a husband, vouchsafed them my love and protection. *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord*, with the spiritual Israel of all nations; *I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts*, giving them the clearest views of my designs of grace, and engaging their souls to my love and service, by the powerful operations of my Spirit, making a deeper and more abiding impression upon their hearts, than the letters of the law made on the tables of stone: *and I will be to them a God*, absolutely and everlastingly reconciled to them, and causing them to experience my continual protection and blessing, *and they shall be to me a people*, engaging to serve me by the most effectual ties of gratitude as well as duty, and secured in their allegiance by my effectual grace, so that they shall never depart from me. *And they shall not* need *to teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord*, as under the former dispensation, where all the typical service required constant explication; but under the clearer dispensation of light and truth in the gospel this would be less necessary: not that the ministry of the word, or private instructions among Christians, should be set

aside, but that in those days the knowledge of divine things should be more universally diffused, and all believers be under the more abundant teachings of the Spirit: *for all shall know me from the least unto the greatest*, as their reconciled God and Father in the great Redeemer, whatever difference there may be as to the degree of their attainments. *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness*, through the propitiation of their great high-priest, *and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more*, pardoning them freely, fully, and for ever. Now *in that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old*, abolishing the Mosaical dispensation, because of its weakness and unprofitableness. *Now that which decayeth and waxeth old*, as is the case with the Jewish economy at present, like a person dying with age, is *ready to vanish away*, the time being at hand, when, by the destruction of the temple, the whole service must cease, never to be resumed again. *Note*, (1.) Our fidelity to God in the covenant of grace depends upon his having engaged for our stability. (2.) God freely and for ever pardons the sins of his people; they shall sink as a stone in the abyss of water, and never rise up again. (3.) The dispensation of the covenant of grace, under which we live, should be matter of our unspeakable comfort and unceasing thankfulness, wherein all the riches of God's grace, without a veil, are laid open before his chosen people, and their eternal happiness infallibly secured.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle, in pursuance of his main design, proceeds to treat, 1. *Of the tabernacle, the place of worship,* ver. 1—5. 2. *Of the worship and services performed in the tabernacle,* ver. 6, 7, 3. *Delivers the spiritual sense and the main design of all,* ver. 8. to the end.

1. THEN verily the first *covenant* had also [a] * ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2. For [b] there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called † the sanctuary. 3. [c] And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4. Which had the golden censer, and [d] the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* [e] the golden pot that had manna, and [f] Aaron's rod that budded; and [g] the tables of the covenant; 5. And over it the [h] cherubims of glory shadowing the [i] mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

a Lev. i—xxvii. Num. iv—vi, viii, ix, xv, xix, xxviii, xxix. Dent. vi—xxvi. Exod. xii—xl. ch. 8. 2, 13.

* Or *ceremonies.*

b Exod. xxv—xxvii, xxxv—xl. Lev. 24. 3. Num. 7. 1. & 8. 4. & 9. 15. 1 Kin. 7. 48. with John 1. 14. Luke 22. 30. John 6. 32, 35.

† Or *holy.*

c Exod. 26. 31. & 35. 12. & 36. 35. & 40. 21. 2 Chr. 3. 14.

d Exod. 25. 10. & 26. 33. & 34. 28. Mat. 5. 17.

e Exod. 16. 34. John 6. 32—57.

f Num. 17. 10. Ps. 110. 2, 3.

g Deut. 10. 2, 5. 1 Kin. 8. 9. 2 Chr. 5. 10.

h Exod. 25. 18, 22. 1 Kin. 6. 6, 7. & 37. 7. Lev. 16. 2. 1 Sam. 4. 4. Ps. 80. 1. & 99. 1. John 1. 51. 1 Pet. 1. 12. Eph. 3. 10.

i Exod. 31. 7. & 26. 34. Lev. 16. 2, 14. Rom. 3. 24, 25. 1 John 2. 1, 2. ch. 4. 16.

Verses 1—5. The apostle begins with an account of the tabernacle, where the chief part of the service under the Mosaical dispensation, or first covenant, was performed. It consisted of two parts:

1. *The outward*, where stood the candlestick of beaten gold, and the table, with the show-bread laid thereon; and this was called the sanctuary, where the daily service of God was performed. The whole building was figurative of Christ's body: the candlestick pointed him out as the true light who should come into the world, where, without him, spiritual darkness must have been for ever spread abroad; and the table of show-bread pointed him out as the living bread that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world, upon whom his people, consecrated to be spiritual priests, feed, and maintain the most endeared communion thereby with each other.

2. *The inward*, which a second veil separated from the outer part of the tabernacle, and was called the Holiest of all, the figure of heaven itself, into which none entered but the high-priest alone once a-year, on the great day of expiation, with *the golden censer* full of incense, which typified Christ's intercession in heaven for his people; and there stood *the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold*, which signified him who was to be the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, wherein were the tables of the law written with the finger of God, and, by the side of it, *the golden pot that had manna*, which was miraculously preserved from putrefaction, signifying the daily living bread with which Christ feeds his Israel in this howling wilderness, giving them meat to eat which the world knoweth not of. There also was *Aaron's rod that budded*, from a dry stick producing flowers and fruit, emblematical of him who rose as the rod out of the stem of Jesse, to be by divine appointment our high-priest for ever. And over the ark were the cherubims of beaten gold, two winged figures, *that shadowed the mercy-seat*, over which the glorious Shechinah dwelt, and on which the blood was sprinkled in the great day of atonement, intimating to us, that Christ, as our propitiatory, interposes between the wrath of a holy God and the transgressors of his law, to save us from the eternal ruin which must otherwise necessarily ensue. But into the mystical meaning of these things the apostle waves to enter, *of which we cannot now speak particularly*. Let us not therefore too curiously pry into them, nor affect to be wise above that which is written.

6. Now, when these things were thus ordained, the priests went [k] always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*. 7. But into the second *went* the high-priest alone [l] once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people:

k Num. 28. 3. Dan. 8. 11, 12.

l Exod. 30. 18. Lev. 16. 2, 15, 34. ch. 5. 3. & 7. 27. & 10. 10, 20. ver. 24, 25.

Verses 6, 7. The tabernacle being prepared, we are told what service was performed in it.

1. In the outer part of the tabernacle the ordinary priests every day officiated, burning incense, trimming the lamps, and accomplishing all the service appointed them.

2. Into the *second* tabernacle, within the veil, went the *high-priest alone once a-year*, on one day only, and then *not without blood, which he offered* as an atonement *for himself, and for the errors of the people;* intimating hereby that there was no access to God but through the blood of atonement, even the blood of him whom all the sacrifices represented, and whose intercession, on behalf of his people, could only be available.

8. The Holy Ghost this signifying, [m] that the way to the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9. [n] Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10. *Which stood* [o] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ‡ ordinances, imposed *on them* until [p] the time of reformation. 11. But

m John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. Eph. 2. 18. ch. 4. 16. & 10. 19—22.

n Col. 2. 17. ch. 7. 11, 18, 19. & 10. 1, 11. & 11. 16. Acts 13. 39. & 15. 10. Gal. 3. 21.

o Lev. i—ix, xi, xvi. Num. xv, xix, xxviii, xxix. ch. 7. 11, 16. Col. 2. 16, 20. Rom. 14. 17.

‡ Or *rites*, or *ceremonies.*

p Gal. 4. 4. ch. 2. 5. & 6. 5. Eph. 1. 10.

Christ [q] being come an high priest of good things to come, by [r] a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but [s] by his own blood; he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. 13. [t] For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; 14. How much more shall the [u] blood of Christ, who [x] through the eternal Spirit [y] offered himself [z] without || spot to God, [a] purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

q Gal. 4. 4. John 1. 14. ch. 2. 17. & 1. 3. & 3. 1. & 4. 14, 15. & 5. 6, 10. & 6. 20. & 8. 1. & 7. 15, 17, 22—28. ver. 12—15, 26, 28. & 10. 5—22. Tit. 2. 14. Eph. 5. 2.
r Ch. 8. 2. Mat. 1. 20. Luke 1. 35. John 1. 14. Jer. 31. 22. Is. 4. 2.
s Acts 20. 28. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 9. ch. 10. 9, 10, 12, 14. & 1. 3.
t Lev. i—xvi. Num. xix. ch. 10. 4.
u See ver. 12. Acts 20. 28. 1 Pet. 1. 19. 1 John 1. 7. & 2. 2.
x Rom. 1. 4. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Is. 42. 1. John 3. 34.
y Is. 53. 1. Dan. 9. 24. Mat. 20. 28. Rom. 3. 25. & 4. 25. & 5. 6—10. & 6. 10. & 8. 3, 34. Gal. 1. 4. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 10. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. & 1. 19, 20.
z Lev. 22. 20. Num. 19. 2, 11. Deut. 15. 21. & 17. 1. Is. 53. 9. Dan. 9. 24, 26. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 1. 19. & 2. 22.
a Rev. 1. 5. 1 John 1. 7. ch. 13. 12. & 10. 22. & 6. 1. Luke 1. 74, 75. 1 Pet. 4. 2.
|| Or *faults*.

Verses 8—14. The apostle here proceeds to declare the design of the Holy Ghost in these ritual services.

1. He signified hereby, *that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:* in that dark dispensation, the way of access to a throne of grace, and of admission into heaven itself through the blood and righteousness of the Redeemer, was not so clearly and fully laid open, as it should afterwards be under the gospel.

2. The tabernacle was *a figure for the time then present,* suited to that more obscure dispensation, and the shadow of good things to come, till he who was the substance of them should appear, and then it would become useless.

3. The gifts and sacrifices there offered could not make the worshippers perfect; but though they were available to the purifying of the flesh, and exculpated them from suffering the temporal punishments, due to them as offenders against God, considered as their *political* Sovereign, they could not purge the conscience from moral evil, appease the fears of guilt, or secure from eternal punishment, any farther than they led them to Christ, who was in these sacrifices prefigured, that so they might be justified by faith; for these sacrifices could little avail, standing *only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances* and rites which accompanied them, and may be considered as a burden *imposed on them until the time of reformation,* when Christ in his gospel should free his spiritual Israel from this heavy yoke.

4. Christ hath appeared and accomplished all that was here prefigured concerning him. *But Christ being come a high-priest of good things to come,* on purpose to procure all spiritual and eternal blessings for his people, *by a greater and more perfect tabernacle,* even of his own body, wherein dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead, *not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building,* but formed by the holy Ghost from the substance of a virgin: *neither by the blood of goats or calves,* which was all the Levitical priests could offer, *but by* a sacrifice infinitely more excellent, hath made the atonement, even by offering his own body on the tree; and with *his own blood* of everlasting efficacy, *he entered in once into the holy place,* even into heaven itself, there for ever to abide, and plead the merit of that sacrifice which he had offered, *having obtained eternal redemption for us* by this one oblation. *For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh,* and under the Mosaical economy re-admitted those who were unclean, and excluded from the public worship, to the congregation of the faithful: *how much more shall the blood of Christ,* the efficacy of which is so infinitely greater, *who through the eternal Spirit,* which dwelt in his perfectly pure human nature, *offered himself without spot unto God,* a lamb meet to bleed on God's altar, how shall not this, I say, much more *purge your conscience from dead works,* from all your sins, however great and aggravated, the wages of which must have been eternal death, and restore you *to serve the living God,* in all holy and willing obedience, regarding him now as your reconciled God and Father, through the Son of his love Christ Jesus? *Note,* (1.) The redemption which the Saviour hath obtained for his people is *eternal,* not merely from present sin and guilt, but includes the purchase of everlasting glory for them. (2.) The oblation which he once offered effectually accomplished this, and left nothing for them to do, but freely to come and receive the unsearchable riches of his grace. (3.) The excellence and availableness of Christ's sacrifice arise from the dignity of his person; he who offered his human nature upon the cross was very God, and that gave infinite value to the blood which he shed. (4.) Sin must eternally have destroyed all the human race but for this one oblation; nothing else could purge the sinner's conscience; but this is all-sufficient to save to the uttermost, and cleanse us from *all* sin. (5.) All whose consciences are purged by the blood of sprinkling, experience also the power of changing grace upon their hearts, and are thenceforward both inclined and enabled in righteousness and true holiness to serve the living God.

15. [b] And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption [c] of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, [d] they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. 16. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity * be the death of the testator. 17. [e] For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. 18. [f] Whereupon neither the first *testament* was † dedicated without blood. 19. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, [g] he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and ‡ scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, 20. Saying, [h] This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. 21. [i] Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. 22. [k] And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

b 1 Tim. 2. 5. ch. 7. 22. & 2. 10. & 8. 6. & 12. 24. Ps. 40. 6—8. Is. 53. 4—10. Rom. 7. 4. & 8. 2—4. & 34. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 19. & 3. 18. & 2. 24. Rev. 5. 9. 2 Cor. 5 21.
c Acts 13. 39. Rom. 3. 25. 1 John 2. 2. & 1. 7. & 3. 8. & 4. 10.
d Rom. 8. 30. & 4. 13, 16. & 9. 23. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 1. 21. Gal. 3. 13. 14. Eph. 1. 7, 13, 14 1 Thes. 5. 9, 10. 1 Pet. 1. 2—4. Rom. 8. 17, 18.
* Or *be brought* in.
e Gal. 3. 15.
f Exod. 12. 22. & 24. 5—8. Lev. i—xvi. Num. xxviii, xxix.
† Or *purified*.
g Exod. 24. 5, 6. Lev. 14. 4, 49. & 16. 14, 15, 18.
‡ Or *purple*.
h Exod. 24. 8. Zech. 9. 11. Mat. 26. 28. ch. 13. 20.
i Exod. 29. 12, 36. Lev. 8. 15. & 16. 14, 16.
k Lev. i—xvi. & 22. 6. & 17. 14. Num. 31. 23. Lev. iv, v, xvi.

Verses 15—22. The covenant of grace is here considered under the nature of a *testamentary disposition,* we receiving all spiritual blessings, as the legacies left by our dying Lord.

And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament, securing for his people, and bequeathing to them every blessing, *that by means of death,* whereby the covenant was ratified, and the full atonement made, *for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament,* the efficacy of his sacrifice reaching back to the beginning, as well as to the end of time, *they which are called* to faith in him, in whatever age they may

have lived, *might receive the promise of eternal inheritance*, which is inseparably connected with faith in his atoning blood. *For* as among men, *where a testament* or will *is* made, *there must also of necessity be the death of the testator*, before the legacies bequeathed can be claimed, or paid; so it was necessary that Christ should die, *for a testament is of force* only *after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood* of slain beasts, which typified the death and blood-shedding of the great Redeemer. *For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats*, which had been sacrificed, *with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people*, in token of the ratification of all that was contained in the sacred volume, and of the application of the blessings and benefits contained in the testament to the souls of the faithful; and this was figurative of that blood and water which flowed from the wounded side of the Redeemer, which, in its virtue, effectually cleanses the consciences of those who believe from all guilt and defilement. And this Moses bid them particularly to observe, *Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined upon you* whereby it is ratified, and his faithfulness engaged for the fulfilment of all the promises therein contained. *Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry*, when they were made. *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood*, wherein the sacrifice and death of Christ were constantly held forth to them as the alone meritorious cause of the sinner's acceptance; *and* that *without* the *shedding of* his *blood* there *is no remission* of sins.

l Ver. 9, 10. ch. 10. 1. Col. 2. 17.
m Ch. 8. 2, 5. ver. 11. ch. 10. 4, 10—17. Dan. 9. 24. Tit. 2. 14. Rev. 5. 9. & 1. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 3. 18.
n Ver. 9, 23. ch. 10. 1. Col. 2. 17.
o Ps. 68. 18. Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51. Acts 1. 9, 11. & 3. 21. Rom. 8. 34. ch. 1. 3. & 6. 20. & 7. 25, 26. & 8. 2, 5. ver. 12. ch. 10. 12—14. 1 John 2. 1, 2. Rev. 8. 3. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Eph. 2. 8.
p Exod. 30. 10. Lev. 16. 2—34. ver. 1, 7.
q Ch. 7. 27. & 10. 10, 14. Rom. 6. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 18. & 1. 19, 20. Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 10. 11. Dan. 9. 24.
r Gen. 2. 17. & 3. 19. Job 30. 23. Eccl. 12. 7. Rom. 5. 12.
s Eccl. 12. 14. Rom. 14. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Mat. 25. 31—46. Rev. 1. 7. & 20. 11—14. 2 Thes. 1. 6—9. Acts 17. 31.
t Mat. 20. 28. Rom. 5. 6, 8, 15. & 6. 10. & 4. 25. 1 Pet. 3. 18. & 2. 24. 1 John 2. 1, 2. & 3. 5.
u Ch. 4. 15. & 7. 26. John 14. 3. Is. 25. 9. & 35. 4. Mat. 25. 34, 46.

23. *It was* therefore necessary that [l] the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but [m] the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* [n] the figures of the true; but [o] into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, [p] as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26. For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: [q] but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27. [r] And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but [s] after this the judgment: 28. So [t] Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him [u] shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Verses 23—28. From what he had advanced, the apostle argues,

That *it was therefore necessary*, by divine appointment, *that the patterns of things in the heavens*, the tabernacle and all the vessels, *should be purified with these* typical sacrifices and sprinklings of blood; *but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these*, even the offering of Jesus himself, who by his own blood ratified the covenant of grace, and being through his sacrifice consecrated to his office as the great high-priest, entered into heaven, there to present his blood before the throne, and prepare mansions for the reception of his people. *For Christ is not*, like the Jewish high-priests, *entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us*, and effectually to insure to us all the blessings which, by his blood-shedding, he hath purchased: *nor* was his sacrifice incomplete, as *yet* again to require *that he should offer himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others*, of the animals which were sacrificed: *(for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world,)* and the fall of man; *but now once in the end of the world*, at the close of the Jewish economy, and at the beginning of the last and most excellent dispensation, under the gospel, *hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, suffering in the human nature, and by the divine glory of his person, offering such a complete and all-availing sacrifice as never needed a repetition, the efficacy thereof extending to every believer to the latest ages of time. *And as it is appointed unto men once to die*, returning to the dust from whence they came, and *but* once, for *after this* bodily death is *the* final *judgment*, when all must appear at God's bar, and stand or fall to eternity: *so Christ was once offered* upon the cross *to bear the sins of many*, and made there a full atonement by his one oblation; *and unto them that look for him*, in faith and love, expecting his return, *shall he appear*, not as a suffering but a glorified Saviour, *without sin*, having taken it all away, and being now manifested to bring his people *unto* that complete and perfect *salvation* in glory, which he hath obtained for them. *Note*, (1.) Die we must, such is the divine decree; highly therefore doth it import us to prepare for this awful change. (2.) Judgment follows close at the heels of death, and as the tree falleth, it must lie for ever. (3.) Christ hath borne *the sins of many*, not of every individual of the human species, but of *the many* sons whom he is appointed to bring unto glory. (4.) He that suffered upon a cross shall shortly appear upon the throne, and a terrible Judge will he be found to those who have not embraced him as a Saviour. (5.) It is the character of his redeemed people that they look for the day of his appearing, earnestly expecting his arrival, that they may obtain their perfect consummation both in body and soul, in his kingdom of everlasting glory.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

To wean the Hebrews from the Levitical dispensation, he proceeds in this chapter, 1. *To lay low the whole of that priesthood and service,* ver. 1—6. 2. *He raises and exalts the priesthood of Christ very high, that he might effectually recommend him and his gospel to them,* ver. 7—18. 3. *He shows to believers the honours and dignities of their state, and calls them to suitable duties,* ver. 19. to the end.

1. FOR the law [a] having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year * continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. 2. For then * would they not [b] have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers, [b] once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins. 3. [c] But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. 4. [d] For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

a Ch. 8. 5. & 9. 9, 11, 23. Col. 2. 17. ch. 9. 9, 13, 14. & 7. 11, 18. ver. 3, 11—14.
* Or *they would have*, &c.
b Ch. 9. 14. 1 John 1. 7. Ps. 103. 12. Is. 43. 25. & 44. 22. & 1. 18. Mic. 7. 19.
c Lev. 16. 21. ch. 7. 27. & 9. 7.
d Lev. 16. 14. Num. 19. 4. Is. 1. 11—15. & 66. 3. Hos. 5. 6. Mic. 6. 6, 7. ch. 9. 9, 13. 1 Pet. 1. 18. ver. 5. 11. 1 John 1. 7.

5. Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, [e] sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body † hast thou [f] prepared me: 6. In burnt-offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure: 7. Then said I, [g] Lo, I come, [h] (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8. Above, when he said, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, and *offering* for sin, thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein;* which are offered [i] by the law; 9. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10. [k] By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all.* 11. [l] And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12. [m] But this *man,* after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; 13. From henceforth expecting [n] till his enemies be made his footstool. 14. [o] For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified: 15. *Whereof* [p] the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for, after that he had said before, 16. [q] This *is* the covenant that I will make with them: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18. Now, [r] where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin.

e Ps. 40. 6–8. Jer. 6. 20. & 7. 22. 23. Amos 5. 21. ver. 4. Hos. 6. 6. Mic. 6. 7. Ps. 50. 9. & 51. 16. Is. 1. 11. & 66. 3.
† Or *thou hast fitted me.*
f Jer. 31. 22. Mat. 1. 20. Luke 1. 35. Rom. 1. 3. & 8. 3. Gal. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 8.
g Gen. 22. 13, 14. 1 Sam. 15. 22. Ps. 40. 8. John 4. 34. & 5. 30. & 18. 11. & 17. 4.
h 1 Pet. 1. 20. Prov. 8. 23. Acts 10. 43. Luke 24. 27, 44. John 1. 45. 2 Cor. 1. 20.
i 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. Gen. 3. 15. & 49. 10.
Lev. i—xvi. Num. xv, xxviii, xxix.
k Ch. 2. 10, 11. & 9. 12—14, 26. 28. & 7. 27. & 13. 12. John 17. 19. Rom. 3. 24. & 4. 25. & 5. 19. & 7. 4. & 8. 3, 4, 33, 34. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 John 1. 7. ver. 14.
l Num. 28. 3, 4. Exod. 29. 38—42.
m Dan. 8. 11, 12. Lev. i—xvi. Num. xxviii, xxix. ch. 7. 11, 18, 19. & 9. 9. ver. 1, 4.
n Ch. 1. 3, 13. & 4. 14. & 6. 19, 20. & 7. 26. & 8. 1. & 9. 12, 24. Ps. 110. 1, 5. Acts 2. 33, 34. & 3. 21. Eph. 1. 20. Col. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 25. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51.
o Ver. 10, 12. ch. 2. 10, 11. & 7. 17, 25, 27. & 9. 14.
p 2 Pet. 1. 21. ch. 3. 7. Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29. Acts 28. 25. 2 Sam. 23. 2.
q See ch. 8. 8, 10, 12. Jer. 31. 33, 34. Rom. 11. 27. Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. & 55. 7. Jer. 23. 8. & 50. 20.
r Ver. 14, 17.

Verses 1—18. The weakness and unprofitableness of the Levitical institutions should engage the Hebrews to receive, with greater cordiality, the blessed gospel. *For,*

1. *The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things,* all being figurative and typical of Christ, who should, in the fulness of time, appear as the substance, *can never by those sacrifices which they,* who were high-priests, *offered from year to year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect,* so as to satisfy God's justice, obtain reconciliation, and pacify the guilty conscience. *For then,* if this great end had been fully answered, *would they not have ceased to be offered?* What use would there have been for the repetition? *because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins,* not have been under any farther condemnation or distress of soul. *But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year,* which shows that the former sacrifices had not perfectly atoned for them. Nor indeed could they, *for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins,* making an adequate compensation to Divine Justice, or that the death of a beast should be a proper and effectual atonement for the sin of the soul. A better sacrifice than these was required, and all the use of these typical ones was to lead them to Christ, whose blood alone could satisfy for sin. *Wherefore,*

2. *When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me,* in which to make that atonement for which the legal sacrifices were ineffectual. *In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then, said I, Lo, I come* (as *in the volume of the book* of prophecy *it is written of me*) *to do thy will, O God;* well pleased and content to suffer all that justice demands to make satisfaction for the sins of my people. *Above when he said, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, (which are offered by the law;) then, said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,* and to take away sin by the sacrifice of myself. *He taketh away the first* covenant, with all the legal sacrifices, because of their insufficiency, *that he may establish the second,* through his own all-atoning blood.

3. In virtue of his oblation the most invaluable blessings are secured to us. *By the which will* of God, as fulfilled in Christ, *we are sanctified,* our sins expiated, and our consciences purged from their defilement, *through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all;* wherein may be observed another singular excellence of our High-priest *and* his sacrifice above all others; for *every priest* STANDETH, with awful distance, and continues DAILY *ministering, and offering* OFTENTIMES THE SAME SACRIFICES, all *which* things showed the imperfection of that dispensation; and, after all, these *can never take away sin,* so as to satisfy God's justice, or relieve the guilty conscience; *but this man,* the glorious Jesus, *after he had offered* ONE *sacrifice for sins,* fully accomplished his work, and never needed to offer another, and *for ever* SAT DOWN, in a state of endless rest and most transcendent dignity, *on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till all his enemies be made his footstool,* and Satan, sin, the world, and death, shall at last be destroyed for ever. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;* in his blood and righteousness they stand complete before God, are regarded by him as without spot, and through the powerful efficacy of divine faith, their hearts are renewed and dedicated to God. *Wherefore the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more;* so that they shall be absolutely, fully, and for ever done away. *Now, where remission of these is,* in so complete a manner, *there is no more offering for sin,* the one oblation of Christ's body on the cross having satisfied to the uttermost. *Note,* (1.) All God's people are sanctified, as well as justified, by the offering of the body of Jesus once for all; thereby all grace, as well as pardon, was purchased for them. (2.) In Christ we are perfected for ever, and our title to glory was as complete when he died on the tree as when we shall appear before his throne. (3.) The absolute and everlasting pardon of sin is one of the peculiar blessings of the covenant of grace. (4.) All the enemies of Christ and his people must sooner or later become his footstool: he is sat down on his throne, and shall reign till they are utterly destroyed.

19. [s] Having therefore, brethren, ‡ boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20. [t] By a ‖ new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; 21. [u] And *having* an high priest over the house of God; 22. [x] Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an

s John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. Rom. 5. 2. Eph. 2. 13, 15, 18. & 3. 12. ch. 4. 16. & 9. 8, 12. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Rev. 5. 9. & 1. 5, 6.
‡ Or *liberty.*
t John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. ver. 19. 2 Tim. 1. 10. ch. 9. 8.
‖ Or *new made.*
u Ch. 2. 17. & 3. 1, 6. & 4. 14, 16. & 5. 5, 6, 10. & 6. 20. & 7. 3, 17, 21, 25. & 8. 1. & 9. 11. ver. 12. 1 Tim. 3. 15. Mat. 16. 18 1 Pet. 2. 5. Eph. 2. 19—22. Gal. 6. 10.
x Ch. 4. 16. Jam. 1. 6. & 4. 8. John 4. 23, 24. Eph. 3. 12. 1 John 3. 21. Phil. 3. 3. Ezek. 36. 26. 1 Cor. 6. 11. ch. 9. 14. Rev. 1. 5. 1 John 1. 7. & 2. 1. Lev. 16. 4.

evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23. [y] Let us hold fast the profession of *our* * faith without wavering; (for [z] he *is* faithful that promised;) 24. [a] And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25. [b] Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is;* but exhorting *one another:* and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

[y] Ch. 4. 14. & 3. 14. Prov. 23. 23. Jude 3. Rev. 3. 3, 11. Eph. 4. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 14.

* Gr. *hope* or *confidence.*

[z] 1 Cor. 1. 9. & 10. 13. 2 Cor. 7. 1. 1 Thes. 5. 24. 2 Thes. 3. 3. ch. 11. 11. Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Tit. 1. 2. ch. 6. 18.

[a] Ch. 6. 10. & 12. 14. & 13. 1. 1 Thes. 5. 14, 15. ch. 3. 13. Prov. 27. 1.

[b] Acts 20. 42. 1 Cor. 11. 20. Jude 19. 2 Pet. 3. 9, 11, 14. 1 Pet. 4. 7. ch. 3. 13. Rom. 13. 11—14.

Verses 19—25. The apostle having concluded the doctrinal part of the epistle, proceeds to make a practical improvement of the whole.

He reminds them of the inestimable privileges which through their great High-priest they enjoyed. *Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest,* and freedom and confidence in approaching a reconciled God, *by the blood of Jesus,* sprinkled with which we are assured of present and eternal acceptance before him; *by a new and living way which he hath consecrated,* who is himself, the way, the truth, and the life; and they who walk in him shall never die; and this *through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;* for, when his body was broken on the tree, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, to show, that every obstruction in our way to a throne of grace and glory was now removed: *and having a High-priest,* one so great and glorious, *over the house of God, let us,*

1. *Draw near* to God in every act of worship, and in the most endeared communion; *with a true heart,* in all simplicity and godly sincerity; and *in full assurance of faith* in the all-sufficiency of our Redeemer, and our reconciliation with God through him; *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience,* with his atoning blood, which speaks peace from all guilt and condemnation; *and our bodies washed with pure water,* cleansed by the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, which the Jewish washings prefigured.

2. *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering;* not seduced by temptation, dismayed with opposition, or distrusting the grace engaged for our support; *for he is faithful that promised,* and we may safely repose on his word our everlasting all.

And, 3. *Let us consider one another,* our respective trials, dangers, wants, and weakness, in order *to provoke each other unto love* towards Jesus and the brethren, *and to good works,* such as may adorn our high profession.

4. Let us be united in heart and worship, *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is,* who, on weak and frivolous pretences, absent from the congregation of the faithful and the communion of the Lord; a sad symptom of declension, and often the prelude to apostasy.

5. Let us never be slack and remiss in holy jealousy over ourselves and our brethren; *but* be *exhorting one another* to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, in the use of every appointed means of grace; *and so much the more as ye see the day approaching,* when the whole Jewish polity and nation shall be destroyed; or when death must place you before the judgment-seat of Christ. An awful consideration! which, the more deeply it dwells upon our minds, will excite our most awakened solicitude to be always ready for our great change.

26. For [c] if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27. [d] But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28. [e] He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29. [f] Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the [g] blood of the covenant, wherewith [h] he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30. For we know him that hath said, [i] Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, [k] The Lord shall judge his people. 31. [l] *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

[c] Num. 15. 30. Mat. 12. 31, 32. ch. 6. 4—6. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. 1 John 5. 16. Rom. 6. 16. ch. 9. 26.

[d] Lev. 10. 2. Num. 16. 35. Ezek. 36. 5. Zeph. 1. 18. & 3. 8. ch. 2. 3. & 12. 25, 29. 2 Pet. 3. 7. & 2. 3.

[e] Deut. 19. 15. Mat. 18 16. John 8. 17. 2 Cor. 13. 1. with Exod. 19. 21. & 22. 18, 20, 28. & 31. 14. & 32. 27. Lev. 24. 11, 14. Num. 4. 5, 15, 20. & 15. 32. & 25. 7. & 35. 30. Deut. 13. 6, 8. & 17. 6. & 27. 26. 1 Sam. 6. 19.

[f] Ch. 2. 3. & 12. 25. 1 Cor. 11. 29. Acts 5. 3, 9.

[g] Ch. 13. 20. & 9. 20. Mat. 26. 28. Zech. 9. 11. Exod. 24. 8.

[h] Ch. 2. 10. & 9, 11, 12. John 17. 19.

[i] Deut. 32. 35. Rom. 12. 19. Ps. 94. 1, 2. Nah. 1. 2, 6.

[k] Deut. 32. 36. Ps. 50. 4. & 135. 14. 90. 11. Nah. 1. 6. Is. 33. 14. [l] Luke 12. 5. ch. 12. 29. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Ps. 76. 7. &

Verses 26—31. To awaken their more abundant concern, the apostle sets before them the dreadful evil and danger of apostasy.

For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, which doth not mean every sin that through infirmity or temptation we may be drawn into, nor even deliberate or repeated acts of sin; but such a course of iniquity, embraced with full consent of the mind, as leads to an utter rejection of the gospel, and denial of Jesus Christ: in which case the only remedy being rejected, *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,* nor any possibility of pardon, *but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries,* such as shortly must seize the infidel Jews, when they shall be buried in the ruins of their city, and awaits the finally impenitent in the great day of God's wrath, when the wicked shall be cast into hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Even *he that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses,* and no sacrifice was appointed for presumptuous sins: *of how much sorer punishment* then, *suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy,* whose offence is so infinitely more aggravated, *who hath trodden under foot the Son of God,* treating him with the direst insolence and contempt as an impostor, denying his deity, despising his atonement and righteousness, and mocking at his grace; *and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing,* of less efficacy than the blood of bulls and goats, yea, as the Jews intimated at his crucifixion, viler than that of the greatest miscreants: *and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace,* imputing his miracles to diabolical power, and calling his operations upon the hearts of men delusion and enthusiasm. Such blasphemy is unpardonable, and must bring down the heaviest wrath of an offended God. *For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord,* and punish incorrigible offenders according to their wickedness. *And again, The Lord shall judge his people,* will detect the hypocrites, and as surely destroy the apostate as he will save the faithful. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,* whose wrath, if it be kindled, yea, but a moment, who may abide it? Let us hear and tremble, and watch and pray, that we come not into this condemnation, and perish with these despisers.

32. [m] But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of af-

[m] Ver. 25. ch. 6. 4. Gal. 3. 4. Phil. 1. 29, 30. Col. 2. 1. 2 John 8.

flictions; 33. Partly, whilst ye were made [n] a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. 34. [o] For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that [p] ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. 35. [q] Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36. [r] For ye have need of patience; that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37. For yet [s] a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38. Now [t] the just shall live by faith: [u] but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39. But [x] we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

n 1 Cor. 4. 9. Phil. 1. 7. & 4. 14. 1 Thes. 2. 14.
o Mat. 5. 12, 41. Jam. 1. 2. Acts 5. 41. & 21. 33. Eph. 3. 1, 13. & 4. 1. & 6. 20. Phil. 1. 7, 13. Col. 4. 3, 18. Philem. 10, 13. ch. 13. 3. 2 Tim. 2. 9, 10. 1 Thes. 2. 14.
p Mat. 5. 12. & 6. 19, 20. & 19. 21. Luke 12. 33. 1 Tim. 6. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 4. 2 Cor. 5. 1. 1 John 3. 2.
q Ch. 2. 1. & 3. 12. & 4. 1, 14. & 12. 15. with Mat. 5. 12. & 10. 32. & 11. 6. Ps. 19. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. ch. 11. 26.
r Luke 21. 19. Mat. 10. 22. & 24. 13. Gal. 6. 9. ch. 12. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 9, 13. & 5. 10. Col. 3. 24. Rom. 2. 7, 10. ch. 6. 12, 15. Rom. 8. 25.
s Hab. 2. 3, 4. Hag. 2. 7. Luke 18. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 8, 9. Is. 26. 20. & 60. 22.
t Hab. 2. 4. Rom. 1. 17. Gal. 3. 11.
u Ps. 85. 8. ch. 6. 4—6. ver. 26, 27. 2 Pet. 2. 19—22. 14. ch. 6. 9. John 3. 16. & 6. 40. 1 Pet. 1. 5.
x 1 Thes. 5. 9, 12. 2 Thes. 2. 13,

Verses 32—39. To excite the faithful steadily to persevere,

1. He reminds them of the past sufferings which they had so nobly undergone. *But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated,* and brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, *ye endured a great fight of afflictions,* and quitted yourselves manfully, as became those who were listed under the banner of the cross; *partly whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions,* pointed at, treated as despicable and ridiculous, and as criminals exposed in the theatres to wild beasts, worried with the unrelenting malice and enmity of the wicked world; *and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used,* nobly owning them in their sufferings for righteousness' sake, sympathizing with them, and affording them every assistance. *For ye had compassion of me in my bonds,* tenderly affected for me, and supporting me to the utmost of your ability; *and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods,* content, yea, glorying in your sufferings and losses, *knowing in yourselves,* from the fullest assurance of God's promises and the experience of his grace, *that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance,* which none can take from you. *Note,* (1.) Every Christian must expect and welcome the cross. (2.) Though we may be screened by Divine Providence and human laws from grosser violations of our property, the lash of slander, the bitterness of reproach, and the trial of cruel mockings, these we shall assuredly meet if we belong to Christ. (3.) God can make his people joyful under all their trials, and neither ashamed nor afraid to suffer for his sake. (4.) If we are of the body of Christ, none of his members suffer with whom we do not sympathize, and we shall own and honour them under their reproaches for his name's sake. (5.) If we gain heaven at last, we need be little concerned what we may lose by the way.

2. He exhorts them to stand fast in the prospect of the glory which was before them. *Cast not away therefore your confidence,* boldness and holy resolution, *which hath great recompense of reward,* and will secure for you a crown of glory which fadeth not away, and that will infinitely overbalance all your losses and sufferings. *For ye have need of patience,* whilst the conflict continues, that ye may not be weary and faint in your mind; and *that after ye have done the will of God,* faithfully obedient to his word, and resigned to his providence, *ye might receive the promise* of the eternal inheritance. *For yet a little while,* a very short moment, *and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry,* to execute vengeance upon his enemies, to vindicate the injuries of his people, and save them with his uttermost salvation. *Note,* (1.) Faith and patience, held fast, secure our perseverance. (2.) Whatever trials oppress us, it is our comfort that the Judge standeth at the door, and that death shall quickly release us from every burden.

3. He encourages and warns them alternately. *Now the just shall live by faith,* or *the just by faith shall live,* in spite of every effort of sin, the world, and Satan, to destroy the life of God in their souls; yea, they shall live with him in eternity; *but if any man draw back* from Christ and his gospel as apostates, *my soul,* saith God, *shall have no pleasure in him,* but, contrariwise, he will be the object of my abhorrence, and suffer all my furious indignation. *But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition,* such confidence have I toward you; *but of them that* truly *believe to the saving of the soul,* faithful unto death, that we may receive the crown of life. *Note,* (1.) Many go far in profession, who after all prove apostates. (2.) They who have true faith will never draw back unto perdition. (3.) Past experience of God's keeping us should encourage our increasing confidence in his grace. He will never leave nor forsake us, and then shall we never leave nor forsake him.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle having, in the close of the foregoing chapter, recommended the grace of faith and a life of faith as the best preservative against apostasy; he now enlarges upon the nature and fruits of this excellent grace. 1. *The nature of it, and the honour it reflects upon all that live in the exercise of it,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The great examples we have in the Old Testament of those that lived by faith, and did and suffered extraordinary things by the strength of this grace,* ver. 4—39. *And,* 3. *The advantages that we have in the gospel for the exercise of this grace above what they had that lived in the times of the Old Testament,* ver. 39, 40.

1. NOW [a] faith is the * substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2. [b] For by it the elders obtained a good report. 3. Through faith we understand that [c] the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

a Ver. 13. Ps. 27. 13. & 42. 11. John 20. 29. 1 Cor. 1. 5. Rom. 8. 24. 2 Cor. 4. 18. & 5. 1, 7.
* Or *ground* or *confidence.*
b Ver. 4—39.
c Gen. i. Ps. 33. 6. John 1. 3. Rom. 4. 17. ch. 1. 2 Pet. 3. 5.

Verses 1—3. We have here,

1. An account of the nature and effects of divine faith. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,* giving such a realizing view of the promises, and such a subsistence of them to the mind, as if they were actually in our possession; *and the evidence of things not seen,* demonstrating as assuredly the certainty of the invisible things revealed in the divine word, as a mathematical proposition, when solved, carries the clearest conviction along with it.

2. All the saints from the beginning have lived under its blessed influence: *For by it the elders obtained a good report,* and were enabled so to walk as to obtain God's approbation of their conduct. This from the first being the divine principle on which alone any work acceptable to God could ever be performed.

3. One of the first articles of faith is this, *That the worlds were framed by the word of God,* who from nothing spoke them into being; *so that the things which are seen,* even all the visible objects of creation, *were not made of things which do appear,* from

any pre-existent matter, but from that chaotic mass, which was produced at the word of the Almighty.

4. By faith [d] Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead † yet speaketh. 5. By faith [e] Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. 6. [f] But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him:* for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. 7. By faith Noe, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, ‡ moved with fear, [g] prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and [h] became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

d Gen. 4. 4, 10. Mat. 23. 35. ch. 12. 24. 1 John 3. 12. with Lev. 9. 24. 1 Kin. 18. 38.

† Or *is yet spoken of.*

e Gen. 5. 22, 24. with 2 Kin. 2. 11. Luke 24. 51. Acts 1. 9.

f Rom. 14. 23. John 3. 18, 36. & 6. 40. ch. 10. 22. Deut. 4. 29. Ps. 20. 4. & 40. 16. Jer. 29. 13. Amos 5. 4. Zech. 8. 22. ch. 10. 35. & 7. 25.

‡ Or *being wary.*

g Gen. 6. 13, 22. & 7. 5, 23. 1 Pet. 3. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 5. Ezek. 14. 14, 20. Mat. 24. 37. Luke 17. 26.

h Is. 45. 24. & 54. 17. & 61. 10. Rom. 3. 22. & 4. 13. & 5. 15—19. Phil. 3. 9. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Verses 4—7. The apostle here begins to instance the power of divine faith in many of the eminent servants of God, and he begins with the antediluvian worthies.

1. Abel. *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,* who only brought of the fruit of the ground, but offered no atoning sacrifice in acknowledgment of his sin, whilst Abel to his mincha, or meat-offering, added the blood of the firstlings of his flock, the type of the great atonement whereon his faith rested; *by which he obtained witness of God that he was righteous,* either by some visible token, as fire from heaven on his sacrifice, or by the witness of the Spirit in his heart; *God testifying of his works,* that they were accepted through the righteousness of faith; *and by it, he, being dead, yet speaketh;* the record of it in the scripture instructs us, that, since the fall of man, the only way of access to God is through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus: and also that vengeance awaits the murderer and persecutor, against whom the blood of innocence and the cries of oppression cry for judgment. *Note,* (1.) The only access to God for sinners from the beginning was through the blood of Jesus. (2.) There is a great difference between those who worship God in formality, and faith. It is not the act, but the way in which we present our prayers, which makes the acceptable offering. (3.) They who are righteous by faith, and have obtained witness from God, may expect the world's enmity. The first most eminent saint recorded in scripture was a martyr for religion.

2. Enoch. *By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death,* caught up to the paradise of God in body and soul, and instantly undergoing the change that fitted him for an eternal mansion in glory; *and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation* to the realms of bliss, *he had this testimony, that he pleased God,* in a course of humble and holy walking, under the influence of divine faith in the expected seed of the woman; see Jude 14, 15. *But without faith* in him *it is impossible to please God: for he that cometh to God,* in any act of religious worship, *must believe that he is* such as he hath revealed himself to the sons of men, who never could have known either his being or attributes but by revelation; *and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,* in the use of all the ordinances which he hath appointed. *Note,* (1.) No service can please God, but what springs from faith as its origin. (2.) God is the portion and exceeding great reward of all his people. (3.) There are appointed means, in which, God hath told us, they who wait upon him shall assuredly obtain his blessing; and in the use of them we cannot be too diligent.

3. Noah. *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet,* which reason could never have suggested, nor mortal know but by divine revelation, *moved with fear* and religious awe at the apprehension of the approaching judgments, *prepared an ark* according to God's direction, in defiance of the scoffs of the men of that generation, *to the saving of his house* from the approaching deluge; *by the which he condemned the world;* his preaching and labours in building the ark witnessed against that unbelieving world, who paid no regard to his works or word during the space of a hundred and twenty years, and thus left them without excuse; whilst he himself *became* hereby *heir of the righteousness which is by faith,* entitled to the complete salvation which the righteousness of that Redeemer in the fulness of time should purchase, whom the ark represented, and he by faith apprehended. *Note,* (1.) God sends his warnings before his judgments: the latter come not till the former have been despised. (2.) Faith begets holy fear, silences all objections, and sets us to work for God in defiance of all opposition. (3.) They who will ever be saved from the deluge of wrath, must by faith take shelter in Christ their ark, for out of him there is no hope.

8. By faith [i] Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9. By faith he [k] sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10. For he looked for [l] a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God. 11. Through faith also [m] Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12. [n] Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable. 13. [o] These all died ‖ in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them,* and embraced *them,* and [p] confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14. For they that say such things declare plainly that they [q] seek a country. 15. And truly, if they had been mindful of [r] that *country* from whence they came out, [s] they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16. But now [t] they desire a better *country,* that is, an heavenly: wherefore [u] God is not ashamed to be called their God;

i Gen. 11. 31. & 12. 1, 4. & 15. 12. & 17. 5. Neh. 9. 7. Acts 7. 2—8. Is. 41. 2.

k Ver. 10. Gen. 12. 7, 8. & 13. 3, 12, 15—18. & 17. 8. & 18. 2, 6, 10. & 23. 4. Acts 7. 5.

l Ch. 3. 4. & 13. 14. & 12. 22, 28. Rev. 3. 12. & 21 2, 10, 19. 2 Cor. 5. 1—8.

m Gen. 17. 17, 19. & 18. 13, 14. & 21. 1, 2. Luke 1. 36, 45. Rom. 4. 19—21. ch. 10. 23. 2 Chr. 20. 20. Is. 7. 9.

n Gen. 13. 16. & 5. 5. & 18. 18. & 22. 17. & 26. 14. & 32. 12. Rom. 4. 18, 19. Num. i, xxvi. 1 Chr. xxi, xxiii —xxviii. 2 Chr. xiii, xvii.

o John 8. 56. Gen. 48. 21. & xlix. & 50. 24.

‖ Gr. *according to faith.*

p Gen. 23. 4. & 47. 9. 1 Chr. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. & 119. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 17. & 2. 11.

q Ver. 16. Gen. 49. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 18. & 5. 1—7. Rom. 8. 23—25. Luke 2. 29. Phil. 1. 23.

r Gen. 11. 28, 31. Josh. 24. 2. Neh. 9. 7. Acts 7. 2.

s Gen. 24. 4—6, 8. & 28. 5. & 35. 26.

t Ver. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 18. & 5. 1—7. Rom. 8. 23—25. Luke 2. 29. Phil. 1. 23. ch. 13. 14. ver. 8.

u Exod. 3. 6, 15. Mat. 22. 32. Mark 12. 26. Luke 20. 37. Acts 7. 32.

x Ver. 8. ch. 13. 14. & 12. 22. Rev. xxi, xxii. 2 Cor. 5. 1. John 14. 2, 3. Mat. 25. 34. Luke 12. 32. Phil. 3. 20.

y Gen. 22. 2—12. Jam. 2. 21. 2 Cor. 8. 12.

* Or *to.*

z Gen. 21. 12. Rom. 9. 7. Gal. 3. 29.

a Rom. 4. 17, 19—21. ver. 11, 12.

[x] for he hath prepared for them a city. 17. [y] By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son;* 18. * Of whom it was said, [z] That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19. [a] Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Verses 8—19. From the antediluvian patriarchs the apostle passes on to consider the case of the great father of the faithful, an example that should have peculiar weight with those who valued themselves on being his descendants.

1. He mentions Abraham's call. *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out* from the land of his nativity *into a place which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance, obeyed* without hesitation, fully persuaded of the truth, power, and grace of God to fulfil his promises; *and he went out,* under divine guidance, and trusting on divine direction, *not knowing whither he went,* neither the country itself, not the way which led to it. *Note,* (1.) Implicit faith is due to God's word; and though we know not how, yet we may be assured, however improbable it may appear to sense and reason, it shall be fulfilled in the appointed season. (2.) They who would go to the heavenly Canaan, must, at God's call, come forth out of a world that lieth in wickedness. (3.) The inheritance of glory is secured to the faithful, and whatever difficulties are in the way, they shall possess it at last.

2. His sojourning in Canaan. *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country,* though proprietor of it by the divine grant, yet not holding the least part in possession; *dwelling in tabernacles,* without any settled abode, *with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise,* Jacob being fifteen years old at Abraham's death. *For he looked for a city which hath foundations,* even the state of eternal glory above, which is represented as a city, Rev. xxii. 14. *whose builder and maker is God,* he having prepared the heavenly mansions for his chosen. *Note,* (1.) The saints of God are here resident in tabernacles of clay, but mansions of glory await them in a better world. (2.) Faith, which realizes our hopes above, necessarily draws forth our affections and desires after that blessed world to which we go. (3.) All the trials of this mortal state will be regarded by us as light and transient, when we abidingly keep in view the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

3. The faith of Sarah is observed as closely connected with that of her husband Abraham. *Through faith also Sarah herself,* though naturally barren, and now past the time of childbearing, *received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age,* being ninety years old; *because,* notwithstanding she at first hesitated and laughed, as if the thing was impossible, yet her faith soon got the better of her unbelief; for *she judged him faithful who had promised,* and that he was able to perform what he had said. *Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead* through old age, *so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable. Note,* Nothing is impossible with God: when he promises, we may trust, and not be afraid.

4. *These all,* Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob, *died in faith, not having received the promises,* neither possessing the land of Canaan, nor having seen the Messiah incarnate; *but, in the* fullest assurance that what God had spoken was as good as done, and sure in the event, *having seen them afar off,* looking forward to the distant ages when the time of their accomplishment should arrive; *and were* as fully *persuaded of them* as if they had lived to see them fulfilled, *and embraced them* with confidence and holy joy; *and,* under the influence of them, *confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth,* regarding themselves as such, looking for their heavenly home, and living above the world on the glorious hopes which God through Christ had given unto them. *For they that say such things,* and professedly and practically die unto the world, *declare plainly that they seek a country,* and look to a better world as their native land. *And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned* to Ur of the Chaldees again; *but now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly,* even that inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which God in Christ, as their covenant God, had revealed unto them, and which they by faith embraced. *Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God,* in a peculiar and most endeared relation; *for he hath prepared for them a city,* a glorious abode with himself, eternal in the heavens. *Note,* (1.) In this world we live by faith, not by sight; and yet the certain approach of the promised inheritance can even here, as if possessed, fill us with joy and peace in believing. (2.) True faith hath ever this effect, to make us overcome the world, and live as strangers and pilgrims on the earth; we place not our affections upon it, but pass through it as a foreign land, with a holy indifference about its gains, honours, or interests; contentedly put up with any accommodations which we meet with, hasten on with diligence towards our native home, consort with our own countrymen who are travelling the same road and speak the same language, and are happy the nearer we arrive to that land where our affections are placed, and whither our footsteps bend. (3.) None that are truly converted to God from the kingdom of darkness and sin, ever think of returning thither again; but whatever difficulties are in the way, or whatever temptation solicit, they steadfastly cleave to Christ as their portion, and follow him in their regeneration. (4.) The heavenly country may well be the object of the believer's desires, when every thing there is so infinitely preferable to what can ever be found in this miserable world. (5.) They who live in faith will die in faith; that which carries them victorious through the conflicts of life will make them triumphant over the terrors of death. (6.) If God be our God, therein is comprehended all possible blessedness; more heart cannot desire, nor imagination conceive.

5. The apostle returns to mention another and the most eminent instance of Abraham's faith. *By faith Abraham, when he was tried,* as never mortal was before, to prove the strength and truth of his faith and obedience, *offered up Isaac,* took every step which evidenced his intention fully to comply with the divine command, (see Gen. xxii.) *and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,* in whom alone the promises were to have been fulfilled: *of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called;* amidst innumerable objections, which sense, reason, nature, yea, even religion, might seem to suggest, he staggered not; looking to the uplifted knife, we still shudder with horror and distress; and what must he then feel that stands ready to plunge it in that dear sacrifice, *thy son, thy only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest!* We start from the scene; but Abraham, herein more than human, dares obey; his faith triumphed over every suggestion, *accounting,* (λογισαμενος) reasoning and concluding, from the most substantial grounds of evidence, *that God,* by whose command he knew with the most infallible assurance that he now acted, *was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence he also received him in a figure;* he knew that God could as easily re-animate Isaac on the altar as produce him from the bodies of his parents, that were, for the purposes of his generation, as good as dead; and that the divine promise should somehow receive its accomplishment, he rested in the fullest confidence. *Note,* (1.) God knows the purposes that are in the hearts of his people; and what they design in obedience

to his will he regards as acts really performed. (2.) Where God commands, we must stop our ears to all the reasoning of unbelief, fear, and selfishness. Duty is ours; events are at his disposal. (3.) Isaac was the figure and type of the death and resurrection of Christ. (4.) We marvel at Abraham's obedience to God's command, *though his son is spared;* with what astonishment and wonder then should we contemplate the love of God, *who spared* NOT *his own Son*, but even for us sinners gave him up to death, even the death of the cross!

b Gen. 27. 27—29, 33, 37, 39, 40.

c Gen. 48. 15—21. & 37. 9. & 47. 31.

d Gen. 50. 24, 25. Exod. 13. 13, 19. Josh. 24. 32. Acts 7. 16.

† Or *remembered.*

e Exod. 2. 2. & 1. 16, 22. Acts 7. 20.

f Ps. 56. 4. & 118. 6. Is. 8. 12, 13. & 51. 7, 12. & 41. 10, 14. Mat. 10. 28.

g Exod. 2. 1, 3—15. Acts 7. 21—24.

h Ps. 84. 10. Acts 7. 23, 25. Job 20. 5. Luke 16. 25.

i Or *for Christ.* Ch. 13. 13. Acts 9. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 5. Col. 1. 24.

k Ch. 10. 35. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Mark 8. 38. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 4. 19.

l Exod. 10. 28, 29. & 12. 31—41. & 13. 17—21. with 3. 2, 10. & 6. 3—8. ver. 13.

m Exod. 12. 2—30.

n Exod. 14. 13—30. Ps. 78. 13. & 66. 6. & 136. 11—15. Neh. 9. 11.

o Josh. 6. 1—20.

p Josh. 6. 23—25. & 2. 2—21. Jam. 2. 25.

‖ Or *that were disobedient.*

20. By faith [b] Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. 21. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, [c] blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff. 22. By faith [d] Joseph, when he died, † made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. 23. By faith [e] Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a proper child; and they were [f] not afraid of the king's commandment. 24. By faith [g] Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25. [h] Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26. Esteeming the reproach [i] of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: [k] for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. 27. [l] By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. 28. Through faith [m] he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them. 29. By faith [n] they passed through the Red sea as by dry *land;* which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. 30. By faith [o] the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. 31. By faith [p] the harlot Rahab perished not with them ‖ that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

Verses 20—31. The apostle proceeds to other eminent instances of faith.

1. Isaac. He had been mentioned before; another instance of his faith is here given, when, in confidence of the promise, he left his parting benediction with his children, and by divine determination, though undesignedly, being blind, conveyed the principal blessing to his younger son. *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, concerning things to come;* to Esau he gave the fatness of the earth, but to Jacob the mercies of a covenant God.

2. Jacob. *By faith,* in the promises of God to Abraham, *Jacob when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph,* by a prophetic spirit foretelling the superior greatness of Ephraim, and crossing his hands designedly, that his right hand might rest on the head of the youngest: *and worshipped God, leaning upon the top of his staff. Note,* (1.) The worship of God will be the believer's exercise to the last: when old age and weakness will not permit him to bend his knees, he will still bow upon his bed, or lean upon his staff, and pour out his humble prayer. (2.) Parents cannot more properly finish their course than by leaving with their children that surround their dying beds, the profession of their faith, and their final benediction.

3. Joseph. *By faith Joseph, when he died,* firmly persuaded of that inheritance in Canaan which was assigned to Abraham and his seed, *made mention of the departing of the children of Israel* out of Egypt, *and gave commandment concerning his bones,* solemnly charging them, under the sanction of an oath, that, when in the expected future day they departed to possess the promised land, his bones might be carried thither. The dust of Canaan was more eligible in his eyes than the noblest sepulchres of Egypt. *Note,* The testimony of dying saints to the truth of God's promises is a happy means to confirm the faith of their surviving brethren.

4. The parents of Moses. *By faith Moses, when he was born,* ordained to be the great lawgiver and deliverer of Israel, and a most eminent type of Jesus their spiritual Redeemer, *was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child, fair to God,* eminently beautiful, and probably some divine tokens appeared of his future greatness; *and they were not afraid of the king's commandment,* though, if discovered, their lives had paid for their disobedience to his bloody edict. They were persuaded that, by a Hebrew, God would work their deliverance; and, probably by some divine intimation perceived this child should be the person. *Note,* (1.) When parents are eminent for their faith, there is a happy prospect that their children will rise up heirs of the same grace. (2.) In days of suffering we may lawfully use every prudent means for our preservation. (3.) An ingenuous countenance often bespeaks the ingenious mind.

5. Moses. Much is spoken of him; for he is famous among the worthies, and hath his name in the first rank. Three eminent instances of his faith are here recorded.

(1.) *By faith* in the promises made to his ancestors, and of the blessings, in a better world, *Moses, when he was come to years,* arrived at maturity, highly honoured, and eminent for wisdom and learning, *refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,* with all the dignities and advantages thence arising, perhaps even of succeeding to the throne of Egypt; *choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God,* as a despised Hebrew, *than to enjoy* all the glories of the highest human grandeur, *and the pleasures of sin,* however alluring, which are but *for a season,* and must in their issue plunge both body and soul into eternal misery: *esteeming the reproach of Christ,* and all the contempt, scorn, and persecutions, which for the sake of their fidelity to his worship, and faith in his promises, Israel endured, *greater riches than the treasures in Egypt,* and what in the issue would prove unspeakably his gain in the eternal world; *for he had respect unto the recompense of reward,* and looked off from the tempting objects of a flattering but deceitful world, to the substantial portion which he expected in the enjoyment of God for ever and ever. *Note,* (1.) Faith appears then most gloriously triumphant over the world, when in the midst of greatness and grandeur, the soul can look down on those trifles, and be ready to part with all for the sake of Christ and his cause. (2.) The pleasures of sin, of the sweetest sins, are momentary; but the punishment of them is eternal. They judge therefore as wisely as religiously, who live in holy self-denial. (3.) As the greatest advantages cannot pay us for the least sin, so are the greatest sufferings to be chosen rather than offend God; and we shall never see cause to regret what we forego or endure for our fidelity to him. (4.) The reproach of Christ is our truest honour; far from being ashamed of it, we should glory therein as our greatest riches. (5.) There

is a recompense of reward, the prospect of which should ever animate our soul, and teach us to count every thing beside dung and dross, so that we may but gain the glorious prize.

(2.) *By faith he forsook Egypt*, carrying up with him the children of Israel, confident of the Lord's protection, and *not fearing the wrath of the* enraged *king*, nor the mighty hosts with which he pursued them in their way; *for he endured*, undismayed and unshaken, *as seeing him who is invisible*, higher than the kings of the earth, and able to save to the uttermost. *Note*, (1.) They who will be faithful to God must expect troubles, and be fearless of the wrath of men. (2.) A believing view of the invisible God will strengthen us, amidst all present difficulties, steadily to persevere.

(3.) *Through faith* in God's deliverance of his people from Egypt, and of the greater redemption which should be obtained for Israel by the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, *he kept the passover, and* observed the peculiar rite then enjoined, of *the sprinkling of* the *blood* on the door-post of their houses, *lest he that destroyed the first born* of the Egyptians *should touch them*, if the blood prevented not his entrance. *Note*, (1.) Christ is our passover. His blood upon our consciences is our only protection from the wrath of God. (2.) If we are spared when others perish, we must acknowledge it to be an act of sovereign grace to us, and own ourselves entirely indebted for it to our adored Redeemer.

(4.) *By faith*, in the power and promise of God, Moses stretched forth his rod, and the divided waters opened a passage for the discouraged hosts of Israel; and under his guidance, while he led the way, *they passed through the Red sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians* daringly *assaying to do, were drowned*, the waters closing upon them, and every man of that terrible host perished. *Note*, They who persecute God's Israel, only rush upon their own ruin.

6. *By faith*, which Joshua, Caleb, and others exercised in God's power and veracity, *the walls of Jericho fell down* of their own accord, when they blew and shouted, *after they were compassed about seven days*, according to the divine command. *Note*, (1.) When God is for us, all opposition must fall before us. (2.) The weakest means in his hands are sufficient to bring about the greatest events.

7. Rahab, a woman, a Canaanite, brings up the rear of faithful worthies. *By faith* in the promise that God would assuredly give the land of Canaan to the Israelites, *the harlot Rahab*, who before had been a woman of infamous character, but now turned unto God, whose grace abounds toward the chief of sinners, *perished not with them that believed not* of the Canaanites; but with her whole family was preserved, *when she had* given that real proof of her faith, in that she *received*, concealed and dismissed *the spies* of Israel in peace. *Note*, (1.) The ruin of sinners is their unbelief. (2.) They who cleave to God's people, and faithfully determine to share their weal and woe, will never have reason to repent their choice.

32. And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of [q] Gideon, and *of* [r] Barak, and *of* [s] Samson, and *of* [t] Jephthah, *of* [u] David also, and [x] Samuel, and *of* the prophets: 33. Who through faith [y] subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, [z] stopped the mouths of lions, 34. [a] Quenched the violence of fire, [b] escaped the edge of the sword, [c] out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35. [d] Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36. [e] And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and [f] scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: 37. [f] They were stoned, [g] they were sawn asunder, were tempted, [g] were slain with the sword: [h] they wandered about in sheep skins, and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38. [i] (Of whom the world was not worthy:) [k] they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth. 39. And these all, [l] having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; 40. [m] God having * provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

q Judg. vi—viii.
r Judg. iv, v.
s Judg. xiii—xvi.
t Judg. xi, xii.
u 1 Sam. xvi—xxvii, xxx. 2 Sam. i—xxiv. 1 Chr. xi—xxix.
x 1 Sam. i, iii, viii—xii, xxv.
y Num. xxi. Josh. vii—xiii. 2 Sam. v, viii, x. 1 Sam. 12. 3—5.
z Judg. 14. 5. 1 Sam. 17. 34. Dan. 6. 22.
a Dan. 3. 24, 25.
b 1 Sam. xx. 1 Kin. xix.
c 2 Kin. 6. 16. & 20. 7. Job 42. 10. Judg. 15. 15. 1 Sam. xiv. Judg. 7. 21.
d 1 Kin. 17. 23. 2 Kin. 4. 36, 37. Acts 22. 24, 29. Ver. 25, 26.
e 2 Kin. 2. 23. Judg. 16. 25. Jer. 22. 2. & 37. 15. Gen. 39. 20. 2 Kin. 22. 24. Acts 16. 23. & 22. 24.
f 1 Kin. 21. 13. 2 Chr. 24. 11. Acts 7. 57.
g 1 Sam. 22. 28. 1 Kin. 19. 10. Jer. 26. 23. Acts 12. 1. Mat. 23. 35, 37.
h 2 Kin. 1. 8. Mat. 3. 4.
i Ps. 16. 3. Prov. 12. 26. Gen. 7. 1. Jam. 2. 5. Rev. 1. 5, 6.
k 1 Sam. 22. 1. & 23. 19. & 24. 1. 1 Kin. 17. 3. & 18. 13. 2 Kin. 6. 1.
l Ver. 2—38. 1 Pet. 1. 12. Luke 10. 23, 24. ch. 10. 36.
m Rom. 11. 26. ch. 7. 19, 22. & 8. 6. & 12. 22—24. Rev. 6. 11.

* Or *foreseen*.

Verses 32—40. Unable to enter particularly into the case of every eminent believer recorded in the Old Testament, the apostle recites a cluster of distinguished names, and of the mighty effects which their faith produced.

1. He recites some of their distinguished names. *And what shall I more say?* when the field is so vast, *for the time would fail me*, if I enlarged on every individual, *to tell of Gideon* and his noble exploits, recorded, (Judges vi, vii, viii.) *and of Barak*, who before him was alike eminent for his faith and victory, (Judges iv.) *and of Samson*, in life and death so signally remarkable, (Judges xiv. 19. xvi. 27—30.) *and of Jephthah*, before whose faith the routed Ammonites fell, (Judges xi. 23—33.) *and of David also*, the man after God's own heart, so famous in sacred history for dependence on God, (2 Sam. xxiii. 1—5.) *and Samuel, and of the prophets*, who did and suffered so nobly in the cause of God and truth, under the mighty influence of divine faith.

2. He mentions many of the glorious acts of faith, which these, and other worthies like them showed; and any one conversant in the book of God may apply them to several of the saints there recorded: *Who*, (1.) *through faith subdued kingdoms*, as Joshua, David, &c. (2.) *Wrought righteousness* in their private and public capacities, governing with equity, and in their conversation were examples of every thing good and gracious; (3.) *Obtained promises*, God remarkably appearing for them, as he had assured them he would in the hour of trial; (4.) *Stopped the mouths of lions*, as David, Samson, Daniel: and still the same faith will produce the same effects, in stopping the mouth of the old lion, that he cannot devour; (5.) *Quenched the violence of fire*, so as to remain unhurt in the midst of the flames, (Dan. iii. 13—27.) (6.) *Escaped the edge of the sword*, when in the most imminent danger of their lives; (7.) *Out of weakness were made strong*, their national affairs restored from the nearest prospect of ruin; their bodily health recovered when their disease seemed desperate, (2 Kings xx. 17.) and though, in comparison with their foes, weak as infancy, yet, in divine strength, became more than conquerors; (8.) *Waxed valiant in fight*, and trusting in the Lord, marvellously overcame in the day of battle; (9.) *Turned to flight the armies of the aliens*, though more, and, to human view, incomparably mightier than they. (10.) *Women received their dead raised to life again;* as in the cases of the widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite; *And*, with respect to the power of faith, as evident in the most acute sufferings, we

read that, (11.) *Others were tortured*, willingly submitting to the most dreadful torments, *not accepting deliverance*, when only to be obtained at the price of their conscience, and some base compliances, rather welcoming death itself than deny the faith, *that they might obtain a better resurrection*, the prospect of eternal glory raising them superior to all the pangs of nature, and all the terrors of death. (12.) *And others had trial of cruel mockings*, ridiculed, treated as despicable, and loaded with every opprobrious name, *and* withal smarted under severe *scourgings, yea, moreover*, endured the pain and shame *of bonds and imprisonment:* such hath been the saints' portion, more or less, in every age. (13.) They were murdered in a variety of ways: *They were* some of them *stoned, they were sawn asunder* as the Jewish tradition affirms Isaiah was, at the command of the cruel Manasseh; they *were tempted* to deny their profession and save their lives, by complying with the commands of their persecutors; they *were slain with the sword* of tyrants and blood-thirsty men, and where some escaped the fury of their foes by flight, their life was embittered and scarce preferable to death itself; for, (14.) *They wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins*, having no better covering to protect them from the inclemency of the skies, *being destitute* of any abode, of clothes and necessary food, *afflicted* with various miseries, and *tormented* with endless insults and abuses, *(of whom* indeed *the world was not worthy,)* nor deserved so great blessing as their examples, prayers, and admonitions; and by the wicked they were treated as unfit for human society, and driven out from among men to dreary solitudes; *they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth*, seeking refuge among wild beasts, more hospitable than their savage persecutors; and, in the midst of all their sufferings, faith enabled them to persevere, and brought them at last to their eternal rest. For,

3. Their faith was at last crowned with the enjoyment of that Redeemer in whom they trusted. *These all having obtained a good report through faith*, enrolled in the sacred records as names held up for imitation to the latest ages, *received not the promise*, saw not that Messiah incarnate in whom their faith centred: *God having provided some better thing for us*, the manifestation of his son in the flesh, to whom they had constantly respect, *that they without us should not be made perfect;* since not by any legal sacrifices, but by the offering of the body of Jesus, both their sins and ours were expiated, and that by the same grace revealed in him we might be saved even as they. According, therefore, to the peculiar advantages which we enjoy under the gospel dispensation, a peculiar obligation is laid upon us, that our faith should be suitably operative, engaging us to all cheerful obedience, and willing sufferers for our Redeemer's sake.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle, in this chapter, applies what he has collected in the chapter foregoing, and makes use of it as a great motive to patience and perseverance in the Christian faith and state, pressing home the argument, 1. *From a greater example than he had yet mentioned, and that is Christ himself,* ver. 1—3. 2. *From the gentle and gracious nature of the afflictions they endured in their Christian course,* ver. 4—17. 3. *From the communion and conformity between the state of the gospel church on earth, and the triumphant church in heaven, from* ver. 18. *to the end of the chapter.*

1. WHEREFORE, seeing we also are compassed about with [a] so great a cloud of witnesses, [b] let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience

[a] Ch. 11. 2—38.
[b] Mat 10. 22. & 16. 24. & 24. 13. Luke 4. 59—62. & 14. 26—33. Rom. 6. 4. & 12. 1, 2. & 13. 11—14. 1 Cor. 9. 24. & 7. 24. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Eph. 4. 22. & 5. 8. Col. 3. 5, 8. ch. 2. 1. & 3. 6, 12. & 4. 1, 2. & 6. 12. & 10. 19—39. & xi. Jam. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 5 & 4. 2. Phil. 3. 8—14.

the race that is set before us, 2. [c] Looking unto Jesus, the * author and finisher of *our* faith; who, [d] for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3. For consider him that [e] endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

[c] John 1. 29. 2 Cor. 3. 18. ch. 9. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Eph. 2. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 8. Phil. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3.
* Or *beginner.*
[d] Ps. 110. 1. Luke 24. 26, 46. Acts 3. 15. & 5. 31. Phil. 2. 7—11. ch. 1. 3, 13. & 2. 10. & 3. 6. & 7. 26. & 5. 9. & 8. 1. & 9. 12, 24. & 10. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 11. & 3. 22.
[e] Mat. 12. 24. & 9. 34. & 27. 39—47. & 26. 65—68. John 7. 12. & 8. 48. & 9. 16. & 10. 20. Gal. 6. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Rev. 2. 3.

Verses 1—3. Having proposed to them such bright examples, the apostle urges the Hebrews,

1. To imitate their faith, patience, and perseverance. *Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses*, who, having finished the glorious course themselves, are now looking on our conduct, *let us*, animated by their examples, and roused to imitation of their excellences, *lay aside every weight* that would retard our speed, all inordinate attachment to earth and earthly things, *and the sin which doth so easily beset us*, that which from our circumstances, station in life, connections, and constitution, is ever soliciting our consent, and would insnare our souls: particularly the great and capital sins of unbelief, pride, and lust, under whatever specious pretences they may appear; *and let us run with patience*, not discouraged at difficulties, nor fainting under temptation, but eager to finish *the race that is set before us*, and to win the glorious prize. *Note*, (1.) We have a race before us; the course is circumscribed by our mortal days: the word of God marks out our path; saints and angels are spectators: death is the goal, and glory the reward of fidelity. What services then can we refuse? What sufferings shall dismay us? (2.) Faith and patience are the mighty graces which can enable us to hold on, and to hold out, till we finish our course with joy.

2. The only way that in faith and patience we can persevere is here described. *Looking unto Jesus*, (αφορωντες) turning away our eyes from sin, the world, and every insnaring object which would seduce our affections, and keeping him singly in our view, who is *the author, and* alone can be *the finisher of our faith*, by grace and strength derived from him, enabling us to follow his perfect pattern; *who, for the joy that was set before him*, that God's perfections might be glorified, full satisfaction made to Divine justice, his people's eternal redemption secured, and himself, as Mediator, be crowned with glory and honour, *endured the cross*, with all its horrors, exercising the most astonishing patience and unshaken fortitude, *despising the shame* of that ignominious tree, *and is* now, in consequence thereof, *set down at the right hand of the throne of God*, exalted to the highest dignity and majesty in the heavens. *For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself*, (αναλογισασθε) compare your sufferings with his, the infinite disproportion between your persons and him; the invincible patience and undisturbed composure with which he bore every insult and torment; reflect upon this often and deeply, *lest ye be weary and faint in your minds*, and let the eye of faith, fixed on him, draw out of his fulness the needful supplies of strength to follow his blessed footsteps. *Note*, (1.) Faith is the gift of Jesus, and he who begins must finish the work with power in our hearts. (2.) When we consider what the Son of God for our sakes freely endured, we shall be ashamed to complain of the comparatively trivial cross which we sustain, and boldly set our faces as a flint against all sufferings and reproaches, which for his sake we may be called to bear. (3.) Great and long continued trials are apt to weary out our feeble minds, so that we are ready to sink under them; but Jesus is before us; he saith, Look unto me:

and that reviving sight uncloses the dying eyes, re-animates the dejected spirit, rouses the fainting heart, and, inspired with renewed vigour, we run our heavenly race, made more than conquerors through his love.

4. [f] Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. 5. And ye have forgotten the exhortation, [g] which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6. For [h] whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7. [i] If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8. [k] But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which [l] corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: [m] shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10. For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; [n] but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. 11. [o] Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12. Wherefore [p] lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13. [q] And make † straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. 14. [r] Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15. [s] Looking diligently lest any man [t] fail of the grace of God; lest any [u] root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; 16. [x] Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, [y] who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17. For ye know how that afterward, [z] when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no ‡ place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

f 1 Cor. 10. 13. ch. 10. 32—34.
g Job 5. 17. Prov. 3. 11, 12. ch. 5. 11. & 6. 11. Rev. 3. 19.
h Ps. 94. 12. & 119. 75. Prov. 3. 11. & 13. 24. Jam. 1. 12. & 5. 11. Rev. 3. 19. Is. 27. 9.
i Deut. 8. 3, 5. 2 Sam. 7. 14. Prov. 13. 24. & 19. 18. & 22. 15. & 23. 13. & 29. 15. John 16. 20, 33. Acts 14. 22. 1 Thes. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 20. 2 Tim. 3. 12.
k Ps. 73. 14, 15. 1 Pet. 5. 9. Rev. 3. 19.
l Prov. 13. 24. & 19. 18. & 22. 15. & 23. 13. & 29. 15. Eph. 6. 4. Lev. 19. 3. Mat. 1. 6.
m Mal. 1. 6. Num. 16. 22. & 27. 16. Job 12. 10. Eccl. 12. 1, 7. Is. 42. 5. & 57. 16. Zech. 12. 1. Acts 17. 25.
n Ps. 119. 67, 71, 75. Prov. 29. 15. Lev. 11. 44. & 19. 2. Deut. 8. 3, 5. Mat. 7. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 4—6. & 2. 5, 9.
o Ps. 8. 3, 32. Jam. 3. 1. Is. 32. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 17. see ver. 10.
p Job 4. 3, 4. Is. 35. 3. 1 Thes. 5. 14. ch. 5. 11. & 6. 12.
q Prov. 24. 16. Gal. 6. 1.
† Or *even*.
r Ps. 34. 14. Mat. 5. 8. Rom. 12. 28. & 14. 17, 19. Exod. 19. 10. 2 Cor. 7. 1. & 6. 17. 1 Thes. 3. 11—13. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Eph. 5. 5, 26. ch. 2. 11. & 10. 10, 24. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. & 2. 1. Rev. 22. 14, 15. & 21. 8, 27.
s 1 Cor. 6. 9. Gal. 5. 19. Deut. 29. 19.
t Ch. 4. 1, 11. & 6. 11. & 3. 12. & 10. 23. & 2. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 6. 1.
u Or *fall from*. Gal. 5. 4.
x Deut. 29. 18. Acts 17. 13 Gal. 5. 9, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 17. 1 Cor. 5. 6. Gen. 27. 28.
y 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. & 10. 8. 2 Cor. 6. 14—17. Eph. 5. 3—5. Col. 3. 5, 6. 1 Thes. 4. 4—7. ch. 13. 4.
z Gen. 25. 29—34. 1 Cor. 15. 32.
‡ Or *way to change his mind*.

Verses 4—17. In support of what he had said before, the apostle,

I. Suggests the most engaging arguments to persevere:

(1.) God had hitherto preserved them in life. *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin;* and as he had not called them to the severest conflicts, it would be shameful indeed if they sunk under lesser trials. *Note*, (1.) Our warfare lies against sin, the deadly foe, who, if not vanquished, will destroy us body and soul for ever. We need be resolute, therefore, when our all is at stake. (2.) We are to acknowledge with thankfulness the kindness of our adored Lord, who proportions our trials to our strength.

(2.) The sufferings they had endured were the kind chastisements of a Father's rod, however evil the instruments might be who were the immediate authors of them. *And ye have forgotten*, or *Have ye forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children? My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord*, on the one hand, neither slighting the affliction, unsuitably affected thereby, or stubborn under the rod: *nor*, on the other, *faint when thou art rebuked of him*, sinking under unbelief, impatient under the trial, or overwhelmed with despair. *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth* for their good, *and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth* into the bosom of his love. *If ye endure chastening*, far from counting it a token of wrath, *God* herein *dealeth with you as with sons*, with the kindest intention of your correction and amendment; *for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?* There is no child of God but needs the gracious scourge; and our heavenly Father will not, like a foolishly fond parent, spare the needful stroke. *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all* the true members of his family are *partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons;* to be neglected, and not counted worth correction, would prove you to be a spurious race, whom God abandons to their own ways. *Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence*, were in duty bound to submit to their paternal discipline, and to love them the more for their care in rebuking the evil they discovered in us: *shall we not much rather* then *be in subjection unto the Father of spirits*, from whose immediate hand our immortal souls are derived; meekly submitting to him, whose authority over us is so much greater; *and* this, that we may *live* in a state of holy communion with him and subjection to him, till he shall have purged out all our evil, and prepared us for a place in his better house above. *For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure*, and much passion, self-will, and weakness mixed with their corrections; *but he*, who is infinitely wise as well as boundless in love, never scourges us *but for our profit, that*, as the blessed issue of the afflictions which he is pleased to lay upon us, *we might be partakers of his holiness*, cleansed from the dross of corrupt affections, and renewed after his blessed image. *No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous*, and the flesh cannot but groan under the scourge: *nevertheless*, whilst faith supports us comfortably under the trial, we afterwards continually see cause to bless God for our suffering; since *afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby;* and we can say, by happy experience, it is good for me that I have been afflicted. *Note*, (1.) God's corrections must not be made light of on the one hand, nor should we on the other despair on account of them; but, humbling our souls under the mighty hand of the Lord, should patiently wait, in confidence that he will lift us up. (2.) God's chastisements are all sent out of pure love to his children; and therefore with dutiful submission, and lowly resignation, should be received. (3.) Though the Lord may leave others to themselves, yet he will not suffer his children to err without visiting their iniquities with a rod. It is a sad symptom of being an alien from his family, never to be visited with his corrections. (4.) If we are bound to reverence our earthly parents, and submit to their arbitrary and often self-willed corrections, how much more should the chastisements of our heavenly Father be embraced with thankfulness, to whom we owe so much higher reverence; who never strikes without cause, and so wisely and graciously orders his afflictive dispensations in time, manner, and measure, as shall be exactly suited to our wants, and effectually tend to our profiting. (5.) Far from judging of God's anger by

the severity or length of our trials, we should from thence conclude his love is great towards us. He visits that he may purge us more thoroughly from our dross; and faith can make us rejoice even in the fires, under the confidence that peaceable fruits of righteousness shall be produced out of those trials, that to flesh and blood are most grievous.

2. He exhorts them not to faint or be disheartened, but to be vigorous in their Christian course. *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;* cast away every desponding fear, and press with eagerness to the goal, encouraging each other nobly to persevere in the face of every difficulty and danger, depending on Almighty grace. *And make straight paths for your feet,* desiring to remove every obstacle at which yourselves or your brethren might stumble, *lest that which is lame be turned out of the way* of truth and righteousness, and the weak offended or perverted from the paths of godliness; *but let it rather be healed,* the feeble-minded supported, the disheartened encouraged, the weak confirmed, the fallen lifted up and restored again. *Note,* We should labour to be assisting each other in our heavenly way, and attentive to the good of our brethren's souls, as to our own.

3. He particularly directs them what to pursue. *Follow peace with all men,* desiring earnestly to maintain it in every relation, and with all persons, as far as is consistent with a good conscience; *and holiness* in heart and life and all manner of conversation, *without which no man shall see the Lord,* or be admitted to the beatific vision in glory everlasting. *Note,* Peace and holiness are essential to our hopes as Christians; we deceive ourselves if we think we can ever be saved, whilst enslaved by passion and vile affections.

4. He gives them a solemn caution against apostasy, enforced by Esau's fearful example. *Looking diligently,* watching over each other with holy jealousy, *lest any man* who hath made profession of the gospel, *fail of the grace of God,* and apostatize from the faith: *lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled,* seduced by their heresies, and perverted by their ill examples: *lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of bread sold his birth-right,* despising the sacred as well as civil privileges which were annexed thereto; and his punishment was suited to his crime, *for ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing* and prevailed upon his father to retract what he had given to Jacob, *he was rejected* by him, *for he found no place for repentance,* nor would Isaac change his mind or reverse his word, *though he sought it diligently with tears. Note,* (1.) Apostates from the truth are the most dangerous enemies, and bitter opposers. (2.) Many, for the gratification of a bestial appetite, have, like Esau, renounced their sacred birth-right, and too late they will rue their sin and folly.

18. For ye are not come unto [a] the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, 19. [b] And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: 20. (For they could not endure that which was commanded, [c] And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: 21. [d] And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) 22. But ye are come unto [e] mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an [f] innumerable company of angels, 23. [g] To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are ‖ written in heaven, and to [h] God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24. And to Jesus [i] the mediator of the new * covenant, and to [k] the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. 25. [l] See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for [m] if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape* if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven: 26. Whose voice [n] then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. 27. And this *word,* [o] Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that † are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28. Wherefore we receiving [p] a kingdom which cannot be moved, ‡ let us have grace, [q] whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29. For [r] our God *is* a consuming fire.

a Exod. 19. 10, 12, 18, 19. & 20. 18. & 24. 17. Deut. 4. 11, 12. & 5. 22, 23. Rom. 6. 14. & 8. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 7.

b Exod. xx. & 19. 16, 19. Deut. 5. 5, 24. & 18. 16. & 4. 12.

c Exod. 19. 13. Gal. 3. 10. Rom. 7. 9—13.

d Gen. 28. 17. Judg. 6. 22. & 13. 22. Dan. 8. 17, 27. & 10. 7, 8, 11, 17. Mat. 17. 6. Rev. 1. 17.

e Gal. 4. 26. Rev. 3. 12. & 20. 9, 23. & 21. 2, 10. Phil. 3. 20. Ps. 48. 1.

f Deut. 33. 2. Ps. 68. 17. Dan. 7. 10. Rev. 5. 11.

g Jer. 31. 9. Rev. 7. 4, 9. & 14. 1, 4. Luke 10. 20. Phil. 4. 3. Rev. 13. 8. & 17. 8. Is. 4. 3. Exod. 4. 22. Num. 3. 40.

‖ Or *enrolled.*

h Gen. 18. 25. Ps. 50. 4, 6. 2 Thes. 1. 5—7. Mat. 5. 12. ch. 6. 10, 12. Is. 57. 2.

i 1 Tim. 2. 5. ch. 7. 22. & 8. 6. & 9. 15. & 10. 4—14.

* Or *testament.*

k Exod. 24. 8. ch. 9. 14. & 10. 22. & 13. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 2. with ch. 11. 4. Gen. 4. 10

l Exod. 23. 21. Mat. 17. 5. Is. 55. 3.

m Ch. 2. 2, 3. & 3. 17. & 10. 28, 29.

n Exod. 19. 18. Hag. 2, 6, 7, 23. ver. 19, 27.

o Ps. 102. 26, 27. Mat. 24. 35. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Mat. 16. 18. ver. 28. Rev. 21. 1.

† Or *may be shaken.*

p Ps. 9. 7. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 14. Luke 1. 33. & 17. 20, 21. Mat. 16. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 4. & 2. 5, 9. Mat. 25. 34.

‡ Or *let us hold fast.*

q Phil. 4. 13. Zech. 10. 12. & 12. 10. 1 Cor. 15. 10. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Tit. 2. 11—14. Ps. 84. 7. & 96. 4—9.

r Exod. 24. 17. Deut. 4. 24. & 9. 3. Ps. 50. 3. 2 Thes. 1. 8. Exod. 19. 18. Num. 11. 1. & 16. 35. Deut. 32. 22. Ps. 97. 3. Is. 66. 15. Dan. 7. 9. ch. 10. 27.

Verses 18—29. To guard the Hebrews particularly from revolting back to Judaism, he sets before them the excellence of the gospel church and worship above the Judaical.

1. He reminds them of that dispensation of terror and bondage from which they had been delivered. *For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched,* which was a palpable earthly substance, and not like the spiritual Zion, *and that burned with fire,* when God in terrible pomp descended thereon; *nor unto blackness and darkness,* which covered that typical dispensation; *and tempest,* emblematical of the storms of wrath which hang over the head of the transgressors; *and the sound of a trumpet,* which with louder, and still louder blasts, spread terrible dismay throughout the hosts of Israel; *and the voice of words,* in the most awful manner articulately pronouncing the ten commandments; *which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more;* so terrified were they at it, and begged that Moses might be their mediator, and that through him they might receive the revelation of the Divine Will: (*for they could not endure that which was commanded,* so unable were they to answer the demands of this perfect law, and dreaded its awful sanction, particularly that fearful edict; *and if so much as a beast touch the mountain,* during the time that the Divine Presence is there manifested, *he shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart. And so terrible was the sight, that Moses* himself *said, I exceedingly fear and quake,*) so dark and terrible was that dispensation under which they had been held: and this should with hearty eagerness engage them to receive and hold fast that milder, brighter, spiritual dispensation of gospel grace, when God, without one terror spread around him, invited poor

sinners, through his dear Son, to approach his throne and live. This more glorious state the apostle,

2. Describes. *But ye are come unto mount Sion*, the spiritual gospel church, where God, well pleased, takes up his blessed abode, and accepts the worship and service there performed; *and unto the city of the living God*, built on Christ the foundation, guarded by Almighty power, and blessed with the most transcendent privileges, *the heavenly Jerusalem*, where all the inhabitants are spiritualized in temper and affections, and made meet for their eternal mansions in glory; and *to the innumerable company of angels*, your fellow-servants, who minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation; *to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven*, in the Lamb's book of life, the noble army of saints, whether militant in earth or triumphant in heaven; *and to God the judge of all*, as reconciled now to you in the Son of his love; and having boldness to approach the throne in that great day, when he shall judge the world by him to whom all judgment is committed; *and to the spirits of just men made perfect*, now entered into their eternal rest and perfected in holiness, with whom you maintain communion, as influenced by the same Spirit, justified by the same blood, members of the same body, pursuing the same end, and ready to join their services in the immediate presence of God and the Lamb; *and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant*, through whom all these invaluable privileges and blessings are derived down to us; *and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel:* his blood cried for vengeance, but the blood which Jesus shed, sprinkled by faith upon our consciences, speaks peace and comfort, and eternal blessedness: as it infinitely exceeds in excellence that of Abel's sacrifice, much more shall it obtain acceptance and favour with God for all those, who, sprinkled therewith, boldly appear in the presence of the Most High and Most Holy.

3. From these considerations he proceeds to exhort them to take heed to themselves. *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh* in the gospel: *for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth*, even Moses who delivered the sacred oracles of the law to the people, *much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven*, that Lord of life and glory who came down from heaven, and is returned thither again, and by the inspiration of his Spirit, which, in such an astonishing manner, he hath sent from thence, speaks now in his gospel word; *whose voice then shook the earth*, when Sinai trembled at his presence: *but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven*, the Jewish church, with all their civil and ecclesiastical polity. *And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made*, not for a perpetuity, but for a while only, as was the case of the Jewish tabernacle and economy, *that those things which cannot be shaken may remain*, and that the gospel church, worship, and privilege, may endure unalterable unto the end of time. *Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved*, and by faith admitted to a participation of the privileges of that kingdom of gospel grace, which will issue shortly in a kingdom of glory, *let us* remember, esteem, and value our distinguished mercies, and *have grace* to hold fast the doctrine of truth, and beg a more abundant measure of the Spirit, *whereby we may serve God acceptably*, through Jesus Christ, *with reverence and godly fear*, under a sense of our own sinfulness and unworthiness. *For our God is a consuming fire*, and will execute fearful vengeance on every apostate from the faith and practice of the gospel. *Note*, (1.) They who have received the grace of God in truth, have a kingdom that cannot be moved. (2.) Constant worship and waiting upon God is the appointed way wherein he hath promised to bestow on us the grace which can enable us to serve him acceptably. (3.) The fire of eternal vengeance will assuredly light down upon the apostate and impenitent soul.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

The apostle concludes with recommending several excellent duties to them, as the proper fruits of faith, ver. 1—18. *then bespeaks their prayers for him, and offers up his prayers to God for them, gives them some hope of seeing himself and Timothy, and ends with the general salutation and benediction*, ver. 18. to the end.

1. LET [a] brotherly love continue. 2. [b] Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby [c] some have entertained angels unawares. 3. [d] Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; *and* them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. 4. [e] Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: [f] but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. 5. [g] *Let your* conversation *be* without covetousness; *and be* content with such things as ye have: [h] for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6. So that we may boldly say, [i] The Lord *is* my helper, [k] and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. 7. Remember them which * have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation. 8. [l] Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. 9. [m] Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: [n] for *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. 10. [o] We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. 11. [p] For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. 12. [q] Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. 13. [r] Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. 14. [s] For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. 15. [t] By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, † giving thanks to his name. 16. [u] But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well

a Eph. 4. 3. 1 Thes. 4. 9. Rom. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 3. 8. & 2. 17. & 4. 8. 2 Pet. 1. 7.
b Rom. 12. 12. Lev. 19. 34. 1 Pet. 4. 9. Deut. 10. 19. Is. 58. 7. Mat. 25. 35. Luke 14. 13. Tit. 1. 8. 1 Tim. 3. 2. & 5. 10.
c Gen. 12. 3. & 19. 2.
d Mat. 25. 36. Rom. 12. 15 Neh. 1. 4. 1 Cor. 12. 26. Col. 4. 18. ch. 6. 10. & 10. 34. 1 Pet. 3. 8. Gal. 6. 1, 2.
e Gen. 2. 18—24. 1 Cor. vii. 1 Tim. 2. 15. & 2. 2, 4.
f 1 Cor. 6. 9. Gal. 5. 19, 21. Eph. 5. 5. Col. 3. 5, 6. ch. 12. 16. Rev. 22. 15. & 21. 8. Mal. 3. 5.
g Col. 3. 5. Mat. 6. 25, 34. Exod. 23. 8. Deut. 16, 16. 1 Tim. 6. 6, 8. Phil. 4. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 11.
h Deut. 31. 8. Josh. 1. 5. Gen. 28. 15. 1 Sam. 12. 22. 1 Chr. 28. 20. Is. 41. 10—17. & 43. 2. & 46. 4. Ps. 37. 25, 28. Prov. 10. 3, 16, 17. & 5. 16.
i Ps. 27. 1—3. & 56. 4, 11. & 118. 6, 8.
k Ver. 17, 24. 1 Thes. 5. 12. ch. 6. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Cor. 11. 1. Song 1. 8.
* Or *are the guides.*
l Phil. 1. 21. & 3. 7—11. 1 Cor. 1. 24, 30. & 2. 2. & 3. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 11. Gal. 1. 7. Eph. 4. 5. Rev. 1. 5, 8.
m Jer. 28. 8. Mat. 24. 4, 24. Rom. 16. 17. Col. 2. 4, 8, 20. 2 Thes. 2. 2. 1 John. 4. 1. Eph. 4. 14. & 5. 6. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. & 6. 3—5, 20. 2 Tim. 2. 16. & 3. 13. Jude 3. Acts 20. 30.
n John 6. 27. Acts 20. 24, 32. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Rom. 14. 17. 1 Cor. 6. 13. & 8. 8. Col. 2. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 12. & 2. 1, 2, 15. & 3. 14. ch. 12. 28. & 9. 9.
o 1 Cor. 9. 13. & 10. 18. Col. 2. 17. Eph. 5. 2. 1 John 2. 2. Col. 3. 11. Gal. 3. 26, 27. & 5. 4. Mat. 8. 11, 12.
p Exod. 29. 14. Lev. 4. 12, 21. & 6. 30. & 9. 11. & 16. 27. Num. 19. 3.
q John 19. 17, 18. Mark 15. 20, 22.
r Song 4. 8. & 3. 11. ch. 11. 26. & 12. 2, 3. Phil. 2. 17. Acts 7. 58. 1 Pet. 4. 14.
s Deut. 12. 9. Mic. 2. 10. Phil. 3. 20. & 1. 23. 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. & 5. 1—8. ch. 4. 9. & 11. 10, 16. & 12. 22.
t 1 Pet. 2. 5. & 4. 11. Eph. 5. 20. 1 Thes. 5. 18. Lev. 7. 12. 2 Chr. 29. 31. & 33. 16. Ps. 34. 1, 2. & 50. 14, 23. & 51. 19. & 69. 30. & 107. 22. & 116. 17. & 66. 13—15. & cxiv. Hos. 14. 2. Ps. cxxxvi.
† Gr. *confessing.*
u Rom. 12. 13. 2 Cor. 9. 12. ch. 6. 10. Mat. 25. 40. Phil. 4. 18.

pleased. 17. [x] Obey them that have [‡] the rule over you, and submit yourselves: [y] for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that *is* unprofitable for you.

[x] See ver. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 5.
[‡] Or *guide*.
[y] Ezek. 3. 18, 19. & 33. 2, 7, 8. Acts 20. 24, 26. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. & 9. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 10. & 5. 2, 3. Tit. 1. 7. Phil. 2. 29. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20. Is. 49. 4, 6.

Verses 1—17. Having warned them against apostasy, and set before them the excellency of the gospel dispensation, he concludes with exhorting them to the practice of those duties which most adorn their holy profession.

1. To mutual and fervent charity. *Let brotherly love continue*, cultivate this blessed temper, and abide and abound in the exercise of it towards each other.

2. To hospitality. *Be not forgetful to entertain strangers;* those who travelled to preach the gospel; or by persecution were driven from their native homes: or whose distressed circumstances pleaded for this kind relief; *for thereby some have entertained angels unawares*, as Abraham and Lot.

3. To Christian sympathy with the afflicted. *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them*, and tenderly feeling for their miseries; *and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body*, and liable to the same sufferings, and fellow-members in the same mystical body of Christ.

4. To chastity. *Marriage is honourable in all*, when entered into according to the divine prescription, *and the bed undefiled* by any forbidden or impure embraces: *but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*, and execute upon them condign punishment, if they repent not of the evil of their ways.

5. Contentment. *Let your conversation be without covetousness*, free from the immoderate pursuit of worldly wealth, inordinate care about it, idolatrous delight in and reluctance to part with it; *and be content with such things as ye have*, satisfied in the portion which God's providence hath allotted you, and envying none their superior affluence: *for he*, who is able to supply all your wants, whilst in the way of duty and honest industry you depend upon him, *hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*, for what was spoken particularly to Joshua shall be fulfilled to every faithful soul, respecting all their concerns, temporal and spiritual, who shall be under the divine blessing, guidance, and protection. *So that we may boldly say*, with the Psalmist, *the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me;* greater is he that is for us than all that are against us; and the devices of wicked men, or wicked devils, he can overrule, and even make them work together for our good.

6. To imitate their dead pastors, and to obey their living guides.

(1.) To imitate the good examples of their departed spiritual teachers. *Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God* in time past, and have now finished their testimony; *whose faith follow*, hold fast the doctrines which they preached, and copy after the holy lives they led, *considering the end of their conversation*, how singly they aimed at the glory of God in life, and what a happy exit they made at death; and well may we desire that our last end may be like theirs. And though the best of ministers are dying men, the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls ever lives to feed his redeemed flock; *Jesus Christ*, the glorious object of our faith and hope, *the same* unchangeable in nature, grace, and love towards his people, *yesterday*, in all past ages, *now and for ever* the portion of his saints, as your faithful guides have taught you. *Be not* therefore *carried about with strange and divers doctrines*, different from that unadulterated gospel which they preached unto you: *for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace*, and fixed in its dependence on the sovereign grace of God in Jesus Christ, as the foundation of all hope, and peace, and holiness, in time and eternity; and *not* to be seduced by Judaizing teachers *with* any pretences that the Mosaic ritual is still in force, and a difference of *meats* and drinks, and such like things necessary to be observed, in order to acceptance with God, all *which* are now abrogated, and *have not profited them that have been occupied therein;* even when they were in force, they were unable to purge the conscience, and make him who did the service perfect; and much less can they now profit, when they are abolished. *We* need none of the Levitical sacrifices to feast upon; we *have* one infinitely better; *an altar*, and sacrifice, *whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle, for* no part of the sin-offering under the law was to be eaten, but *those bodies of the beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary*, on the great day of atonement, *by the high-priest for* the *sin* of the people, *are burnt without the camp. Wherefore* they who remain subject to this law, can have no more right to feed upon the body and blood of Christ, which are received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper, than the Levitical priests had to feed upon the flesh of the atoning sacrifice; in exact correspondence with which *Jesus also, that he might sanctify his people*, his spiritual Israel, *with his own blood, suffered without the gate*, before he went up to heaven, the true sanctuary, there to plead the atonement which he had made. *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach;* turning our backs upon the temple and all its ritual services, founding no expectations upon them, but cleaving in faith and love to Christ alone, content to be treated with every insult, reproach, or cruelty for his sake, boldly carrying our cross to Calvary after him, and, if need be, ready to die for his sake. *For here we have no continuing city;* this polluted world is not our rest, nor do we desire to take up our rest here below, *but we seek one to come*, a city that hath abiding foundations, whose maker and builder is God, where saints, and angels, and Jesus himself dwelleth. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually*, since all sacrifices of atonement are at an end, and praise and blessings for redeeming love, are the services now required at our hands; *that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name*, an oblation well pleasing and acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Not that we must rest merely in words, *but* our works also must testify our grateful acknowledgment of the divine mercy; therefore *to do good, and to communicate* of your substance to the needy, especially to those of the household of faith, and, according to your ability, *forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased*, and for the Saviour's sake will bless the offerer.

(2.) They are enjoined, as to follow the example of their departed pastors, so to obey their living guides. *Obey them that have the rule over you*, your spiritual teachers, who instruct you in the word of God, *and submit yourselves* meekly to their reproofs and admonitions: *for they watch for your souls*, to guard you from deceivers, to warn you from approaching danger, to feed you in the pastures of ordinances, and to help you on your heavenly way; and this they do with all holy jealousy, zeal, and diligence, knowing the solemn reckoning which they must one day make, *as they must give an account: that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that* would not only be grievous to them, but most *unprofitable for you*, whose condemnation would be highly aggravated by all their fruitless labours bestowed upon you. *Note*, (1.) Ministers can never too often or too deeply consider the awful account they must one day give before their eternal Judge. (2.) When we have delivered our souls, then it becomes our people's care to see that their profiting appears: if they trifle with our message, their blood lies upon their own heads.

18. [z] Pray for us: for we trust [a] we have a good conscience, in all things

[z] Rom. 15. 30. Eph. 6. 19, 29. Col. 4. 3. 1 Thes. 5. 25. 2 Thes. 3. 1.
[a] Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 12. & 3, 4.

willing to live honestly. 19. [b] But I beseech *you* the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner. 20. Now [c] the God of peace, that [d] brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, [e] that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting || covenant, 21. [f] Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, * working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ; [g] to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen. 22. And [h] I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: [i] for I have written a letter unto you in few words. 23. Know [k] ye that *our* brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you. 24. Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. 25. [l] Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

b Philem. 22. Phil. 1. 19, 20. & 2. 24. Rom. 15. 30, 31. & 1. 12.
c Rom. 15. 33. & 16. 20. 1 Cor. 14. 33. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 4. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 23. 2 Thes. 3. 16.
d Acts 2. 24, 32. & 3. 13, 26. & 4. 10. & 5. 30. & 10. 40. & 13. 30. & 17. 31. Rom. 1. 4. & 4. 24, 25. & 8. 11. 1 Cor. 6. 14. & 15. 15. 2 Cor. 4. 14. Gal. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 20. Col. 2. 12. 1 Thes. 1. 10.
e ch. 10. 29. & 9. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 21. Zech. 9. 11. Is. 40. 11. & 49. 9. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 24. John 10. 11, 14. 1 Pet. 2. 25. & 5. 4.
|| Or *testament*.
f 2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 2. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 23. 1 Pet. 5. 10.
Or *doing*.
g See Rev. 1. 6. Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Ps. 72. 18, 19. & 115. 1.
h Ch. 2. 1. & 3. 1. & 4. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 20. & 6. 1. & 10. 1. Ps. 78. 1. i 1 Pet. 5. 12. Gal. 6. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 17.
k Acts 16. 1—3. & 17. 14. & 19. 22. & 20. 4. Rom. 16. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 17. Phil. 2. 16, 19. 1 Tim. 1. 2, 18. 2 Tim. 1. 5. Rev. 7. 17. Rom. xvi. 1 Cor. 16. 14—21. 2 Cor. 13. 12, 13. 1 Rom. 16. 20, 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18. Eph. 6. 24. Phil. 4. 23. Col. 4. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 28. 2 Thes. 3, 18. Rev. 22. 21.

Verses 18—25. The apostle here,

1. Recommends himself to their prayers. *Pray for us*, that we may be wise, vigilant, zealous, successful; and this will be your own benefit, for the more the people pray for us, the more profiting will they receive from us: *for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly*, to discharge our awful trust with fidelity, and so to behave as to confute the calumnies of our enemies, approving ourselves to God, and enjoying the testimony of a good conscience. *But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner:* and that, being delivered from my present confinement, you may again reap the fruit of my labours among you. *Note*, (1.) Every faithful minister, however maligned by wicked men, hath the testimony of God and a good conscience, and that is his rejoicing. (2.) Mercies are doubly sweet which come in answer to prayer.

2. He in return offers up his own prayers on their behalf. *Now the God of peace*, our reconciled God, *that* hath spoken peace to our consciences, and hath *brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep*, in token of his perfect satisfaction in his undertaking, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*, shed to procure our peace and pardon, and all the blessings of grace and glory for his redeemed, *make you perfect in every good work to do his will*, enabling you to go from strength to strength, till you arrive at the perfection of knowledge, holiness, and blessedness in glory everlasting, *working in you*, by his own almighty grace, *that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ*, by whom alone every spiritual gift descends upon us; *to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen!* whose is the work, and to whom the praise is to be ascribed. *Note*, (1.) Our peace with God is bought with the blood of the everlasting covenant, and he is thereby become our God for ever and ever. (2.) Every thing pleasing in us to God is his own work; left to ourselves, evil, and only evil continually, is the native produce of our fallen hearts. (3.) God must have all the glory of our salvation, from the beginning to the end; for we are nothing, and he is all in all.

3. He exhorts them very affectionately to attend to what he had said, and informs them of Timothy's release. *Now I beseech you, brethren*, dearly beloved, *suffer the word of exhortation;* take in good part what I have said, and receive the comfort it is intended to communicate to you; *for I have written a letter unto you in few words*, when the subject would have admitted of great enlargement. *Know ye, that our brother Timothy is set at liberty* from his bonds for Christ; *with whom, if he come* to me *shortly*, and it please the Lord that I regain my liberty, *I will see you.*

4. He concludes with his affectionate salutations. *Salute all them that have the rule over you*, your faithful ministers, *and all the saints* in Christ Jesus. *They of Italy salute you*, wishing you the best of blessings. *Grace be with you all. Amen!* May the sovereign and everlasting love of God in Christ, with all its transcendently blessed effects, be with you in time, and continue to influence and guide, till you arrive at his kingdom of glory in eternity.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

JAMES.

Introduction.

THE writer of this epistle was James the son of Alpheus, who was cousin-german to Christ, and one of the twelve apostles, Mat. x. 3. He is called a pillar, Gal. ii. 9. And this epistle of his cannot be disputed, without loosening a foundation-stone.

It is called a general epistle, because (as some think) not directed to any particular person or church; but such a one as we call a circular letter. Others think it is called general or catholic, to distinguish it from the epistles of Ignatius, Barnabas, Polycarp, and others, that were noted in the primitive times, but not generally received in the church, and on that account not canonical, as this is.

The time when this epistle was written is uncertain, probably about the year 60. The design of it is to reprove Christians for their great degeneracy, both in faith and manners; and to prevent the spreading of those libertine doctrines, which threatened the destruction of all practical godliness. It was also a special intention of the author of this epistle, to awaken the Jewish nation to a sense of the greatness and nearness of those judgments which were coming upon them; and to support all true Christians in the way of their duty, under those calamities and persecutions they might meet with. The truths laid down are very momentous and necessary to be maintained; and the rules for practice, as here stated, are such as ought to be observed in our times as well as in preceding ages.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

After the inscription and salutation, ver. 1. *Christians are taught how to carry it when under the cross,* ver. 2—12. *He warns them not to impute to God any temptations to sin, since he cannot be the author of sin, but is the author of all good,* ver. 13—18. *All passion, and rash anger, and vile affections ought to be suppressed. The word of God should be made our chief study: and what we hear and know of it, we must take care to practise, otherwise our religion will prove but a vain thing. To which is added, an account wherein pure religion consists,* ver. 19—27.

1. JAMES,[a] a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, [b] to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. 2. My brethren, [c] count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3. [d] Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4. [e] But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. 5. [f] If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6. [g] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth [h] is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8. [i] A double-minded man *is* unstable in all his ways. 9. Let the brother of low degree * rejoice [k] in that he is exalted: 10. [l] But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. 11. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the [m] grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. 12. [n] Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for, [n] when he is tried,

a Mat. 10. 3. & 13. 55. Acts 1. 3. & 15. 13. & 21. 18. Gal. 1. 19. & 2. 9, 12. Jude 1. Tit. 1. 1. Rom. 1. 1, 23.

b John 7. 35. Acts 2. 5—11. & 8. 1, 4. & 15. 13, 29. & 26. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 1. Deut. 32. 26. & 28. 64.

c Deut. 8. 2, 3. Mat. 5. 11, 12. Acts 5. 41. Rom. 5. 3. Heb. 10. 34. & 4. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 13. Phil. 1. 29. 1 Pet. 1. 6. & 4. 13, 16. 2 Pet. 2. 9. Luke 8. 13. & 22. 28.

d Rom. 5. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 7.

e Mat. 10. 22. & 5. 12, 48. 2 Pet. 1. 4—10. Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. Gal. 6. 9.

f 1 Kin. 3. 9, 11. Prov. 2. 3, 6. Jer. 29. 12, 13. n. 2. 20. Mat. 7. 7, 11. & 21. 22. Luke 11. 9. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 23. ch. 3. 17. & 5. 16. 1 John 3. 22. & 5. 14.

g Mark 11. 24. 1 Tim. 2. 8. Rom. 14. 23. Heb. 11. 6.

h Eph. 4. 14. Heb. 13. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 17. Jude 12, 13. Gen. 49. 4. Ps. 66. 18.

i Hos. 10. 2. & 7. 8, 11. 1 Kin. 18. 21. Ps. 12. 2. Is. 29. 13. 2 Kin. 17. 41.

* Or *glory.*

k Rom. 8. 17. Phil. 3. 14. 2 Thes. 1. 11. Heb. 3. 9. ch. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Rev. 1. 6. Acts 5. 41. 1 Pet. 4. 16. Phil. 1. 29.

l 1 Tim. 6. 17. with Job 14. 2. Is. 40. 6. 1 Cor. 7. 31. 1 Pet. 1. 24. 1 John 2. 17. ch. 4. 14. Ps. 103 15. & 37. 2, 10, 35, 36. & 73. 18. & 90. 5, 6. & 102. 12.

m Job 5. 17. Ps. 94. 12. Prov. 3. 11, 12. Heb. 12. 5. Rev. 3. 19. Ps. 119. 67, 71, 75. & 34. 19. Rom. 5. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. & 4. 19. ver. 2.

n Mat. 10. 22. & 19. 28, 29. Rom. 2. 7, 10. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 12. 11. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Luke 22. 28—30. Mat. 5. 10. & 25. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 7. & 3. 14. & 4. 12, 13. & 5. 4. Rev. 2. 10. & 3. 21. ch. 2. 5. Exod. 20. 6.

he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Verses 1—12. We have here,

1. The inscription of the epistle. *James*, who counts it his highest honour to subscribe himself *a servant of God, and,* or *even, of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad,* wherever dispersed throughout the world, sendeth *greeting,* wishing that all blessings may descend upon them, whether of this world or a better.

2. He exhorts them, under the persecutions and troubles which for Christ's sake they endured, to rejoice. *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations,* and by Divine Providence are permitted to be variously exercised by the malice of the wicked; esteem their reproaches your honour, and your losses your truest gain, *knowing this,* by divine testimony, and happy experience, *that the trying of your faith worketh patience;* your faith is proved genuine by this blessed effect, and every exercise of it tends to confirm your hearts in meek and humble resignation. *But let patience have her perfect work;* be the trials never so many, never so grievous, never so long continued, bear up under them with persevering steadfastness, *that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing;* arriving at the highest eminence of grace, and holding out till you reach the perfection of holiness in heaven. *Note,* (1.) Surrounded as we are with temptation, and beset with corruption, we have need of patience, that we faint not under our trials. (2.) Philosophy may enjoin submission, but Christianity only can teach us to rejoice under affliction. (3.) Faith is the root of all graces: as that is vigorous, they will be in exercise. (4.) The sharpest conflicts which we have to sustain prove in their issue, when rightly improved, the greatest blessings to our souls.

3. If we would act aright under our trials, we must be upon our knees often, to beg divine direction. *If any of you lack wisdom,* and know not how to act in any emergence, *let him ask of God, that giveth to all men,* who apply according to his word, *liberally, and upbraideth not;* never weary in granting, nor ever reproaching his supplicants with their unworthiness, or the multitude of the favours which he bestows; *and it shall be given him;* all the counsel and assistance which such a one needs shall be bestowed in answer to his prayer. *But let him ask in faith nothing wavering;* not distrusting the faithfulness, power, and grace of God in Christ, however difficult and embarrassed his circumstances may be: *for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed;* the sport of every gust of temptation, restless, impatient, fluctuating, unsettled in principle and practice: *for let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord,* whilst he dishonours him by his unbelief and fickleness. Such *a double-minded man,* divided between hope and fear, Christ and the world, halting between both, and willing to reconcile the incompatible services of God and Mammon, *is unstable in all his ways,* and having no fixed end in view, can never prosper in his soul, nor expect an answer to his prayer. *Note,* (1.) We have every encouragement to approach a throne of grace, and every possible assurance of finding relief there. How perverse and foolish then must we be, if we make not use of this invaluable privilege? (2.) They who come to God with their requests must honour him by their confidence in his power, truth, and love: unbelief shuts the blessing. (3.) When the heart is unstable and wavering, prayer cannot ascend with acceptance before God.

4. *Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted* to the infinite riches of grace, and the transcendent dignity of an heir of glory; *but the rich* brother *in that he is made low;* taught, amidst all his affluence and grandeur, true poverty of spirit, and lowliness of mind, and ready ever to part with any thing he possesses for the sake of Christ, *because* he knows the fleeting and perishing nature of all worldly wealth, and that *as a flower of the grass he shall pass away,* and leave it all behind. *For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.* Often in this world riches make themselves wings, and fly away as an eagle towards heaven, and death at farthest will prove their vanity.

5. A blessing is pronounced upon faithful perseverance. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation;* far from proving our hurt, our trials in their issue tend to advance our truest felicity: *for when he is tried,* as gold in the furnace, and comes forth brighter from the fires, *he shall receive the crown of life* and glory, *which the Lord,* the righteous Judge, *hath promised,* and will at the great day of his appearing assuredly give *to them that love him. Note,* (1.) We must be tried before we can be crowned. (2.) Where the love of God is in the heart, many waters cannot quench it, neither can any floods of persecution or temptation drown it. (3.) The reward of fidelity is still the gift of God, who freely promises, by his grace supports, and of his mercy bestows the crown of life.

13. [o] Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14. [p] But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15. [q] Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. 16. [r] Do not err, [s] my beloved brethren. 17. [t] Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from [u] the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 18. [x] Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.

[o] 1 Cor. 10. 13. Ps. 5. 4—6. Hab. 1. 12, 13. Jer. 44. 4.
[p] Rom. 7. 11. Gen. 6. 5. Mat. 15. 19. 2 Tim. 3. 13. Is. 44. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 11. Tit. 3. 3.
[q] Job 15. 35. Ps. 7. 14. Rom. 6. 21, 23. & 7. 5. Ezek. 18. 4. Gen. 2. 17. Ps. 9. 17.
[r] Gal. 6. 7. Col. 2. 4, 8.
[s] Ver. 19. ch. 2. 5. Heb. 13. 1.
[t] Prov. 2. 6. John 3. 27. Rom. 11. 36. 1 Cor. 4. 7.
[u] Gen. 1. 2, 3, 14 15. John 1. 9. 1 John 1. 5. Eph. 1. 17. Mal. 3. 6. Ps. 102. 26, 27. Num. 23. 19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Is. 14. 24, 27. & 46. 10. Rom. 11 29.
[x] John 1. 13. & 3. 5. 1 John 3. 9. & 5. 18. Gal. 4. 19. 1 Cor. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 3, 1. 23. Eph. 1. 4. Heb. 12. 23. Jer. 2. 3. Rev. 14. 4.

Verses 13—18. Concerning the cause of all the evil of sin which we fall into, when brought into temptation, we are taught,

1. That it is not to be imputed to God. *Let no man say, when he is tempted* to commit sin, in order to extricate himself from suffering, *I am tempted of God; for* this is abominably impious, since *God,* who is in his nature perfectly holy, *cannot* himself *be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man* to iniquity, whatever providential afflictions he may lay upon them. *Note,* We are very apt to cast our sins at God's door, and to blame him for putting us in such temptations; whereas our trials are designed to exercise our graces, not to draw out our corruption.

2. We have only ourselves to blame for all the evil which is in us. *But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed;* foolishly and perversely following the bait which Satan lays, beguiled by his enticements, and dragged by the cords of corrupt affections from the paths of truth and holiness. *Then when lust hath conceived* in thought and desire, *it bringeth forth sin,* gaining the consent of the will to the perpetration of iniquity; *and sin when it is finished,* in the act, and impenitently persisted in, *bringeth forth death* of body and soul for ever. *Do not err, my beloved brethren,* by entertaining false and injurious conceptions of the blessed God in this matter. *Note,* (1.) The root of all evil is in our fallen hearts. (2.) Sin enslaves us by flattery; it is the deceitfulness of unrighteousness which proves

our ruin: and false hope supports vain confidence till it appears that there is a lie in our right hand. (3.) If we do not destroy the power of sin, we may be assured it will finally destroy us.

3. All good which is in us proceeds wholly from God. *Every good gift, and every perfect gift*, every bounty of providence, and every spiritual endowment, which tends to the perfection of our nature in knowledge and holiness, *is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights*, the author of all light, natural, moral, spiritual, or eternal; *with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* The sun that gilds the firmament is obscured often by clouds, rises and sets, is eclipsed, and moves to and fro between the tropics, but God knows no change; nothing but good, without the shadow of evil, can proceed from him. *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*, not for any desert of ours, but of his sovereign pleasure, sending us his gospel, and making it effectual, through the power of the Spirit, to quicken our souls from the death of sin, and raise us to newness of life; *that*, as his adopted and regenerate sons, *we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures;* consecrated to him, and devoted to his immediate service. *Note*, (1.) All glorying must be excluded, if all good be of grace; for what then have we, which we have not received? (2.) Those who are born of God, owe it to his sovereign will and pleasure, not to any thing in themselves, they lying in the same corrupted mass of mankind as others, till separated by his grace. (3.) All who are begotten by the word of truth in the gospel, must from that moment consider themselves as consecrated to God's service, and bound to live to his glory.

19. [y] Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20. [z] For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. 21. Wherefore [a] lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and [b] receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls. 22. But [c] be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23. [d] For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25. [e] But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man [f] shall be blessed in his † deed. 26. [g] If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion *is* vain. 27. [h] Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, [i] To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* [k] to keep himself unspotted from the world.

y Ver. 16. Eccl. 5. 1, 2. & 7. 9. Ps. 4. 5. Prov. 10. 19. & 13. 3 & 17. 27. Mat. 5. 22. Gal. 5. 20—23. Eph. 4. 26, 31. Col. 3. 8, 15. 1 Tim. 2. 3, 8. Prov. 16. 32. Job 6. 25. with ver. 18, 21. ch. 3. 1, 13.

z Eccl. 7. 9, 10. with Ps. 11. 7. & 33. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 34. Eph. 4. 25. 2 Tim. 4. 8.

a Rom. 13. 12, 13. Col. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 11. Heb. 12. 1.

b Ps. 25. 9. 1 Thes. 1. 5. & 2. 13. Rom. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 21. & 15. 1—4. Eph. 1. 13. Acts 13. 26. Tit. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 9. John 6. 63, 68. 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2. & 2. 16. Heb. 4. 2.

c Mat. 7. 21, 23—27. Luke 6. 46. & 11. 28. Rom. 2. 3, 13. Col. 2. 4. 1 John 3. 7. 2 Tim. 3. 13.

d Luke 6. 47—49. ch. 2. 14, 26. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Tit. 1. 16.

e 2 Cor. 3. 6, 17, 18. John 13. 17. Rom. 8. 15. ch. 2. 12. Mat. 5. 19. Heb. 7. 19. & 9. 9.

f Luke 11. 28. John 13. 17. Ps. 19. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Rom. 2. 7, 8. Rev. 14. 13.

† Or *doing*.

Ps. 34. 13. & 39. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 3. 10. ch. 3. 6. Ps. 39. 1.

h Mat. 5. 8. John 15. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 5.

i Is. 1. 17. & 58. 6. Mat. 25. 36. 1 John 2. 15. & 3. 17. ch. 2. 14—16. Ps. 68. 5.

k John 17. 14. ch. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15, 16. Gal. 6. 14. Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 5. 7, 11. Col 3. 1, 2, 5. Prov. 23. 5. Ps. 17. 14. 1 John 5. 4, 5, 18.

Verses 19—27. The apostle here enjoins them,

1. To restrain their passions. *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear* God's word; *slow to speak*, not daring to censure the ways of providence and grace; *slow to wrath*, not disputing or quarrelling with the truths of God, or treating those who differ in points of controversy with contempt or anger. *for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;* the cause of God cannot be served by our selfish passions; nor with such a spirit may we hope to speak aright, or to convince others. *Note*, (1.) We should not be obstinate in our own opinions, but be willing to hear the objections of others. (2.) God's cause is not to be served by noise and anger, but by meekness and the word of truth. Whoever is in the right, they that are angry are sure to be in the wrong.

2. To put away every other vile and corrupt affection. *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness*, every defiling lust, and malicious temper; *and receive with meekness the ingrafted word*, that it may take fast hold of your affections, and be incorporated with your hearts; bowing before it with all humility, and receiving it on God's authority with faith and love; *which is able to save your souls*, when thus accompanied by the power of the Spirit. *Note*, Corrupt affections entertained, disincline and indispose the soul for receiving God's word, turn us away from hearing it, and prejudice us against the truth.

3. We must be not only hearers of the truth, but practise it also, else it can profit us nothing. *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*, by any fallacious conclusions, to the ruin of your souls. *For if any man be a hearer of the word* merely, resting upon that as of any avail, *and* is *not a doer* of what he hears, *he is like a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and* hastily passing by, *straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.* Such is the careless and cursory hearer of the word: he may discover whilst under the word, in a transient glance, something of the sinfulness and depravity of his nature, and his need of Christ; but it makes no deep or lasting impression; no sooner is he gone forth into the world, than he forgets his convictions, and continues utterly unchanged in temper and conduct. *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty*, attentively viewing himself in the glass of the gospel, wherein we are called from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; *and continueth therein*, careful to hold fast in principle, and to correspond in practice with the things therein revealed; *he not being a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work*, diligently to obey what God commands, *this man shall be blessed in his deed*, made happy in God's present service, and his end be everlasting life. *Note*, (1.) True religion consists not in profession merely, but in practice, without which Christianity is but an empty name. (2.) Many by hearing pick up some right notions in their heads, whose hearts are never savingly affected. (3.) The word of God is as the faithful mirror, that knows not to flatter: if we attentively view ourselves in that glass, we shall see the horrid deformity of our fallen spirits, and the foul spots of native corruption, and learn to entertain the lowliest thoughts of our vile selves, and wretched services, when we see them all polluted with sin. (4.) They are only blessed, who, having discovered their real state, are seriously led to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness; and in a Saviour's blood, and by the power of his grace, have their filthiness cleansed, and their nature renewed after his image, so as henceforth to walk and please God.

4. He marks the difference between true and false religion. *If any man among you seem to be religious*, making such a profession, *and* yet *bridleth not his tongue*, from railing, reproach, slander, profaneness, bitterness, or proud talkativeness to display his own talents, *this man's religion is vain;* however plausible he may appear, his heart is rotten; and whilst he would build up his own excellence by detracting from others' worth, his hypocrisy is visible through the mask. *Pure religion and undefiled, before God and the Father*, that religion which he approves, is dictated by his word, and aims at his glory, *is this, to visit the*

fatherless and widows in their affliction; stretching out the kind hand of charity to relieve, sympathizing with them, and affording them every assistance which they need and we can give; *and to keep himself unspotted from the world;* neither polluted by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, nor the pride of life; but preserved pure for God, amidst the overflowings of ungodliness. *Note,* (1.) We have to do with a heart-searching God, who requireth truth in the inward parts. (2.) Where the soul is right with God, there purity and charity will be manifest in every word and work. (3.) This world is full of defilement; it will need much watchfulness to keep our garments unspotted.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter the apostle condemns all partiality to the rich, and despising the poor, ver. 1—7. *He shows that the whole law is to be fulfilled, and that mercy should be followed as well as justice,* ver. 8—13. *He exposes the error and folly of those that boast of faith without works, telling us that this is but a dead faith, and such a faith as devils have, not the faith of Abraham, or of Rahab,* ver. 14. to the end.

1. MY brethren, have not [a] the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [b] *the Lord* of glory, with [c] respect of persons. 2. For if there come into your * assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3. [d] And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here † in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: 4. [e] Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? 5. Hearken, [f] my beloved brethren, [g] hath not God chosen the poor of this world [h] rich in faith, and heirs of ‡ the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? 6. But [i] ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment-seats? 7. [k] Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

a Rom. 1. 8. 1 Tim. 1. 5, 19. Tit. 1. 1. Jude 3.
b 1 Cor. 2. 8. Phil. 2. 9. Heb. 1. 3. Acts 7. 2. Ps. 24. 7—10. Tit. 2. 13.
c Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. & 16. 19. Prov. 24. 23. & 28. 21. Rom. 2. 11. Jude 16.
* Gr. *synagogue.*
d Acts 22. & 23. 4. Jude 16.
† Or *well*, or *seemly.*
e Ch. 3. 16. & 4. 11. Mat. 7. 1—5.
f Ch. 1. 16. ver. 1. ch. 3. 1.
g Mat. 5. 3. & 11. 25. Luke 6. 20. 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28. John 7. 48.
h Luke 12. 21. 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. Rev. 2. 9. Exod. 20. 6. Prov. 8. 17. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Mat. 5. 3. Ch. 1. 12.
‡ Or *that.*
i 1 Cor. 11. 22. ch. 5. 4, 6. Acts 13. 50.
k Ps. 73. 9, 11. Job 21. 14, 15. Rev. 13. 5, 6. with Phil. 2. 9.

Verses 1—7. The apostle here,

1. In general warns them against all undue respect of persons, because of their rank in life. *My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,* which centres in him as the object, and is derived from him as the author and finisher of it, *the Lord of glory, with respect of persons;* acting with undue partiality, unbecoming the disciples of Jesus, who is himself exalted to the highest glory, and hath prepared eternal mansions for his people without distinction of rich or poor, and therefore we should make none in the merits of any cause which comes before us. *Note,* A sight of Christ, and the glory provided for his people, stamps vanity on all the puny differences which here subsist between men.

2. He gives an instance of the great evil and injustice of all such partiality. *For if there come into your assembly,* for religious worship, or rather into your court, where causes civil or ecclesiastical are determining, *a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man,* who is a party in the cause to be tried, *in vile raiment,* making a wretched appearance; *and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and* with evident partiality on his side, *say unto him* with great deference, *Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor* with insolence and contempt, *Stand thou here* at a distance, *or sit here under my footstool,* in any despicable place, *are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?* disposed to favour the rich, and oppress the poor; and how criminal is such a behaviour? *Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?* Is not the gospel chiefly preached to them? and are they not for the most part called to the participation of all its glorious privileges of grace here, and glory hereafter? and if God hath so highly honoured them, we surely ought not to treat them with disdain or partiality. *But ye have despised the poor;* to your shame and guilt be it spoken. *Do not rich men,* to whom ye pay such undue deference, *oppress you, and draw you before judgment-seats,* with litigious suits, and exercise the most cruel tyranny over you? *Do not they,* who are high in the world, prove your bitterest persecutors, and *blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?* and then surely ye have no cause to caress them. *Note,* (1.) All partiality in judgment is in God's sight abominable. (2.) Among the poor, God's saints are chiefly to be found; and the riches of faith, and heirship of glory are infinitely more valuable than the wealth of both the Indies, or the widest earthly domains. (3.) They who love God, however poor, can never be despicable, since they are possessed of the highest dignity, as heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.

8. If ye fulfil the ‖ royal law according to the scripture, [m] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: 9. [n] But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. 10. [o] For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point,* he is guilty of all. 11. For ‖ [p] he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now, if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. 11. [q] So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by [r] the law of liberty. 13. [s] For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy * [t] rejoiceth against judgment.

l Ch. 1. 25. & 4. 12. Deut. 4. 2. & 12. 31. & 5. 32.
m Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Rom. 13. 8, 9. Gal. 5. 14. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 9.
n Ver. 1. Lev. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. & 16. 19. & 10. 17.
o Deut. 27. 26. Mat. 5. 19, 20. Gal. 3. 10. ver. 11.
‖ Or *that law which said.*
p Exod. 20. 13, 14. Deut. 5. 17, 18. Gal. 3. 10.
q Phil. 4. 8. John 13. 17. ch. 1. 25, 27. Mat. 5. 48. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. 2 Pet. 1. 4—8.
r Ver. 8. ch. 1. 25. Rom. 7. 12, 14. Ps. 119. 14, 16, 32, 45. & 116. 16.
s Gen. 42. 4. Judg. 1. 7. Job 22. 5—10. & 24. 9, 10. Mat. 6. 15. & 7. 1, 2. & 18. 30. & 25. 41, 42. Luke 16. 25. ch. 5. 4. 35. & 5. 7. 1 John 4. 17, 18.
* Or *glorieth.*
t Mat. 25.

Verses 8—13. The apostle,

1. Lays down the only proper rule of conduct. *If ye fulfil the royal law,* enacted by the King of kings, *according to the scripture,* where he hath revealed his will to us, and among the most eminent precepts stands this, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,* treating every man with that benevolence, kindness, and impartiality, which, if in their case, you would reasonably expect from them, *ye do well;* such a conduct is honourable, and becoming your profession; *but if ye have respect to persons,* showing more favour to the rich than to the poor, *ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors,* (Lev. xix. 15.) and one such wilful iniquity must issue in your eternal ruin. *For whosoever shall keep the whole law,* admitting that it were possible, *and yet* should *offend in one point, is guilty of all;* such an allowed transgression would be as evident a contempt of the authority of the lawgiver, as if he broke every precept; and, as the wages

of every sin is death, must expose the soul to the wrath of God. *For he that said, Do not commit adultery; said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law,* and liable to suffer its awful penalty.

2. He exhorts them to behave as becomes the gospel which they profess. *So speak ye, and so do,* in every word and work seek to approve yourselves to God, *as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty;* and who being brought under the gospel dispensation of light and grace, have the strongest obligations to show an impartial, genuine, universal, and cheerful obedience to the Redeemer's commands.

3. He supports his exhortation by a most awful consideration. *For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy,* but hath been partial to the rich, and oppressive to the poor; whilst, on the other hand, where by divine grace the heart hath been influenced to exercise fervent charity, there *mercy rejoiceth against judgment;* such a one shall not be afraid of appearing at God's bar, but through the great Redeemer shall have boldness, and find favour with God on that day. *Note,* A solemn sense upon our minds of an approaching judgment, will necessarily have the most powerful influence on our conduct.

14. What *doth it* profit, my brethren, [u] though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?
15. If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16. [x] And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?
17. [y] Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being † alone. 18. Yea a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith ‡ without thy works, and [z] I will shew thee my faith by my works. 19. [a] Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20. But wilt thou know, [b] O vain man, that [c] faith without works is dead? 21. Was not Abraham our father [d] justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22. || Seest thou [e] how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, [f] Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called [g] the Friend of God. 24. Ye see then how that [h] by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25. Likewise also, was not Rahab the harlot [i] justified by works, [k] when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? 26. For as the body without the * spirit is dead, so [l] faith without works is dead also.

u Ch. 1. 23. Mat. 7. 26. 1 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16. Is. 29. 13. & 58. 2—4. Acts 8. 13. John 12. 42.
x Job 31. 20. Luke 3. 11. & 6. 35. Gal. 6. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Heb. 13. 16. 1 John 3. 17, 18. Prov. 3. 27, 28. & 21. 13.
y Ver. 14, 19, 20, 26. 1 Cor. 13. 3. with Gal. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5.
† Gr. *by itself.*
‡ Some copies read *by thy works.*
z Gal. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Tit. 2. 11, 12. 2 Pet. 1. 4—8. Mat. 7. 17. ch. 3. 12, 13.
a Deut. 6. 4. Mat. 8. 29. Mark 1. 24. & 5. 7. Acts 16. 17. & 19. 15. Phil. 2. 10, 11. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude 6. Rev. 20. 10.
b Job 11. 12. Ps. 94. 8, 11. 1 Cor. 8. 2. Gal. 6. 3.
c Ver. 14, 17, 18, 24, 26. 2 Pet. 1. 4—8. Gal. 5. 6.
d Mat. 12. 37. ver. 18. with Gen. 22. 9, 12. Heb. 11. 17.
|| *Thou seest.*
e Ver. 14, 18, 20. Gal. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Mat. 7. 17. ch. 3. 13. with Heb. 11. 17, 19.
f Gen. 15. 9. Rom. 4. 3, 6, 10, 22, 23. Gal. 3. 6.
g 2 Chr. 20. 7. Is. 41. 8. Gen. 22. 16—18. John 15. 14, 15. Rom. 5. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Eph. 2. 13—19. Rev. 5. 9.
h Ver. 14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 26.
i Ver. 18. see 24.
k Josh. 2. 1—21. & 6. 23, 25. Heb. 11. 31.
* Or *breath.*
l See ver. 14, 18, 20, 22, 24. with Gal. 5. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Acts 8. 13. John 12. 42. Tit. 1. 16.

Verses 14—26. The apostle having spoken of the royal law, proceeds to show the influence of faith on all holy obedience; not, as many vainly suggest, in opposition to Paul, or to correct his doctrine: their word proceedeth from that one Spirit, who is truth itself, and cannot contradict his own revelation. Paul speaks of faith as justifying the sinner in the sight of God; James speaks of it as justifying us in the sight of men, by the effects which it produces in justified persons, for which Paul was equally an advocate. See Gal. v. 6. 1 Thes. i. 3. Tit. iii. 8.

1. True faith ever produces genuine fruit, and worketh by love, without which the profession of faith is useless. *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Saying* and *having* are very different things. What can a mere boasted name signify? *Can faith,* such a faith, *save him? If a brother or sister be naked, or destitute of daily food,* and the necessaries of life, *and one of you,* pretending to charity, *say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* such empty words have nothing of godlike charity in them, and are mere sounding brass, and tinkling cymbal. *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone,* an empty profession, without real life and power. *Yea a man may say,* to a vaunting hypocrite who pleads his faith, *Thou hast faith* in name, *and I have works; show me thy faith,* to which thou makest such vain pretensions, *without thy works,* of which if thou art destitute, how wilt thou prove its genuineness and reality? *and I will show thee my faith by my works,* which are the only indisputable evidences before men of its truth. Thou mayest perhaps say thou art no atheist; *thou believest that there is one God:* so far *thou doest well:* but what influence hath this faith upon thee? *the devils also believe and tremble,* and their faith is perhaps herein more operative than thine. *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?* and wants every proof of its soundness and sincerity. *Note,* (1.) To rehearse the articles of our creed, if we have not the truth of faith in our heart, will not advance us above the devils. (2.) All pretences to faith are but delusion, where men's works deny him in whom they profess to believe.

2. He supports what he advances with scripture evidence:

[1.] In the case of Abraham. *Was not Abraham our father justified by works,* and proved to be a true believer, *when he had offered his son Isaac upon the altar?* then his justification in the sight of God, which he had many years before obtained, (Rom. iv. 10, 11.) became evident, and the sincerity of his faith apparent to all men. *Seest thou how faith wrought with his works,* effectually engaging him to obey God's command; *and by works was faith made perfect;* manifested to be right in kind, and in the most vigorous exercise. *And the scripture was fulfilled,* and seen to be true, *which said,* many years before that event, (see Gen. xv. 6.) *Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see, then,* by this instance, *how that by works a man is justified,* and the reality of his character as a believer discovered, *and not by faith only,* which is such only in name, without producing any genuine fruit that demonstrates its living influence: or though it be real, can only appear to men by the effects which it produces.

[2.] In the case of Rahab. *Likewise, also, was not Rahab the harlot justified by works?* and did she not give a solid proof of the faith she possessed before the spies arrived at her house, that God would infallibly give the land of Canaan to Israel; *when,* in consequence thereof, great as the danger was to which she must expose herself, *she had received the messengers,* who came to spy out the country, *and had sent them out another way?*

From the whole, therefore, it appears evident, that nominal faith, or the mere profession of it, without any living fruits of grace produced from it, is mere hypocrisy. *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

Where that vital principle is implanted, its powerful energy will be seen: and we may assuredly conclude, where no fruits of grace appear in the temper and conversation, that the soul is as really dead in sin, as the body is dead when the spirit is departed, and nothing but the lifeless clay remains.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The apostle here reproves all arrogance of talk or behaviour. 1. *Those who profess religion, ought especially to govern their tongues,* ver. 1—12. 2. *True wisdom makes men meek, and avoiders of strife and envy; and hereby may easily be distinguished from a wisdom that is earthly and hypocritical,* ver. 13. to the end.

1 MY brethren, [a] be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater * condemnation. 2. [b] For in many things we offend all. [c] If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. 3. Behold, [d] we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. 4. Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and [e] *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. 5. Even so the tongue is a little member, [f] and boasteth great things. Behold how great † a matter a little fire kindleth! 6. [g] And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. 7. For every ‡ kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of || mankind: 8. But the tongue can no man tame: [h] *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9. [i] Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, [k] which are made after the similitude of God. 10. [l] Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. 11. Doth a fountain send forth at the same * place sweet *water* and bitter? 12. [m] Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

a Eccl. 7. 16. Mat. 7. 1, 2. & 23. 8, 10. Luke 6. 37, 38. Rom. 2. 1—3, 20, 21. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Prov. 16. 18. Luke 12. 47, 48. Mat. 11. 22, 24.

* Or *judgment.*

b 1 Kin. 8. 46. Prov. 20. 9. Eccl. 7. 20. 1 John 1. 8. Is. 64. 6.

c Ps. 34. 13. & 39. 1, 2. ch. 1. 26. Prov. 15. 1. & 25. 8. Mat. 12. 36, 37. 1 Pet. 3. 10.

d Ps. 32. 9. Is. 37. 29. Prov. 26. 3. Ps. 39. 1.

e Ps. 107. 25—27. Jon. 1. 4. Acts 27. 14, 15, 27.

f Ps. 10. 3. & 12. 3, 4. & 73. 8, 9. Job 21. 14, 15. Prov. 12. 18. & 15. 1, 2. Rev. 13. 5, 6.

† Or *wood.*

g Ch. 1. 26. Prov. 16. 27. & 15. 1. & 17. 4. Rom. 3. 13, 14. Ps. 5. 9. & 64. 3. & 140. 3. Mat. 15. 11, 18—20. Mark 7. 15, 20—23. ver. 2. Eccl. 7. 6.

‡ Gr. *nature.*

|| Gr. *nature of man.*

h See ver. 6. Ps. 55. 21. & 57. 4. & 59. 7. & 58. 4. & 64. 3, 4. & 140. 3, 4. Rom. 3. 13, 14. Eccl. 10. 11.

i Ps. 145. 21. Is. 29. 13.

k Gen. 1. 27. & 9. 6. 1 Cor. 11. 7.

l Gen. 49. 4. 1 Kin. 18. 21. Is. 48. 2, 4. Jer. 7. 4, 9, 10. Mic. 3. 11. Luke 6. 46. Ps. 50. 16. ver. 9.

* Or *hole.*

m Mat. 7. 16—18. & 12. 33. Luke 6. 44. Gal. 5. 19—23.

Verses 1—12. They who have the least pretensions to true godliness, are often the most talkative professors of it; to bridle the tongue is therefore among the proofs of living faith.

1. He warns them against a magisterial and censorial behaviour. *My brethren, be not many masters;* affect not to set up for teachers, (διδασκαλοι,) loving to hear yourselves talk, and liberally dealing out reproof and censure; *knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation,* by being thus forward to pronounce sentence on others, when we do not truly first judge ourselves: *for* if we were duly sensible of our own faults, we should be less rigid in our judgment of others; seeing *in many things we offend all;* and the more we know of our own hearts, the more shall we be obliged to own, that our censure can nowhere so justly light upon as ourselves: for we must be conscious to more evil within, than we can know of all the world beside.

2. He enjoins them to bridle their tongues. *If any man offend not in word,* and hath such a guard over himself, as to utter nothing rash, opprobrious, false, or sinful, *the same is a perfect man,* a finished Christian, far advanced in divine life; *and able also to bridle the whole body,* and restrain the irregular appetites and passions which war against the soul. *Behold we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body,* governing and directing thereby all their motions. *Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor* or pilot *listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things;* and according as it is under government, or lawless, is capable of doing much good, or much evil.

3. The evil of an unruly tongue is great. *Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!* what a conflagration blazes from a single spark! *And the tongue,* when let loose, *is a fire, a world of iniquity,* pouring forth the abominations of the heart: *so is the tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature,* in nations, churches, families; spreading sedition, treasons, heresies, blasphemies, divisions, enmity; in every age, in every station, its baleful influence appears: *and it is set on fire of hell;* infected with the old serpent's venom, promoting the interest of Satan's kingdom by profaneness, rage, lying, lewdness, slander, and all the train of evils which flow from thence; the punishment of which will be, that in hell it shall be tormented in flames unquenchable. *For every kind of beasts,* the most savage, *and of birds,* however untractable in their nature; yea, *and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind;* mastered by their power, and rendered gentle by human art: *but the tongue can no man tame;* nothing short of almighty power and grace can restrain or cure its malignity; *it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison;* deadly to the owner, and mortal as far as its influence extends. *Therewith bless we God, even the Father,* in prayer and praise speaking good of his name; and this is indeed the proper use of our tongues; but alas, how horrid is that perversion of speech, when *therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.* Yet such is the inconsistence of some professors of religion, that *out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing;* worship in one breath, and then reviling, slandering, and backbiting in the next. *My brethren, these things ought not so to be;* such behaviour is utterly incongruous, and contradictory to the faith of the gospel. *Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berries? either a vine figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh:* and as impossible is it for a heart, in which true grace is implanted, to be guilty habitually of such gross inconsistencies.

13. [n] Who *is* a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14. But if ye have ° bitter envying and strife in your hearts, [p] glory not, and lie not

n Ps. 107. 43. Hos 14. 9. Mat. 5. 16. Eph. 5. 8, 9, 15. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 15. & 4. 8. Rom. xii. Col. iii. 1 Thes. v. 1 Tim. 6. 11, 12. 2 Tim. 2. 22—25. Tit. 2. 11, 12. & 3. 8, 14. ch. 1. 21. & 2. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

o Rom. 13. 13. 2 Cor. 12. 20. Gal. 5. 15, 20, 21, 26. 7. 4, 9. ch. 1. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

p Rom. 2. 17—23. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Jer.

against the truth. 15. [q] This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, † sensual, devilish. 16. [r] For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* ‡ confusion and every evil work. 17. [s] But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, || without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18. [t] And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

q Jer. 4. 22. 1 Cor. 2. 7. Jude 19. Gal. 5. 19, 20. Phil. 3. 19. Rom. 8. 7.
† Or *natural.*
r Gal. 5. 15, 20, 21, 26. 1 Cor. 3. 3. ch. 4. 1.
‡ Gr. *tumult*, or *unquietness.*
s 1 Cor. 2. 6, 7. ch. 1. 5, 17. Mat. 5. 7, 8. Luke 6. 36. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Rom. 12. 9. 2 Cor. 6. 6. Gal. 5. 22. & 6. 9. 1 Thes. 4. 3, 4, 9. ch. 1. 19, 21, 26, 27. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 2. 1. ch. 2. 1—4.
|| Or *without wrangling.*
10. Mat. 5. 9.
t Prov. 11. 18. Is. 32. 17. Hos. 10. 12. 2 Cor. 9. 10. Phil. 1. 11. Heb. 12. 11.

Verses 13—18. Nothing is more desirable than true wisdom. The apostle here teaches us,

1. In what way that will show itself. *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge amongst you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom*, and prove his pretensions, not by arrogant boasts, but by his humility, meekness, holy conversation, and every good word and work, which may prove him a partaker of the grace of God in truth, and of the wisdom which maketh wise unto salvation.

2. A contrary conduct evidently demonstrates the folly and falsehood of pretended sophists. *But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts;* live under the power of a contentious and disputing spirit, evident in the bitter words which proceed out of your mouths: *glory not* in any fancied attainments, or zeal for orthodoxy; *and lie not against the truth*, by pretending to contend for that to which your temper proves you an utter stranger. *This wisdom descendeth not from above*, and never had God for its author: *but is earthly*, in its principle and end; *sensual*, the offspring of the fallen nature; and *devilish*, the image of Satan, and cultivated by him to advance the interests of his kingdom; *for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work*, that tends to ruin both our own souls, and all that are around us.

3. How different and lovely are the effects and influence of true wisdom! *But the wisdom that is from above*, coming down from the Father of lights, the gift of his grace to his peculiar people, *is first pure*, engaging us to all purity in doctrine, manners, temper, speech, and conduct; *then peaceable*, breathing nothing but love and quietness, averse to noisy broils and hot disputes, maintaining peace where it subsists, and seeking to heal every breach at which division hath entered. It is *gentle*, affable, courteous, engaging, ready to recede from its own in matters of property to avoid litigation; and mild, where in sentiment any difference subsists; never urging its own opinions with violence, willing patiently to hear the judgment of others: *easy to be entreated*, and ready to forgive every offence; not rigidly obstinate, but flexible to the advice of the wiser and more experienced: *full of mercy and good fruits;* benevolent, generous, liberal, willing to the utmost to help and relieve the distresses of the afflicted; *without partiality*, in judging or censuring others; *without hypocrisy*, speaking and acting always with simplicity and godly sincerity, without disguise or design. *And the fruit of righteousness*, even all the gracious produce above described, and eternal life hereafter, *is sown in peace of them that make peace;* they who are possessed of the peaceable wisdom above described, are the persons who go forth bearing the precious seed, and shall see in their own hearts, and under their ministry, the plenteous success of their labours both here and hereafter; *for the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.*

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In this chapter we are directed to consider, 1. *Some causes of contention besides those mentioned in the foregoing chapter, and to watch against them,* ver. 1—3. 2. *We are taught to abandon the friendship of this world, so as to submit and subject ourselves entirely to God,* ver. 4—10. 3. *All detraction and rash judgment of others is to be carefully avoided,* ver. 11, 12. 4. *We must preserve a constant regard, and pay the utmost deference to the disposal of divine providence,* ver. 13. to the end.

I. FROM [a] whence *come* wars and * fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your † lusts [b] that war in your members? 2. [c] Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye [d] ask not. 3. [e] Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your ‡ lusts. 4. [f] Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that [g] the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, [h] The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth || to envy? 6. But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, [i] God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. 7. [k] Submit yourselves therefore to God. [l] Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8. [m] Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. [n] Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double-minded. 9. [o] Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness. 10. [p] Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

a Gal. 5. 15, 20. Mal. 15, 19. John 8. 44. 1 Tim. 6. 4, 9, 10. ch. 1. 14. Jer. 17. 9. Rom. 8. 7. Gen. 6. 5. ch. 3. 14—18.
* Or *brawlings.*
† Or *pleasures.*
b Rom. 7. 23. Gal. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 2. 11.
c Hab. 2. 5. ch. 5. 3, 4, 6. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. Eccl. 1. 4, 8.
d Ch. 1. 5. Phil. 4. 6. Is. 43. 23.
e Job 27. 9. Ps. 18. 41. Prov. 1. 28. Is. 1. 15. Mic. 3. 4. Zech. 7. 13. Jer. 11. 14. & 14. 12. Ezek. 8. 11. Mat. 20. 22. Ps. 66. 18. with ch. 1. 5, 6. Rom. 8. 26. 1 John 2. 22. & 5. 14.
‡ Or *pleasures.*
f Ps 73. 27. Mat. 12. 39. & 16. 4.
g John 15. 19. & 17. 14. Rom. 8. 7. Gal. 1. 10. 1 John 2. 15, 16. Ps. 17. 14.
h Gen. 6. 5. & 8. 21. Num. 12. 29. Prov. 21. 10.
|| Or *enviously.*
i Job 22. 29. Prov. 3. 34. & 29. 23. Mat. 23. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Luke 1. 51, 52. & 14. 11. & 18. 14. Ps. 138. 6.
k Lam. 3. 27. 2 Chr. 30. 8. 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 17. 10. 11, Job. 1. 21.
l Eph. 4. 27. & 6. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. Rev. 12. 11.
m Is. 1. 18. & 55. 7. 2 Chr. 15. 2. Jer. 29. 12, 13. Hos. 6. 1, 2. Ps. 145. 18. & 34. 15, 17. & 73. 28. Zech. 1. 3. Mal. 3. 7.
n Ps. 26. 6. Is. 1. 15, 16. 1 Tim. 2. 8. Jer. 4. 14. Mat. 23. 26. ch. 1. 8, 21. 1 Kin. 18. 21. 1 John 3. 3.
o Ps. 119. 136. Mat. 5. 4 Jer. 13. 18. Ezek. 6. 9. & 7. 16. & 16. 63. ch. 5. 11.
p Job 22. 29. Luke 14. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 6. Ps. 10. 17, 18. Prov. 29. 23. Mat. 18. 4. Luke 18. 14.

Verses 1—10. Inordinate desire after earthly things is the usual ground of contention; against this therefore the apostle warns them.

1. He ascribes to this the wars and contentions which then were notorious among them. *From whence come wars and fightings among you?* which some suppose hath reference to the many seditions of the Jewish people against the Roman government; but rather refers to the contentions and lawsuits which were maintained by those who made profession of Christianity, and which were so unbecoming of the name they bore; *come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?* Yes: to the pride and covetousness of your hearts do these owe their origin, and tend to the ruin of religion and the peace of the church, provoking God to withdraw his Spirit from you. *Ye lust*, and long to gratify your criminal passions, *and have not* what you grasp after: *ye kill*, impatient to inherit, and wishing those dead whom you expect to succeed; *and desire to have,*

grasping covetously after abundance, *and cannot obtain;* disappointment blasts your pursuits: *ye fight and war*, contending fiercely for superiority, wealth, and victory: *yet ye have not*, your schemes and designs are defeated, *because ye ask not*, neglecting to seek counsel of God in your enterprises, and not desiring his direction and blessing. And if *ye ask, ye receive not, because ye ask amiss;* neither praying for right things, nor with a right view, but eager after earthly gain; *that ye may consume it upon your lusts*, not to employ it for God's glory and the good of mankind. *Note*, (1.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of Christianity than covetousness and fierce disputes. (2.) They who do not seek God's blessing, justly meet with disappointment in all their enterprises. (3.) To ask amiss is as bad as not to ask at all; nor may we expect an answer to those prayers which worldly-mindedness and selfishness, not God's glory, dictates.

2. He solemnly warns them against intimate connexion with the world that lieth in wickedness. *Ye adulterers and adulteresses*, whose affections are alienated from Christ, to whom ye were once in profession and baptism espoused; *know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?* all undue attachment to the pleasures, interests, honours of the world, and delight in the company of the worldly-minded, are utterly inconsistent with fidelity to God, and real friendship with him; nay, are virtually a profession of enmity against him. *Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world*, and at all events is resolved to keep fair with the men of the world, and to advance his interests here below, he *is*, and must be, *the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain*, in many passages describing the deadly corruption of the natural heart, *The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?* and, till renewed by grace, is ever with an evil eye regarding the superior prosperity and affluence of others, and grasping after the like abundance: this spirit must therefore be mortified, or we must be condemned with the world.

3. He directs them how to overcome the world. *But he*, even God, *giveth more grace* than the world can spread snares, and hath infinitely greater riches to bestow, than this poor earth can proffer. *Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud*, who make flesh their arm, and place their happiness and confidence in worldly things, vain of their own wisdom, riches, or attainments; these he fights against, blasts their designs, and ruins their confidences; *but he giveth grace unto the humble*, who, sensible of their own wretchedness, wants, and weakness, bow down at his feet for relief. *Submit yourselves therefore to God*, to his guidance and government, obedient to his will and word, resigned to his providence, and content with the portion which he allots you, whatever it be. *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you*, as a vanquished foe, unable to contend with those who have put on the whole armour of God, and appear resolved to fight manfully under Christ's banner. *Draw nigh to God*, in fervent prayer for help, *and he will draw nigh to you* with comfort, strength, and salvation in every time of need, and will make you more than conquerors.

4. He exhorts them to put away every evil thing, and with real penitence to return to God. *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners*, in the atoning blood of Jesus, that you may lift them up with acceptance before the throne of grace; *and purify your hearts, ye double-minded*, from pride, envy, covetousness, and hypocrisy; seeking that grace which can alone be effectual for this blessed purpose. *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep*, over the deep corruption and sinfulness of your hearts, and under a sense of your past grievous departures from God. *Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness*, ashamed and confounded at your past baseness, ingratitude, and unfaithfulness to a dying Redeemer. *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord*, acknowledging your vileness, and imploring his pardoning grace and help; *and he shall lift you up* with the arms of his love, and recover you from your backsliding, restore you to his favour, and bring you at last to his presence and glory. *Note*, (1.) They who would find acceptance with God, must approach him as cleansed with atoning blood, and without hypocrisy desiring indeed to be received into the arms of his mercy. (2.) They who have unfaithfully departed from God, need with shame, remorse, and mourning, return to him, humbling their souls before him, that he may lift them up. (3.) None perish who cast themselves at the footstool of divine mercy; it is God's delight to revive the spirit of the humble, and to heal the broken-hearted.

11. [q] Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: [r] but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. 12. [r] There is one lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy: [s] who art thou that judgest another? 13. [t] Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain; 14. Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow: [u] for what *is* your life? * It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15. For that ye *ought* to say, [x] If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. 16. [y] But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. 17. [z] Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

q Tit. 3. 2. Mat. 7. 1. Luke 6. 37. Rom. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 4. 5.
r Is. 33. 22. Mat. 10. 28.
s Mat. 7. 1, 2. Rom. 14. 4. & 2. 1.
t Prov. 27. 1. Luke 12. 18—20.
u Job 7. 7. Prov. 3. 28. & 27. 1. Is. 40. 6. 1 Cor. 7. 31. ch. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 24. 1 John 2. 17. Job 14. 1.
* Or *for it is.*
x Acts 18. 21. Rom. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 4. 19. & 16. 7. Phil. 2. 24. Heb. 6. 3.
y 1 Cor. 5. 2, 6. Is. 47. 7, 8, 10. Rev. 18. 7. Ps. 52. 1, 7.
z Luke 12. 47, 48. John 9. 41. & 15. 22. Rom. 1. 20, 21, 32. & 2. 17, 18, 23.

Verses 11—17. The former subject is here resumed, concerning the right government of the tongue; and we are,

1. Warned against all reviling and rash censure. *Speak not evil one of another, brethren;* inventing falsehoods, exposing the infirmities, publishing the failings, divulging the secrets, aggravating the offences, or detracting from the excellences of one another. *He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother*, in things which God hath left indifferent, *speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law;* arraigning the wisdom, equity, and goodness of the Lawgiver, as if he permitted what he ought to condemn; *but if thou* arrogantly *judge the law*, and pretend to decide what is fit to be enjoined, and what not, *thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy;* invested with supreme authority to enact laws, able to reward the faithful, and punish the disobedient. This is his prerogative; to invade it, is the highest insolence. *Who art thou*, a poor despicable, perishing worm, *that judgest another*, and darest thus to usurp the throne of God? *Note*, (1.) Where we cannot in conscience speak well of a person, it is our duty at least to be silent. (2.) Since God hath reserved that for himself to determine concerning men's everlasting state, and hath given us his law as our only rule of duty, it becomes us to make nothing sin, which he hath not declared to be evil; nor ought we to erect another court of judicature over our brethren, where men's opinions, not the word of God, is to decide.

2. He inculcates constant dependence upon divine providence. *Go to now, ye* who forget your entire dependence upon God's disposal of you, and *that say*, with self-sufficiency and disregard of him, *To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain*, as if your

time and the success of your enterprises, were in your own hands, and owing to your wisdom and diligence. *Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow*, or whether you shall ever live to the rising of another sun. *For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away;* so fleeting, so transitory, and every hour in jeopardy; the consideration of which should teach you to speak less confidently. *For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that;* adding this humble proviso, and owning your dependence for life, ability, or success in every enterprise, upon him, in whose hands your breath is, and whose are all your ways, Dan. v. 23. *But now ye rejoice in your boastings*, and talk as if you ceased to be creatures under the care and keeping of your great Creator. *All such rejoicing* in your own self-sufficiency *is evil*, most offensive to God, and bringing great guilt upon your souls. *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin;* highly aggravated, as he wilfully opposes the dictates of his own conscience, and treasures up thereby wrath against the day of wrath. *Note*, (1.) In all our ways we should consider God, and in every undertaking beg his blessing and commit ourselves to his guidance. (2.) Our lives are fleeting things: we have not a moment we can call our own. It is folly to be planning schemes for years to come, when we know not what a day may bring forth. (3.) When we know better, and do worse, we are most inexcusable, and shall lie down under peculiar condemnation.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 64.

In this chapter the apostle denounces the judgments of God upon those rich men that oppress the poor, ver. 1—6. *Hereupon all the faithful are exhorted to patience under their trials and sufferings*, ver. 7—11. *The sin of swearing is cautioned against*, ver. 12. *We are directed how to carry it, both under affliction, and in prosperity*, ver. 13. *Prayer for the sick, and anointing with oil are prescribed*, ver. 14, 15. *Christians are directed to acknowledge their faults one to another, and to pray one for another, and the efficacy of prayer is proved*, ver. 16—18. *And lastly; it is recommended to us to do what we can for the reducing of them that stray from the ways of truth.*

1. GO [a] to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*. 2. [b] Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3. [c] Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire: ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4. [d] Behold, the hire of the labourers, which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. 5. [e] Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in [f] a day of slaughter. 6. [g] Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you. 7. [h] * Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive [i] the early and latter rain. 8. [k] Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. 9. [l] Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: [m] behold, the Judge standeth before the door. 10. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, [n] for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11. Behold, [o] we count them happy which endure. [p] Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that [q] the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

a Prov. 10. 15. & 11. 28. Amos 6. 7. Luke 6. 24. ver. 6. ch. 2. 6. & 4. 9. Is. 22. 12, 13. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.

b Mat. 6. 19, 20. Job 13. 28. Is. 51. 8. Hos. 5. 12.

c Ps. 21. 9. Is. 30. 27. & 33. 11. Rom. 2. 5.

d Lev. 10. 13. Deut. 24. 14, 15. Job 34. 10, 11. Jer. 22. 13 Is. 5. 7. Exod. 22. 23. Hab. 2. 11. Mat. 3. 5.

e Job 21. 13. Ps. 73. 7. & 119. 69, 70. Eccl. 11. 9. Is. 5. 11, 12. & 22. 13. & 47. 8. Jer. 5. 8. Amos 6. 4—6. Luke 16. 19, 25. 1 Tim. 5. 6.

f Prov. 7. 14. & 17. 1. Is. 22. 13. Ezek. 39. 17.

g Ch. 11. 2. Mat. 23. 34, 37. John 16. 2. 1 Thes. 2. 15. Heb. 10. 32—34. & 11. 36, 37.

h Heb. 11. 36. & 12. 1. Rom. 5. 3, 4. & 8. 25. & 15. 4. Gal. 5. 5. & 6. 9 2 Thes. 1. 3. ver. 8.

* Or *be long patient*, or *suffer with long patience.*

i Deut. 11. 14. Jer. 5. 24. Hos. 6. 3. Joel 2. 23. Zech. 10. 1.

k Ver. 7. 1 Cor. 10. 11, 12. Phil. 4. 5. Heb. 10. 25—37. 1 Pet. 4. 7.

l Gr. *Groan*, or *grieve not.* Ch. 4. 11. Gal. 5. 14, 20, 26.

m Mat. 24. 33. 1 Cor. 10. 11. Phil. 4. 5. Rev. 22. 12, 20. & 16. 15.

n Mat. 15. 12. & 23. 34, 37. Heb. 11. 16, 35.

o Ch. 1. 12. Dan. 12. 12. Mat. 5. 10, 11. Heb. 10. 36. & 11. 25. Ps. 94. 12.

p Job 1. 21, 22. & 42. 10—12.

q Ps. 103. 13. Is. 63. 7, 9. Joel 2. 18. 2 Chr. 30. 9. Neh. 9. 17, 31. Ps. 103. 8. & 116. 5. & 117. 2. Jer. 3. 12. Joel 2. 13. Luke 6. 36. Num. 14. 18. Mic. 7. 18.

Verses 1—11. The apostle addresses himself,

1. To the rich oppressors. *Go to now, ye rich men*, whose portion is in this world only, *weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you*, both temporal and eternal. *Your riches are corrupted*, your hoarded stores putrefy; *and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered*, laid by in useless bags; *and the rust of them*, which by time they have contracted like iron, *shall be a witness against you*, to upbraid your covetousness and avarice; *and shall eat your flesh as it were fire*, bring down divine vengeance upon your guilty heads; *ye have heaped treasure together for the last day*, to provide for distant years to come, but which will be a prey to the destroyers of your city and nation, and serve only to be a treasure of wrath against the day of wrath. *Behold, the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth* against you for judgment, *and the cries of them which have reaped*, complaining of your injustice and oppression, *are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth*, who will avenge their quarrel. *Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth and been wanton:* indulging every brutish appetite, and making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof: *ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter;* faring sumptuously on the spoils of iniquity, fattening yourselves as beasts for the slaughter. *Ye have condemned and killed the just*, both the Lord himself, and many of his righteous servants; *and he doth not resist you;* meekly and patiently resigned to suffer. *Note*, (1.) Though wicked men prosper for a while, God keeps a strict account of all their ways and will bring them shortly into judgment for these things. (2.) Riches are to be used, not to be hoarded in bags, or barns, or wardrobes; then they prove a blessing, else they are only treasures of wrath. (3.) Though the poor may groan under the yoke of oppression without redress, there is one who heareth their appeal, and will vindicate their cause. (4.) Pleasure, luxury, and indulgence may for a while lull the sinner's soul asleep: but he will soon be awakened from his short-lived dream, and startled with the fearful looking-for of judgment, when too late he will begin to weep and howl in vain.

2. He addresses himself to the persecuted poor saints. (1.) *Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord*, who will come, and will not tarry, to espouse your cause, and rescue you from the power of your oppressors. *Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain*, expecting the desired harvest, when he hopes to reap the fruit of all his toils. *Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh*, when your redemption from every misery will be completed for ever. (2.) *Grudge not one against another, brethren;* groan not under your sufferings, through envy, fret-

fulness, or desire of revenge; *lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door;* and that consideration should powerfully plead with you to wait with patience, and refer yourselves entirely to his determination. (3.) *Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord,* faithfully discharging their commission, *for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience,* whose noble behaviour bravely imitate under the like persecutions. *Behold, we count them happy which endure* with meekness and resignation to the will of God, because their end must be peace and blessedness eternal. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job,* how eminently exemplary, *and have seen the end of the Lord,* the happy issue which God put to his troubles; or that perfect pattern of submission to the will of God which Jesus himself showed under all his sufferings: *that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy,* sympathizing with his suffering saints, and delivering them out of all their afflictions. We need not therefore be discouraged under any cross; the victory is secured, and the end of it shall be our eternal glory.

12. [r] But, above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. 13. [s] Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? [t] let him sing psalms. 14. Is any sick among you? let him call for the [u] elders of the church; and let them pray over him, [x] anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15. [y] And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and [z] if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. 16. [a] Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. [b] The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 17. Elias was a man [c] subject to like passions as we are, and [d] he prayed † earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18. And he [e] prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. 19. Brethren, [f] if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 20. Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way [g] shall save a soul from death, and shall [h] hide a multitude of sins.

r Mat. 5. 34—37. & 23. 16, 20. 2 Cor. 1. 17, 18. with Exod. 20. 7. Deut. 5. 11.
s Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15. Mat. 26, 38, 39.
t Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16, 17.
u 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 5. 1.
x Mark 6. 13. & 16. 18. with 1 Cor. 12. 28, 30.
y Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15. & 18. 6. & 34. 6. & 116. 8. John 5. 19. & 9. 2, 3. 1 Cor. 11. 30—32.
z Is. 33. 24. Mat. 9. 2. 1 John 5. 14. 1 Cor. 11. 36.
a Mat. 18. 15, 16. 1 Tim. 2. 1. Eph. 6. 18—20.
b Gen. 20. 17. & 32. 28. Exod. 15. 25. & 17. 11. & xxxii—xxxiv. Num. 11. 2. & 14. 20. 1 Kin. 13. 6. & 17. 21, 22. 2 Kin. 4. 4, 33. 2 Chr. 14. 11, 12. & 32. 20, 21. Ps. 34. 15. & 91. 9, 15. Prov. 15. 29. Hos. 12. 4. John 9. 31. 1 John 3. 22. Mat. 7. 7—11. & 21. 22. Is. 45. 11. Dan. 2. 18. Ps. 10. 17. & 107. 6, 13, 28. & 145. 18. Jer. 15. 1.
c Acts 14. 15. & 10. 26.
d 1 Kin. 17. 1. Luke 4. 25. Rev. 11. 6.
† Or *in his prayer.*
e 1 Kin. 18. 42—45.
f Mat. 18. 15, 16. Deut. 22. 1, 2. Lev. 19. 16, 17.
g Rom. 11. 14. 1 Cor. 9. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 16. Jude 23.
h Prov. 10. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 8. Ps. 32. 1.

Verses 12—20. The apostle here,

1. Warns them against all profane swearing. *But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay;* except in solemn cases, where an appeal to God is lawful, never exceed a simple affirmation or denial in your conversation, *lest you fall into condemnation,* and bring guilt upon your souls. *Note,* Swearing is of all sins most unprofitable; and whilst it offers the highest affront to God, affords not even momentary pleasure to the offender.

2. He teaches them how to behave in adversity and prosperity. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray,* humbly spreading his case before the Lord, that he may obtain the needful relief. *Is any merry?* in prosperous circumstances, and happy in his soul, *let him sing psalms,* and praise the gracious giver of every good gift.

3. *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord,* as the symbol of miraculous power with which the elders were invested; *and the prayer of faith shall save* and recover *the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins,* which may have brought such a visitation upon him, *they shall be forgiven him. Note,* The removal of sickness is a great mercy, but the pardon of sin still far greater, for which we are especially called upon to offer up our prayers.

4. *Confess your faults one to another,* and take shame to yourselves where you have offended your brother. Or if any thing lies particularly upon your conscience, communicate it to some pious friend, or able minister of Christ, *and pray one for another* over the sins you confess and bewail, *that they may be healed,* their guilt pardoned, and their power subdued.

5. He shows the great efficacy of prayer. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much;* a memorable example of which we have in the case of *Elias,* who *was a man subject to like passions as we are;* liable, as other poor corrupted creatures, to many sinful infirmities; *and he prayed earnestly, that it might not rain,* as a punishment upon Ahab and rebellious Israel, and a means to convince them of the greatness of their sin; *and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months;* so long the land of Israel was parched with drought, and a severe famine followed. *And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit;* and as the effect of Elijah's prayer was so wonderful, we may comfortably be assured, that when we like him pray with faith and fervency, our prayers too shall receive an answer of peace.

6. He concludes with warmly recommending a zeal for the conversion of men's souls. *Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth,* in principle or in practice backsliding from Christ, *and one convert him,* recovering him back again to the great Shepherd's fold; *let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death,* preventing that eternal ruin which must otherwise have ensued, *and shall hide a multitude of sins,* which, when the sinner is converted, shall be forgiven and blotted out, as well as be a means of preventing all the evil which must have ensued from his ill example and influence. *Note,* (1.) Nothing is so valuable an acquisition as an immortal soul: one such won to Christ is better than the riches of both the Indies. (2.) They who truly turn to God, will have a vail of eternal oblivion cast on their past offences: they shall be remembered no more. (3.) Death eternal, of body and soul, is the wages of sin; and unless we are saved from it now, we must be undone for ever.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL

OF

PETER.

Introduction.

TWO epistles we have enrolled in the sacred canon of the scripture, written by Peter, an eminent apostle of Jesus Christ. The design of this first epistle is, 1. To explain more fully the doctrines of Christianity to these newly converted Jews. 2. To direct and persuade them to a holy conversation, in the faithful discharge of all personal and relative duties, whereby they would secure their own peace, and effectually confute the slanders and reproaches of their enemies. 3. To prepare them for sufferings: This seems to be his principal intention; for he hath something to this purpose in every chapter, and doth by a great variety of arguments, encourage them to patience and perseverance in the faith, lest the persecution and sad calamities that were coming upon them should prevail with them to apostatize from Christ and the gospel.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 65.

In which the apostle describes the persons to whom he writes, and salutes them, ver. 1, 2. *Blessing God for their regeneration to a lively hope of eternal salvation,* ver. 3—5. *In the hopes of which salvation he shows they had great cause of rejoicing, though for a little while they were in heaviness and affliction for the trial of their faith, which would produce joy unspeakable and full of glory,* ver. 6—9. *This is that salvation which the ancient prophets foretold, and the angels desired to look into,* ver. 10—12. *He exhorteth them to sobriety and holiness, which he presseth from the consideration of the blood of Jesus, the invaluable price of man's redemption,* ver. 13—20. *And to brotherly love, from the consideration of their regeneration and the excellency of their spiritual state,* ver. 22—25.

1. [a] PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to [b] the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; 2. [c] Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, [d] through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and [e] sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: [f] Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

a Mat. 4. 18, 19. & 10. 2. & 14. 28—31. & 16. 16—23. & 17. 1—5. & 26. 33—40, 69—75. John xx, xxi. Acts i.—xii. 1 Cor. 9. 5. Gal. 1. 18. & 2. 7—14.
b Deut. 32. 26. & 28. 64. Is. 65. 9. Acts 2. 5—11. & 6. 9. & 8. 1, 4. Jam. 1. 1.
c Rom. 8. 28—30. 33. & 9. 23, 24. & 11. 5, 7. & 16. 13. 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28. Eph. 1. 4, 5.
d 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Thes. 1. 4, 5. Eph. 1. 4. Ezek. 36. 25, 27. Rom. 8. 13.
e Heb. 12. 24. Rev. 1. 5. Ezek. 36. 25. Zech. 13. 1. Exod. 24. 8.
f Dan. 4. 1. & 6. 25. Rom 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 3. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 13. 14. 2 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 2.

Verses 1, 2, This epistle opens with,

1. The writer's name and title; *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,* by his immediate appointment, and sent especially to the circumcision.

2. The persons to whom it is addressed: *To the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia;* dispersed by various providences through these provinces, and now called to the faith of Christ; *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,* who from eternity designed you for salvation, as the objects whom his sovereign grace was pleased to choose; *through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience,* this blessed author of all grace effectually calling and converting your souls to the love and practice of true holiness, *and* leading you to the *sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,* for pardon and peace with God, which only by the sacrifice of the Redeemer could be obtained. *Note,* (1.) God hath an elect, whom before worlds were, he determined to bring unto glory. (2.) These in the fulness of time are called to faith in a Redeemer, and, as miserable sinners, apply to the blood of sprinkling for the pardon of their iniquities. (3.) The Spirit of God sanctifies all those whom the Father chooses, and prepares them for the inheritance which is prepared for them.

3. The salutation: *Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied;* may the pardoning, sealing, sanctifying, comforting, preserving grace of our God be with you: and peace, the blessed effect thereof, be diffused in the church, your families, and in your own souls. *Note,* We need nothing more to make us happy, than grace and peace; and if we possess all the world beside, and lack these, we are poor and miserable.

3. [g] Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which [h] accord-

g Eph. 1. 3, 17. 1 Cor. 1. 3. John 20. 17. Rom. 8. 17.
h Eph. 1. 7, 8. & 2. 7, 8, 10. Tit. 3. 5. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Ps. 86. 5, 15.

ing to his * abundant mercy, [i] hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, [k] by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4. [l] To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven † for you, 5. [m] Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, [n] ready to be revealed in the last time. 6. Wherein [o] ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7. That [p] the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8. [q] Whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, [r] ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: 9. [s] Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.

* Gr. *much.*

† Or *for us.*

[i] John 3. 3, 5. & 1. 13. Jam. 1. 18. 1 John 5. 18. & 3. 1—3, 9. Rom. 8. 17.

[k] Rom. 8. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 20. Eph. 2. 6. 1 Thes. 4. 14. John 14. 19. Rom. 5. 10. Is. 26. 19. Phil. 3. 10.

[l] Acts 20. 32. & 26. 18. Eph. 1. 11, 14. Col. 1. 12. Rev. 21. 27. ch. 5. 4. Col. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 12. & 4. 8. Ps. 31. 19.

[m] John 17. 11, 12, 15. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Ps. 125. 1, 2. John 10. 28, 29. Deut. 33. 27. Jude 1. 1 John 5. 4. Eph. 3. 17. 2 Cor. 1. 24. ch. 5. 9.

[n] Ver. 13. Col. 3. 3, 4. 1 John 3. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Tit. 2. 13.

[o] Mat. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 17. & 6. 10. Rom. 5. 3. & 12. 12. Heb. 10. 32—34. Jam. 1. 2, 12. ch. 4. 13. & 5. 10.

[p] Jam. 1. 3, 12. ch. 4. 13. Is. 48. 10. Zech. 13. 9. Ps. 66. 10. Job 23. 10. Mat. 19. 27. & 25. 21, 34. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Rom. 2. 10. & 8. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 5. John 12. 26. Acts 3. 21. Tit. 2. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 8. with ver. 18. Prov. 17. 3. Jer. 9. 7.

[q] 1 John 4. 20. John 20. 29. Acts 3. 21. 2 Cor. 5. 7. Heb. 11. 1, 27.

[r] Is. 61. 10. Hab. 3. 17, 18. Rom. 5. 3, 4, 11. Phil. 1. 25. & 3. 3. & 4. 4. Ps. 43. 4. & 149. 2. Rom. 6. 22. Acts 15. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 12. with Heb. 11. 13. & 6. 12.

Verses 3—9. The apostle begins,

1. With thanksgiving for the inestimable blessings which through the gospel they enjoyed. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy,* without the least respect to our deserts, of his sovereign grace *hath begotten us again unto a lively hope,* when we had nothing in prospect before us but misery and despair, *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,* who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, that we, beholding in him the justice of God satisfied, might be emboldened to approach a reconciled God, and not only by his grace be quickened to newness of life here, but be entitled also *to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,* prepared by eternal love, and sure to every one of his redeemed, *who are kept* not by your own strength or sufficiency, *but the power of God,* engaged to protect you from all your enemies, and to preserve you, *through faith* of his operation in your hearts, *unto salvation* completed in glory, and which is *ready to be revealed in the last time,* when Jesus shall appear, and take his faithful followers to their eternal mansions of blessedness above. *Note,* (1.) We can never enough be thankful, when we remember the abundant mercy of our God and Father in Jesus Christ to our sinful souls. (2.) Every blessing flows from boundless and unmerited grace. (3.) The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the grand foundation of our hope; and it is a lively hope, animating the soul to patience, purity, and perseverance, and never faileth till it is swallowed up in fruition. (4.) Heaven, with all its glories, is our *inheritance;* our title is secured, nay, possession is taken by the forerunner for us entered. (5.) Whatever enemies, snares, dangers, temptations, beset us in our way to heaven, we shall be more than conquerors, if God be our keeper, and if he implants true faith in our hearts, which never faileth. (6.) The time is short ere all the promises shall receive their accomplishment, and our salvation be perfected for ever.

2. Having mentioned the salvation which was in prospect, he shows how that afforded comfort and support under all their trials. *Wherein ye greatly rejoice,* looking forward and upward to your glorious hope, *though now for a season, (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations,* which though you cannot but feel as men, you can rejoice under them as Christians: and they are sent, *that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried in the fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ,* when its purity, genuineness, and excellence, shall be acknowledged, brightened, and strengthened, by all the conflicts it hath sustained in the Saviour's service, *whom having not seen, ye love,* with fervent and supreme affection, faith realizing his amiableness to your souls; *in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory,* the lively foretaste of the eternal bliss; *receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls,* begun already, and to be completed shortly in glory. *Note,* (1.) A Christian hath cause of rejoicing in God and the hope set before him at all times, and even in the midst of grief and trouble this consolation the world cannot take away. (2.) Though our lot as Christians in this world is manifold temptations, and our nature cannot but groan under the burden, yet we must remember there is a *need be* for every pang we feel, and that will reconcile us to them. (3.) The bitterest afflictions to flesh and blood are often the most profitable medicines to our souls; and when we come to glory we shall see that these were indeed blessings in disguise. (4.) The trial of our faith tends to its confirmation and establishment; and, like gold, when tortured in the furnace, we come forth from our troubles the brighter, and leave the dross of corruption behind. (5.) Fidelity will be crowned when Jesus shall appear, and all our trials then will end in immortal honour and eternal glory. (6.) Jesus is precious to the believing soul; and the realizing views of him, which faith presents, bring down the foretastes of heavenly blessedness.

10. [t] Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: 11. Searching what, or what manner of time [u] the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, [x] when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12. Unto whom it was revealed, [y] that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you [z] with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; [a] which things the angels desire to look into.

[t] Mat. 13. 17. Luke 10. 24. Gen. 49. 10. Dan. 2. 44. & 9. 24. Hag. 2. 7. Zech. 6. 12, 13 & 9. 9. Mal. 3. 1. & 4. 2. Mat. 11. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 19, 21.

[u] 1 Cor. 3. 16. Gal. 4. 6. Rom. 8. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 21.

[x] Ps. xxi, xxii, lxix, lxxii, cx, cxviii. Is. liii. & 52. 13—15. & liv —lxvi. Dan. 9. 24, 26. Luke 24. 26, 27, 44. Acts 26. 22, 23.

[y] Dan. 9. 24. & 12. 9, 13. Heb. 11. 13, 39.

[z] Acts 2. 4, 33. Joel 2. 28. Is. 44. 3—5. Prov. 1. 23.

[a] Exod. 25. 20. Eph. 3. 10. Luke 15. 10. Dan. 8. 13. & 12. 5, 6.

Verses 10—12. The salvation of the gospel, on which their faith fixed, was that which the blessed prophets had foretold, and after which they earnestly inquired. *Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently,* into the meaning of their own prophecies which by inspiration they delivered, digging deep into the golden mine, that themselves might share the treasure; *who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you* through the incarnate Saviour: *searching* with eagerness, *what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ* for the sins of his people, *and the glory that should follow,* when, having offered his one atonement, he should ascend to the throne of the Majesty on high. They wished to know the exact time, and what would be the state of the world, when this great event

should come to pass. *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us, did they minister;* the events predicted were not to be fulfilled in their days, but ours; and they foretold *the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,* who by his miraculous operations, and by the communication of his gifts and graces, bears his sacred testimony to the truth of our report: *which things the angels desire to look into,* bending forward as the cherubims over the mercy-seat, with wonder and delight contemplating the glories of gospel-grace, admiring and adoring. *Note,* (1.) The mysteries of gospel-grace were not only the subject which engaged the holy prophets' researches, but they afford matter for angelic contemplation, wonder, and praise. (2.) The word of God must be searched, and diligently examined: there are treasures hid in it which will abundantly repay our pains. (3.) The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven still continues to make the gospel effectual to our salvation, and on his mighty operation all the success of our preaching depends.

13. Wherefore [b] gird up the loins of your mind, [c] be sober, and hope ‡ to the end, for the [d] grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14. [e] As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 15. But as he which [f] hath called you is holy, [g] so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16. Because it is written, [h] Be ye holy; for I am holy. 17. And if ye [i] call on the Father, [k] who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, [l] pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear: 18. Forasmuch as ye know that [m] ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your [n] vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; 19. [o] But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20. [p] Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but [q] was manifested in these last times for you, 21. Who [r] by him do believe in God, that [s] raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

b Exod. 12. 11. 1 Kin. 18. 46. Luke 12. 35. & 17. 8. Eph. 6. 14.
c Luke 21. 34. Rom. 13. 13. 1 Thes. 5. 6. 2 Tim. 4. 5. Heb. 3. 6, 14. & 10. 35. Tit. 2. 12, 13.
‡ Gr. *perfectly.*
d Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 4—8. Rom. 5. 21. ch. 3 7. ver. 7. 2 Thes. 1. 7. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28.
e Eph. 4. 1, 18 22. & 2. 2. Rom. 12. 2. ch. 4. 2, 3. Tit. 3. 3. Acts 17. 30.
f 1 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. ch. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 3.
g 2 Pet. 3. 11, 14, 17, 18. & 1. 4—10. 1 Thes. 5. 23. & 4. 7. Mat. 3. 15. & 5. 48. Eph. 5. 1, 2. Phil. 1. 27. & 2. 15. Luke 1. 74, 75. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Tit. 2. 12. & 3. 8, 14. Heb. 12. 14, 28. & 13. 9.
h Lev. 11. 44. & 19. 2. & 20. 7. Mat. 5. 48.
i Mat. 6. 9. & 7. 7—11. Eph. 1. 17. & 3. 14.
k Deut. 10. 17. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Job 34. 19. Mat. 3. 9. Acts 10. 34, 35. Rom. 2. 10, 11. Gal. 2. 6. Eph. 6. 9. Col. 3. 11, 25. Gal. 2. 6. & 3. 28.
l 1 Chr. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. John 15. 19. & 17. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 6. & 7. 1. Phil. 2. 12. Heb. 11. 13, 14. & 12. 28. ch. 2. 11.
m 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. & 7. 23. ver. 7. Ps. 49. 7.
n Rom. 1. 22. Ezek. 20. 18. Acts 7. 51, 52. Ps. 94. 13, 14.
o Is. 52. 14, 15. & 53. 4—12. Dan. 9. 24. Zech. 13. 7. Mat. 20. 28. John 1. 29, 36. Eph. 1. 7. & 5. 2. Col. 1. 14, 20. Acts 20. 28. Heb. 9. 12, 14. & 10. 12, 14. 1 John 1. 7. & 2. 1, 2. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 5, 9. ch. 2. 22, 24 & 3. 18. Heb. 4. 15. & 7. 26. 1 Cor. 5 7. Exod. 12. 5.
p Prov. 8. 23 Mic. 5. 2. Eph. 1. 4. Rom. 3. 25. Rev. 13. 8. Acts 10. 42. Is. 42. 1 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 1. 2.
q Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. Heb. 1. 1, 2 & 9. 26. Rom 16. 25, 26. Col. 1. 26, 27. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 1 John 3. 5, 8. & 4. 9, 10. Rom. 4. 24. Mat. 10. 6. & 15. 24. Acts 3. 25, 26. Eph. 3. 3, 10, 11.
r Phil. 1. 29. Luke 22. 32. John 14 6. Heb. 12. 2. & 7. 25. Rom 10. 9, 10. Acts 3. 15. 16.
s Rom. 4. 24, 25. Mat. 28. 18. John 1. 14. & 8. 54. & 12. 16. & 13. 31. & 16. 14. & 17. 5, 24. Acts 2. 24, 33, 36 & 3. 15, 26. & 4. 10. & 5. 3. & 10. 40. & 13. 30 & 17. 31. Rom. 6. 4. & 8. 11, 34. 1 Cor. 6. 14. & 15. 15, 20. 2 Cor. 4. 14. Gal. 1. 1. Eph. 1. 20. Phil. 2. 9—11. Col. 2. 12. 1 Thes. 1. 10. & 4. 14. 1 Tim. 3. 16. 2 Tim. 2. 8. Heb. 1. 3. & 2. 9. & 5. 9. & 7. 25. & 9. 24. & 10. 19. & 13. 20. Jam. 2. 1. ch. 3. 22. Rev. 5. 9—13.

Verses 13—21. From the foregoing consideration the apostle,

1. Enforces the practice of true godliness in sundry particulars. *Wherefore,* (1.) *Gird up the loins of your mind,* be disentangled from every thing in the world which would retard you in your heavenly course, and be strong in the Lord and the power of his might to fight the good fight of faith. (2.) *Be sober,* temperately using every creature-comfort, and with holy vigilance preparing for the Master's return. *And,* (3.) *Hope unto the end,* never dismayed nor discouraged by the temptations to which you may be exposed, but patiently persevering, and confidently waiting *for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ,* when the work of grace shall be completed, and an eternity of glory succeed; the hope of which, as an anchor of the soul, will enable us to ride out every storm. (4.) Behave *as obedient children* to your heavenly Father, dutiful in observing his commands, and submitting to his disposal and correction; *not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance,* not conformed to the corrupt manners, maxims, and pursuits of a world which lieth in wickedness, among whom we all had our conversation in time past, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and knowing not the dreadful ruin which hung over our heads. To these ways let us never return; *but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation,* proposing to yourselves nothing short of his complete and perfect image, and in every state, condition, and circumstance, desiring that your hearts, lips, and lives, may exactly correspond with his holy will: *because it is written* in that word which is our eternal rule of duty, *Be ye holy, for I am holy.* (5.) Maintain a holy jealousy over yourselves. *And if,* as becometh your profession, *ye call* in ceaseless prayer *on the Father* for that grace which alone can enable you for all that he commands, *who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work,* and thereby proves whether they are obedient children or not; *pass the time of your sojourning here in fear,* in filial fear of offending God, and holy jealousy over your own hearts, knowing that your present state is your pilgrimage, and that, if you are faithful, you shall shortly reach the happy rest, where all your fears will end, and your felicity be completed for ever.

2. To encourage and engage them to the practice which he recommends, he suggests the most powerful motives. *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation,* from the foolish traditions and corrupt manners and ways *received by tradition from your fathers;* to redeem you from which, all the perishing treasures of this world would be a price too despicable to be mentioned: *but* an infinitely greater hath been paid for you; ye are redeemed *with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot,* who offered himself as your ransom to God, pure from all defilement, a lamb fit to bleed on God's altar, and of such transcendent dignity in his person as to add infinite value to his sacrifice. *Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world,* by an eternal decree, to be the one great propitiation; *but was manifested in these last times for you,* becoming incarnate, and making the brightest displays of the glory of his grace, *who by him do believe in God* as your reconciled and covenant God, *that raised him from the dead,* in testimony of his acceptance of the sacrifice which he had offered for our justification, *and gave him glory,* exalting him to the mediatorial throne; *that your faith and hope might be in God,* assured, through the Divine Messiah, of present favour and acceptance with him, and expecting, according to his promise, all the blessings of grace here and of glory hereafter.

22. Seeing ye have [t] purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto [u] unfeigned love of the brethren; *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23. [x] Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth

t Acts 15. 9. John 15 3. & 17. 17. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 2 Cor. 6. 7. 1 John 3. 3.
u Rom. 12. 9, 10. Eph. 4. 3. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 7. 1 John 3. 18. Heb. 13. 1. ch. 2. 17.
x John 1. 13. & 3. 3, 5. Tit. 3. 5. 1 John 3. 9. & 5. 18. Jam. 1. 18. Heb. 4. 12. John 6. 63.

and abideth for ever. 24. || For [y] all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: 25. [z] But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. [a] And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

|| Or *for that.*

y Ps. 39. 5. & 102. 11. & 103. 15. Is. 40. 6. & 51. 12. Jam. 1. 10. & 4. 14. 1 John 2. 17 1 Cor. 7. 31.

z Ver. 23. Is. 40. 8. Ps. 119. 89. Mat. 5. 18. Jam. 1. 21. Luke 16. 17.

a Acts 20. 27. 1 Cor. 2. 2. & 15. 1—4. Eph. 1. 13. Gal. 1. 8, 9. Rom. 1. 16.

Verses 22—25. The apostle proceeds,

1. To inculcate the exercise of fervent charity. *Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit,* and have so graciously begun to advance in all holiness of heart and temper, being led by him especially *unto unfeigned love of the brethren; see* therefore *that,* under his blessed influences and according to the gospel word, *ye love one another with a pure heart fervently,* with still increasing and more enlarged affection: *being born again,* and made partakers of a divine nature, *not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever,* unchangeably the same, and communicating a dignity and honour to which the highest human pedigree cannot pretend. *Note,* (1.) The gospel truth, through the Spirit embraced and obeyed, is the effectual means of purifying the soul. (2.) Unfeigned love of the brethren is among the surest evidences of the Spirit's work upon the heart. (3.) They who have made the highest advancements in the divine life have need be exhorted to increase more and more. (4.) If we have received the ingrafted word into our souls, we have a divine principle which shall live and abide for ever, till it is perfected in glory.

2. He sets forth the vanity of man. *All flesh is grass,* weak and perishing: *and all the glory of man,* his pomp, wealth, affluence, wisdom, and endowments of every kind, are *as the flower of grass,* that soon fades and decays, *the grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away;* one stroke of sickness, or accident, or the ravages of age, make all human greatness droop, and death carries it to the grave: *but the word of the Lord endureth for ever,* and they who are begotten by it have in their hearts eternal life begun. *And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you,* whose effects are so everlastingly blessed. *Note,* A deep sense of the vanity of man, and of his present state of corruption, will serve greatly to draw off our minds from the trifles of time, to look to the abiding glories of eternity which in the gospel are revealed unto us.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The general exhortation to holiness is continued and enforced by several reasons taken from the foundation on which Christians are built, Jesus Christ, and from their spiritual blessings and privileges in him, ver. 1—12. *Particular directions are given how subjects ought to obey the magistrates, and servants their masters, patiently suffering in well doing, in imitation of Christ.*

1. WHEREFORE, [a] [b] laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2. [c] As new born babes, desire, [d] the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3. If so be ye have [e] tasted that the Lord *is* gracious. 4. To whom coming, *as unto* [f] a living [g] stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God *and* precious, 5. Ye also, [h] as lively stones, * are built up a spiritual house, [i] an holy priesthood, to offer up [k] spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, [l] Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7. [m] Unto you therefore which believe *he is* † precious: but unto them which be disobedient, [n] the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8. And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient; [o] whereunto also they were appointed. 9. But [p] ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, ‡ a peculiar people; [q] that ye should shew forth the || praises of him [r] who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 10. [s] Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

a Ch. 1. 2—4, 19, 23.

b Eph. 4. 22, 25, 31. Col. 3. 5, 8. Heb. 12. 1. Jam. 1. 21. & 3. 14. & 5. 9. Mat. 6. 2. & 23. 28. 1 John 3. 18. Rom. 1. 29—31. & 12. 9. Tit. 3. 2, 3. ch. 3. 9. Jam. 4. 11. Gal. 5. 15, 20, 21, 26.

c Mat. 18. 3. Mark 10. 14. Rom. 6. 4, 6. 1 Cor. 14. 20.

d 2 Cor. 2. 17. Eph. 1. 13. Ps. 19. 7—10. & cxix. Job 23. 12. Jer. 15. 16. 1 Thes. 2. 13. with Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. 2 Pet. 3. 18.

e Ps. 84. 8. & 9. 10. & 119. 68. Heb. 6. 4, 5. Zech. 9. 17. 1 John 5. 26. & 6. 57. & 11. 25. & 14. 16, 19. Col. 3. 4.

f Eph. 2. 20, 22. 1 Cor. 3. 11. Ps. 118. 22. Mat. 21. 42. & 16. 18. Acts 4. 11, 12. Dan. 2. 34, 44. Is. 28. 16. ch. 1. 20.

h Eph. 2. 5, 6, 10, 20—22. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Mat. 16. 18. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 19. Rev. 3. 12.

* Or *be ye built.*

i Ver. 9. Is. 61. 6. & 66. 20, 21. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 20. 6. Heb. 10. 22.

k Rom. 12. 1. Is. 66. 20. Phil. 2. 17. & 4. 18. Ps. 141. 2. Hos. 14. 2. Mal. 1. 11. Heb. 13. 15, 16. & 12. 28. ch. 4. 11. Phil. 4. 18. Eph. 1. 6.

l Is. 28. 16. Rom. 9. 33. & 10. 11. Eph. 2. 20. Luke 2. 34. see ver. 4.

m John 20. 16, 28. & 6. 69. & 4. 29, 42. Phil. 3. 7—10. Song 5. 9—16. Hag. 2. 7.

† Or *an honour.*

n Ps. 118. 22. Mat 21. 42. Luke 2. 34. Acts 4. 11, 12. Rom. 9. 33. Is. 8. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 23. 2 Cor. 2. 16. Rom. 11. 7—11.

o Exod. 9. 16. 1 Thes. 5. 9. Jude 4. Rom. 9. 13, 22. & 11. 7.

p Exod. 13. 2, 8, 21. & 19. 5. & 23. 22. Deut. 4. 20. & 7. 6. & 10. 15. & 14. 2. & 26. 18. & 32. 9. Ps. 135. 4. Is. 41. 8. & 43. 3, 21. & 60. 1, 2. & 61. 6. & 63. 18, 19. & 66. 20, 21. & 62. 12. Jer. 10. 16. Mal. 3. 17. John 17. 9. Acts 20. 28. & 26. 18, 23. Eph. 1. 4, 14. & 5. 8. 25. 1 Thes. 1. 4. Tit. 2. 14. Heb. 13. 12. ch. 1. 1—5, 23. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 20. 6. See ver. 5.

‡ Or *a purchased people.*

q Is. 43. 21. & 62. 3. Zech. 6. 11. Mat. 5. 15, 16. Eph. 1. 6, 12—14. & 3. 21. ch. 4. 11. Ps. xcv—c, ciii—cviii, cxv, cxviii, cxxxv, cxxxvi, cxlv—cl.

|| Or *virtues.*

r Rom. 9. 21, 23, 24. Gal. 1. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Phil. 3. 14. Heb. 3. 1. Acts 26. 18. Eph. 5. 8, 11. Col. 1. 13. Ps. 119. 18. Is. 60. 1, 2. 1 John 2. 8. & 5. 20.

s Hos. 1. 10. & 2. 23. Rom. 9. 25. Hos. 2. 1. Jer. 31. 20.

Verses 1—10. The apostle proceeds,

1. To exhort the Hebrews to show a temper suitable to their profession. *Wherefore laying aside all malice,* every thing spiteful, envious, and revengeful; *and all guile,* every thing deceitful in word or behaviour; *and hypocrisies,* whether in the profession of religion towards God, or in pretences of respect and friendship towards men; *and envies,* repining at the prosperity of others; *and all evil speakings,* which proceed from these vile tempers in the heart: in opposition to all which, *as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word,* the pure unadulterated gospel, *that ye may grow thereby* in every divine and holy temper, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: *if so be,* or *forasmuch as, ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious,* experimentally proving the richness of his mercy, and having begun to enjoy a sweet savour of that grace, which, though but a taste compared with what it shall be, is yet so precious and reviving. *Note,* (1.) All malice, guile, hypocrisy, and slander, are direct contradictions to the Christian character. (2.) By nature all evil cleaves to us closer than our garments; but it must be put off as filthy rags, if we mean with comfort to appear in the presence of God. (3.) The word of God supplies milk for babes, and strong meat for men; and they who feel an appetite for it verily shall be fed and nourished up in the words of sound doctrine. (4.) The grace which is in Jesus Christ is rich and free to the poorest and most miserable sinner, and to those who have tasted of it he will indeed be precious.

2. He describeth that blessed Jesus, the true foundation of the sinner's hope, of whose grace they had been made partakers. *To whom coming* by faith, *as unto a living stone,* even Christ, who is the only foundation, everlasting, durable, and never to be shaken; *a living stone,* the head of vital influence, and communicating to all his members life and stability; *disallowed indeed*

of men, rejected and slighted by the Jewish rulers, and all unbelievers, who will not come to him that they may have life: *but chosen of God and precious*, appointed by him from eternity to bear the massy structure of his church, as most excellent in himself, and most able to exalt the glory of God, and to secure the salvation of his redeemed. Coming therefore to him, *ye also, as lively stones*, animated by virtue of union with him, *are built up a spiritual house*, in which God the Spirit is pleased to take up his blessed abode; *a holy priesthood*, consecrated for God's immediate service, and devoted to his glory; not *to offer up* the blood of beasts, but the better *spiritual sacrifices* of your bodies, souls, and spirits, in prayer and praise, which are *acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*. *Note*, (1.) Every child of God is the temple of the Deity, where his Spirit abidingly dwells. (2.) They who reject Christ as their foundation, must build on the sand, and be swept away by the deluge of wrath. (3.) All Christians are consecrated as priests to God, and must approve their peculiar relation to him by their unreserved devotedness to his service.

3. He supports what he had advanced by the testimony of Isaiah. *Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold*, with wonder, love, and praise, behold, *I lay in Sion*, in my holy mountain, *a chief corner stone*, the great Messiah, on whom all his people's hopes are built; *elect*, and chosen for this blessed purpose, to unite Jews and Gentiles, and the whole body of the redeemed, in one glorious church; *precious* in my sight, and who should be above all things dear to those who are grounded on him as their foundation: *and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded*, neither here nor hereafter; having confidence, through a Redeemer's blood and righteousness, to approach a throne of grace, and boldness to appear before a throne of glory. *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious;* Jesus is inexpressibly amiable in your eyes, you count your relation to him the highest honour, and firmly trust your everlasting hopes upon him: *but unto them which be disobedient* and unbelieving, as another scripture observes, *the stone which the builders*, the Jewish priests and rulers, *disallowed* and rejected, *the same*, as was foretold, *is made the head of the corner*, exalted to the greatest honour, and setting up his gospel church in defiance of their enmity and opposition. *And*, as Isaiah in another place prophesies, he is become *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word*, and through pride and prejudice, unable to bear the humbling manner in which the Messiah appeared, and the doctrines which he taught, *being disobedient* and infidel, having rejected him as the promised hope of Israel, and split upon this rock; *whereunto also they were* appointed, according to God's sovereignty and righteous judgment. *Note*, (1.) Faith in Jesus will prevent all shame; the hope founded upon him shall never fail us, either in time or eternity. (2.) Christ is indeed precious to the believer, so precious, that, compared with the excellency of the knowledge of him, he counts all things beside but dung and loss. (3.) They who disbelieve the gospel, and disobey God's word, rush on their ruin, and must suffer shipwreck in eternity.

4. He reminds them of the rich and invaluable blessings and privileges which in the Redeemer they had obtained. *But ye are a chosen generation*, elect to infinitely greater privileges than those which the visible church of Israel enjoyed; *a royal priesthood*, having an unction from the Holy One, and made kings and priests unto God, Rev. i. 6. victorious over your spiritual foes, separated for God, and to reign with him in glory for ever; *a holy nation*, consecrated to the Lord, and in spirit and temper conformed to his image; *a peculiar people*, in a nobler sense than ever Israel was of old, appointed to the highest dignity, and enriched with the most distinguishing blessings; *that ye should show forth the praises of him, who*, by his grace, *hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light* of gospel truth, brought from the cloudy dispensation of legal institutions into that bright day, which the Sun of Righteousness makes, arisen with healing in his wings. *Which in time past were not a people*, having been disowned and divorced of God, Hos. i. 9, 10. ii. 23. *but are now the people of God*, through Jesus admitted into the covenant of grace, and acknowledged as the Lord's: *which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*, even pardon, grace, and all the blessings of eternal redemption.

11. Dearly beloved, I beseech *you*, [r] as strangers and pilgrims, [u] abstain from fleshly lusts, which [x] war against the soul; 12. [y] Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, [*] [z] whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, [a] they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 13. [b] Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14. Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15. For so is the will of God, [c] that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16. [d] As free, and not † using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17. ‡ [e] Honour all *men*. [f] Love the brotherhood. [g] Fear God. Honour the king.

[r] Gen. 23. 4. Lev. 25. 23. 1 Chr. 29. 15. Ps. 39. 12. & 119. 19. Heb. 11. 13. Jam. 1. 1. ch. 1. 1, 17. 1 Cor. 7. 29—31. 2 Cor. 5. 6. Phil. 3. 20.
[u] Rom. 13. 13, 14. Gal. 5. 16, 20, 21. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Tit. 2. 12. 2 Pet. 3. 11, 14. & 1. 4—8.
[x] Rom. 7. 23. Gal. 5. 17, 24. Jam. 4. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.
[y] Ch. 3. 1, 16. Rom. 12. 17. & 13. 13. 2 Cor. 8. 21. Phil. 4. 5. & 2. 15, 16. & 4. 8.
[*] Or *wherein*.
[z] Tit. 2. 8. ch. 3. 16. & 4. 14, 15, 16. Mat. 5. 16.
[a] Luke 1. 68. & 19. 44.
[b] Jer. 27. 12, 17. & 29. 7. Mat. 22. 21. Rom. 13. 1—7. 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2. Tit. 3. 1. with 2 Pet. 2. 10. Jude 8. 1 Tim. 6. 1—5.
[c] Tit. 2. 8. ch. 3. 1, 16. & 4. 15, 16. Phil. 2. 15, 16. Mat. 5. 16. & 10. 16.
[d] John 8. 32, 36. Rom. 6. 18, 22. 1 Cor. 7. 22. Gal. 5. 1, 13. Jam. 1. 25. & 2. 12. 2 Pet. 2. 10, 19. Jude 4, 8.
[e] Ch. 5. 5. Rom. 13. 7. & 12. 10. Phil. 2. 3.
† Gr. *having*.
‡ Or *esteem*.
[f] Rom. 12. 10. & 13. 8. Gal. 6. 10. Eph. 4. 3. Heb. 13. 1. ch. 1. 22. & 3. 8. & 4. 8. 2 Pet. 1. 7. 1 John 3. 11—17, 23. & 4. 20.
[g] Ps. 111. 10. Prov. 1. 7. & 23. 17. & 24. 1. Eccl. 8. 2. Mat. 22. 21. see ver. 13, 14.

Verses 11—17. Whilst they are in the flesh, the best of men, have need be warned and exhorted to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. The apostle therefore admonishes them,

1. To guard against all worldly and carnal affections. *Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as* becomes *strangers and pilgrims*, for such you profess yourselves to be upon the earth, *abstain from fleshly lusts*, subduing every inordinate appetite and every covetous desire, *which war against the soul*, and threaten its defilement and destruction; *having your conversation honest among the Gentiles*, adorning your profession by every thing commendable and excellent; *that whereas they speak against you as evil doers*, and misrepresent you as a wicked, refractory, and lawless people, *they may* be confuted *by your good works, which they shall behold*, and be ashamed of their unjust aspersions, compelled to *glorify God in the day of visitation*, either when in a day of judgment he shall punish them for their ill usage of you, or in mercy, when turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, he shall lead them to approve and imitate your good conversation.

2. To be obedient to magistrates. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*, under whatever form of government you live, or whoever they be whom the Divine Providence sets over you: *whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him*, and bear his commission, *for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well;* from whom faithful and obedient subjects have nothing to fear, have every thing to hope for. *For so is*

the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, by your loyalty and cheerful submission to the civil government, confuting the calumnies of those who would brand you as seditious: *as free* indeed from the tyranny of sin, Satan, and the curse of the law, *and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness,* to cover any treasonable design, or other malignant evil, *but as the servants of God,* conscientiously observant of his holy will in all things, and obedient to magistrates, not only for wrath but also for conscience' sake.

3. He adds four short but important precepts. *Honour all men* according to their rank and station. *Love the brotherhood,* high or low, rich or poor; bear them an unfeigned regard as members of Christ, show it in every act of kindness to their bodies or their souls. *Fear God* with all reverence and filial awe of offending. *Honour the king,* as his representative upon earth, and governing by his authority.

h Eph. 6. 5—7. Col. 3. 22—25. 1 Tim. 6. 1—3. Tit. 2. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 7. 20—24.
i Mat. 5. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 12. ch. 3. 14, 17. & 4. 14—16. ver. 20.
|| Or *thank, or grace.*
* Or *thank,* &c.
k Mat. 10. 38. & 16. 24. John 16. 33. Acts 14. 22. 1 Thes. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 12.
l Ch. 3. 18. ver. 21—24. John 13. 15 Mat. 16. 24. Phil. 2. 5. 1 John 2. 6. 1 Cor. 11. 1. Eph. 5. 2.
† Some read *for you.*
m Is. 53. 9. Luke 23. 41. John 8. 46. & 14. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Heb. 4. 15. & 7. 26, 27. & 9. 28. & 1. 19. 1 John 2. 1. & 3. 5.
n Mat. 27. 39—44. Luke 22. 34—46. John 8. 48, 49. Heb. 12. 3. Is. 50. 6—9.
‡ Or *committed* his cause.
o See ch. 1. 19. Is. 53. 4—6, 11, 12. Mat. 8. 17. Heb. 9. 28. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Rom. 8. 3. Mat. xxvi, xxvii. Luke xxii, xxiii. Gal. 3. 13.
|| Or *to.*
p Luke 1. 74, 75. Rom. 6. 2, 6, 10—12. & 7. 4, 6. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 2. 20. John 7. 19. Eph. 5. 25, 26. Is. 53. 5.
q Ps. 119. 176. Is. 53. 6. Jer. 50. 6. Ezek. 34. 16. Luke 15. 4. Mat. 18. 12. r Ch. 5. 4. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 24. Is. 40. 11. John 10. 11, 14, 16. Heb. 13. 10. Rev. 7. 17.

18. [h] Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. 19. [i] For this *is* || thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20. For what glory *is it,* if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it,* ye take it patiently, this *is* * acceptable with God. 21. [k] For even hereunto were ye called: [l] because Christ also suffered † for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22. [m] Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. 23. [n] Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not: but ‡ committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: 24. [o] Who his own self bare our sins in his own body || on the tree, [p] that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25. For ye were [q] as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto [r] the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Verses 18—25. As the Jews very hardly bore a foreign yoke, as unwilling were they to submit to any Gentile masters; and those of them who believed in Christ were by their Judaizing teachers persuaded to think that they owed no obedience to unbelieving masters. To correct so dangerous an imagination, the apostle,

1. Inculcates the duty of *servants.* *Be subject to your masters, with all fear* and reverence, and be obedient to all their lawful commands; *not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward,* if such is your lot to be placed under their power. *For this is thankworthy,* a matter of real commendation, and a singular gift of God, *if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully,* and bearing patiently the ill usage of a cruel master, to whom he hath given no just cause of provocation. *For what glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?* this can bring no credit to your religion, you receive but the just reward of your deeds. *But if, when ye do well,* faithful to your trust, and true to your profession, *and suffer* for your conscientious regard to God and his service, *ye take it patiently,* with all meekness, and without murmuring, *this is acceptable to God,* and a sure proof of the truth of his grace in your hearts. *Note,* (1.) The spirit of independence, which is in men, hardly brooks subjection, and correction still less. (2.) Patient suffering for well doing is our distinguished honour. (3.) Though the duty of servants is submission, yet their guilt is not the less who abuse their authority over them; and they will find a Master shortly, who will call them to account, with whom there is no respect of persons.

2. He enforces what he had enjoined with the most powerful arguments. *For even hereunto were ye called.* The cross every Christian must be content to bear: and we should the more readily take it up, *because Christ also suffered for us* as our substitute, and to make atonement for us, or *for you,* as many copies read; for the meanest servant as well as for the highest of the sons of men; *leaving us an example* of patience and long-suffering under all the most cruel and unjust treatment which he met with, *that ye should follow his steps,* and be conformed to his blessed pattern; *who,* grievously as he suffered, yet *did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;* his bitterest enemies could not so much as fix upon him the shadow of a crime: *who, when he was reviled, reviled not again;* but observed an admirable silence, as the sheep before her shearers is dumb: *when he suffered, he threatened not,* nor discovered the least anger at his tormentors; *but committed himself* and his cause *to him that judgeth righteously,* and to whom vengeance belongeth: *who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,* submitting, as our surety, with his own blood to pay the penalty due to our iniquities; *that we, being dead to sin,* as crucified with him, *should live unto righteousness,* quickened by his Spirit to newness of life; *by whose stripes ye were healed,* and the deadly wounds of your souls, far worse than those which the most cruel masters can make in your bodies, were cured by the sovereign balm of that blood which streams from his scourgings. *For ye were as sheep going astray,* foolish, disobedient, deceived, in time past; *but are now* by grace recovered, and *returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls,* the blessed and adored Jesus. *Note,* (1.) Christ's example should animate us with cheerfulness to take up every cross which in his providence he is pleased to lay upon us. (2.) Our sufferings, however cruel or unjust, will never be an excuse for our impatience under them, or for any anger toward the instruments of them, however wicked or unreasonable. (3.) All the sins of the redeemed were laid upon the Saviour: on the tree he bore them. There never will be one sin pardoned, but those whose price were then paid: there never will be one sin remembered any more against those whose surety he then appeared. (4.) The doctrine of imputation is inculcated in both testaments; nor can it be more strange that we should be justified by Christ's righteousness, than that we should be healed by his stripes. (5.) All whose sins he bore are raised from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness. We are deceived, if we live in our iniquities and flatter ourselves with hope in Christ. (6.) By nature, by practice, we have all gone far astray. Reader, art *thou* then returned, by faith in the atoning blood, to the great Shepherd of souls? Art thou under his government, and dost thou tread in the footsteps of his flock?

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

Wherein the apostle describes the duties of husbands and wives, ver. 1—7. *He exhorts Christians to unity, love, compassion, peace, and patience under sufferings; to oppose the slanders of their enemies, not by returning evil for evil, or railing for railing, but by a blessing; by a ready account of their faith and hope, and by keeping a good conscience,* ver. 8—17. *To encourage them to this, he proposeth the example of Christ, who suffered, the*

just for the unjust, but yet punished the old world for their disobedience, and saved the few that were faithful in the days of Noah.

a Gen. 3. 16. Eph. 5. 22, 24. Col. 3. 18. Tit. 2. 5.

b 1 Cor. 7. 16. & 9. 19—22. Mat. 5. 16. & 18. 13. Prov. 11. 30. Jam. 5. 20. Phil. 2. 15, 16. & 3. 8, 9.

c Ch. 2. 11, 12. Eph. 5. 33.

d 1 Tim. 2. 9. Tit. 2. 3. Is. 3. 16—24. Zeph. 1. 8.

e Rom. 2. 29. & 7. 22. Luke 17. 21. Ps. 45. 13. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Tit. 2. 11, 12. 1 Sam. 16. 7. Ps. 51. 6.

f 1 Sam. 1. 2, 10. Tit. 2. 3. with Deut. 14. 12. & 32. 7.

g Gen. 12. 5. & 18. 6, 12.

h John 8. 39. Rom. 2. 7, 8. Phil. 4. 8. Tit. 2. 12.

* Gr. *children.*

i Ver. 14. Is. 8. 12, 13. & 51. 7, 12, 13. Phil. 1. 28.

k 1 Cor. 7. 3. Eph. 5. 25, 28, 29, 31, 32. Col. 3. 19. Ps. 101. 2. 1 Cor. 14. 35. & 12. 23. Gal. 3. 28, 29. with 2 Cor. 4. 7. 1 Thes. 4. 4.

l 1 Tim. 2. 8. Job 42. 8. Mat. 5. 18, 19, 23, 24. Ps. 66. 18.

1. LIKEWISE, [a] ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, [b] they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2. While they behold [c] your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. 3. [d] Whose adorning, let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: 4. But [e] *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 5. [f] For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: 6. [g] Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: [h] whose * daughters ye are as long as ye do well, [i] and are not afraid with any amazement. 7. [k] Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; [l] that your prayers be not hindered.

Verses 1—7. The apostle proceeds to the duty of husbands and wives.

1. The duty of wives. *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands,* whether Christian, Jewish, or heathen, regarding them as your superiors by creation and the ordinance of God; *that, if any obey not the word,* and are yet strangers to the faith of Christ, *they also may without the word,* though they should refuse to attend the preaching of the gospel, *be won by the conversation of the wives,* struck with your exemplary, engaging, and amiable conduct, *while they behold your chaste conversation,* circumspect in every word and action, and your chastity *coupled with fear,* showing them that reverence, attention, desire to please, and fear to offend, which cannot but attract their notice, and gain their high esteem. *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;* not making dress and finery your study, expensive, negligent of your family concerns, or desirous to attract others' eyes besides your husband's; *but* whilst careful of modest neatness of person, most careful of that which will render you above all other things amiable in their eyes, putting on *the hidden man of the heart,* the adornings of grace, truth, and holiness; *in that which is not corruptible,* and infinitely preferable to the poor and fading splendour of gay apparel, *even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit,* gentle, mild, tractable, silencing every rising of anger, and the emotions of fretfulness, *which is* the great secret of happiness in a married state, and *in the sight of God of great price,* and highly approved by him. *For after this manner in the old time the holy women also who trusted in God adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands,* delighting in their station, and never desiring to invert or change God's established order; *even as Sarah obeyed Abraham* with all dutiful subjection, *calling him Lord,* and paying him due reverence and respect as her superior: *whose daughters ye are,* in a spiritual sense, *as long as ye do well,* and copy her meek, dutiful, and humble example, *and are not afraid with any amazement,* not terrified from your duty by any menaces, not obedient through slavish fear of your husbands, but from the nobler principles of love and duty. *Note,* Wives should seriously consider this word of God, and make conscience of observing it: the advice is of infinite importance, not only to their comfort in this world, but is essential to all their hopes in a better.

2. The duty of husbands. *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge,* delighting in their company, their persons, their conversation; with purity and tender affection discharging every duty of the conjugal state; *giving honour unto the wife,* treating her with respect, making her your bosom friend, consulting her comfort and happiness, providing in the best manner for her which your circumstances will afford, bearing with and concealing her infirmities, considering her *as the weaker vessel,* to whom peculiar delicacy and tenderness is due, *and as* your equal in all Christian privileges, *being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered,* or the effects of them defeated, as they must be by unchristian strifes, or austerity. Let those who bear the honoured name of husband then remember the duties of their station. Such a conduct will engage affection and submission, and supersede the exercise of authority.

8. Finally, [m] *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another; † love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous: 9. [n] Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that [o] ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. 10. For [p] he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: 11. Let him [q] eschew evil, and do good: let him seek peace, and ensue it. 12. [r] For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* ‡ [s] against them that do evil. 13. [t] And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which *is* good? 14. [u] But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye:* and [x] be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; 15. But [y] sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always [z] to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and ‖ fear: 16. [a] Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. 17. [b] For

m Lev. 19. 18. Rom. 12. 10, 15, 16. & 15. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Eph. 4. 32. Phil. 2. 1, 2. & 3. 16. & 4. 2. Col. 3. 12. 1 Thes. 4. 9. Heb. 10. 34, & 13. 1—3. ch. 1. 22. & 8. 17. & 4. 8. 2 Pet. 1. 7. 1 John 3. 11, 16, 17.

† Or *loving to the brethren.*

n Prov. 17. 13. & 20. 22. & 22. 29. Rom. 12. 14, 17—21. 1 Thes. 5. 15. Mat. 5. 39, 44. ch. 2. 23. 1 Cor. 4. 12. & 6. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 15.

o 1 Tim. 4. 8. Mat. 25. 34. Eph. 1. 3.

p Ps. 34. 12—16. Jam. 2. 26. Ps. 32. 2. Rev. 14. 5. ch. 2. 1, 22.

q Is. 1. 16. Ps. 37. 27. & 34. 14. Rom. 12. 18. & 14. 19. Heb. 12. 14. 3 John 11.

r Ps. 34. 15, 16. & 33. 18. & 11. 7. & 66. 18. Job 36. 7. Jam. 5. 16.

‡ Gr. *upon.*

s Jer. 44. 11. Amos 9. 4. John 9. 31.

t Prov. 16. 7. Rom. 8. 28. Job 5. 22.

u Mat. 5. 10. ch. 2. 19, 20. & 4. 14. Jam. 1. 12.

x Is. 12. 13. Mat. 10. 28. Jer. 1. 8. ver. 6. Phil. 1. 28. John 14. 1, 27. Is. 51. 12, 13.

y Is. 8. 13. Ps. 89. 7. Rev. 15. 4.

Job 1. 21. z Ps. 119. 46. Acts 4. 8—12, 19, 20. & 5. 29—32. & xxiv, xxvi. Col. 4. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 25. Jam. 3. 13. ‖ Or *reverence.* a Ch. 2. 12, 15, 19. 2 Tim. 1. 19. Tit. 2. 8. Acts 23. 1. & 24. 16. Phil. 4. 8. & 3. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 12. b Ch. 2. 19, 20. & 4. 14, 15. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12. ver. 14, 16.

it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

Verses 8—17. The apostle passes on to more general exhortations.

1. He enjoins the exercise of Christian charity. *Finally, be ye all of one mind,* united in the great points of Christian doctrine, and harmonizing in mutual affection; *having compassion one of another,* bearing with tender sympathy each other's burdens; *love as brethren,* out of a pure heart, fervently; *be pitiful* of each other's wants, weakness, and infirmities; *be courteous,* obliging, friendly, condescending: *not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing,* however cruelly or unkindly treated by professed enemies or pretended friends; *but contrariwise, blessing,* praying for those who most dispitefully use you; *knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing,* both temporal, spiritual, and eternal, which promise God hath annexed to such a gracious conduct. *Note,* To love those who are kind to us, is in some sort but natural; but to love our enemies, and return their bitterness with blessings, this is the work of supernatural grace.

2. Having mentioned the blessing which they should inherit, who walked according to the rule laid down, he quotes a passage from the Book of Psalms, showing the way to a truly happy life. *For he that will love life, and see good days* of prosperity and comfort in this world, *let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile,* sincere in all his conversation, without dissimulation, and cautious, never to offer a rash, hasty, or passionate expression; *let him eschew* and avoid *evil* of every kind, which misery, as its shadow, ever attends; *and do good* to all, according to his abilities and opportunities; *let him seek peace,* as the richest acquisition, *and ensue it,* using every lawful means to preserve inviolate in all his connections and relations, and to heal every breach which may be made. *For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous,* observing, approving, and directing them in all their holy conversation; *and his ears are open to their prayers,* regarding every request they make, and ready to fulfil all their petitions; *but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil,* with frowns of righteous indignation he beholds their crooked ways, and winged vengeance cuts off the remembrance of them from the earth; see Psalm xxxiv. 16. *Note,* (1.) Godliness hath the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come. (2.) What an encouragement have we to approach a throne of grace, when God assures us of his constant attention to our prayers? (3.) They who persist in their iniquities must perish without remedy.

3. He suggests the most encouraging motives for their patient suffering. *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* What have you to fear from men, or devils, if God be on your side? And will not such an inoffensive conduct disarm even your very enemies? *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake,* and your religion exasperates your persecutors, *happy are ye* in this honourable cross, *and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled* at any of their menaces, frowns, or cruelty; *but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts;* set him before you, that, filled with holy fear of offending him, relying on his power, faithfulness, wisdom, and mercy, you may defy all the impotent wrath of men, *and be ready* always *to give an answer,* and to make your defence and apology *to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear,* with all dispassionate calmness and holy reverence of God, whose cause you plead; or this may refer to him that asketh the reason of their Christian hope; if he appears with meekness and fear, willing to hear your defence, then faithfully deliver your souls; *having a good conscience* towards God and towards men; and acting so uprightly and irreproachably, *that whereas they speak evil of you as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ,* and let your lives give the lie to their slanders, and turn them to their own confusion. *For it is better, if the will of God be so* that ye are appointed to suffer, *that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing,* for it is bitter indeed when sin and suffering meet together, the burden is then grievously insupportable. *Note,* (1.) To suffer for righteousness' sake is our honour and happiness. (2.) The more we live in the fear of God, the less shall we be influenced by the fear of men. (3.) We never need be ashamed of our principles, but should readily and freely vindicate them, whenever we can gain an attentive hearing. (4.) The purest innocence is not a defence from the aspersions of malice. (5.) The surest way to confound the slanders of malevolence is *to live them down.*

18. For Christ also hath [c] once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, [d] being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 19. By which also he went and [e] preached unto the spirits in [f] prison; 20. [g] Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noe, while the ark was a preparing, [h] wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. 21. [i] The like figure whereunto, *even* baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) [k] by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; 22. [l] Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers, being made, subject unto him.

[c] Rom. 5. 6—11. & 3. 25. & 4. 25. Heb. 9. 12, 14, 26, 28. & 10. 10, 12, 14. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Eph. 2. 18. & 3. 12. see ch. 1. 19. & 2. 21, 24. Is. 53. 4—12.
[d] Ch. 4. 1. 2 Cor. 13. 4. John 1. 14. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Rom. 1. 4. & 8. 11. & 6. 4. Acts 3. 15. John 10. 18. Rev. 1. 5, 18.
[e] Gen. 6. 3. ch. 1. 11, 12. & 4. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 5. Heb. 11. 7.
[f] Luke 16. 23. 2 Pet. 2. 4.
[g] Gen. 6. 1—5, 11—13. Job 22. 15, 16. Heb. 11 7. Mat. 24. 38. Luke 17. 26. 2 Pet. 2. 5. & 3. 6.
[h] Heb. 11. 7. Gen. 7. 7. & 8. 18. 2 Pet. 2. 5.
[i] Acts 22. 16. Mark 16. 16. Eph. 5. 26. Tit. 3. 5. Rom. 10. 10. & 6. 4—5. Gal. 3. 27. Phil. 3. 9, 10.
[k] Rom. 4. 25. & 8. 11. & 6. 4—5. & 7. 4. 1 Cor. 15. 20. Eph. 2. 6. John 14. 19. & 47. 5. & 110. 5. Mark 16. 16. Luke 24. 51. Acts 1. 9—11. & 3. 21. Rom. 8. 21, 34. 1 Cor. 15. 24. Col. 3. 1. Heb. 1 3. & 2. 8. & 4. 15. & 6. 19, 20. & 7. 26. & 8. 1. & 9. 24. & 10. 12. Acts 7. 56. Eph. 2. 20—23. Heb. 2. 14. Mat. 28. 13.
[l] See ch. 1. 21. Ps. 68. 18.

Verses 18—22. We have here,

1. The example Christ proposed as our encouragement to suffer patiently for him. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust,* he who was perfectly pure and holy giving himself a sacrifice for us, to bear the sins of such polluted wretches as we are, *that,* having made a perfect and full satisfaction to Divine Justice, and obtained reconciliation through his own blood, he might *bring us to God,* into a state of favour and acceptance with him, *being put to death in the flesh,* and suffering in his human nature the penalty of sin, *but quickened by the Spirit,* by that eternal Spirit of the Son of God, which had taken the human nature into union with himself; or *by the Holy Ghost,* who is one in operation and agency with the Son. *Note,* (1.) The sufferings of Jesus were the real penalty due to our iniquities, and God laid them upon him in all their bitterness. (2.) He was the *just* one; had he not been so, he could not have satisfied for the unjust. (3.) By the sufferings of Jesus, sinners have access to and acceptance with God. (4.) If he voluntarily endured so much for us, shall we shrink from any cross which we may be called to bear for him?

2. He mentions what Christ did in the old world. *By which also he went and preached unto the spirits* which are now *in prison,* by his Spirit enlightening Noah, and sending him forth as a preacher of righteousness to them, *which sometime were disobedient,* and would neither believe nor attend to the warnings which Christ sent them, *when once the long-suffering of God waited,*

during a hundred and twenty years, *in the days of Noe, while the ark was a preparing*, who continued preaching and building that immense structure which was a living sermon to them, *wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water*, passing safely through the deluge which covered the earth, whilst the rest of the world perished in the waters, and went down into the prison of hell. *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us*, as the antitype of the ark, *not* the mere external ordinance, the applying water to the body for *the putting away of the filth of the flesh*, which of itself could be of no avail, *but* as the outward visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, even *the answer of a good conscience towards God*, pledging our fidelity to him in return for the privileges to which we are admitted, *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ*, who is the author of our life and salvation, being raised for our justification, the head of vital influence to his people, and shall raise them up at the last day. *Note*, (1.) God warns before he strikes. (2.) Though he is long-suffering, he will not always bear with sinners. (3.) They who reject the counsel of God against their own souls, have themselves only to blame for their destruction. (4.) Few ever were or will be saved in any age. (5.) Baptism saveth, not as a mere ceremony performed, but as a seal of that covenant which is established through a Redeemer, and a symbol of that grace, which out of his fulness we have received.

3. Christ is now exalted to the throne of majesty on high. *Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him;* he is possessed of universal dominion, appointed to be head over all things to his church; and whatever any of his members may endure, he will support and bring them safely through; and, as surely as they suffer with him, they shall reign with him.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

The work of a Christian is twofold, doing the will of God, and suffering his pleasure. This chapter directs us in both. The duties we are here exhorted to employ ourselves in are the mortification of sin, living to God, sobriety, prayer, charity, hospitality, and the best improvement of our talents, which the apostle presseth upon Christians, from the consideration of the time they have lost in their sins, and the approaching end of all things, ver. 1—12. *The directions for sufferings are, that we should not be surprised at them, but rejoice in them, only taking care not to suffer as evil doers. He intimates that their trials were near at hand; that their souls were in danger as well as their bodies, and the best way to preserve them was to commit them to God in well-doing.*

1. FORASMUCH then [a] as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, [b] arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for [c] he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; 2. [d] That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, [e] but to the will of God. 3. [f] For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: 4. [g] Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil *of you:* 5. [h] Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. 6. [i] For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, [k] that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

a See ch. 1. 18, 19. & 3. 18. & 2. 24.
b Ch. 2. 21. Rom. 6. 2, 6, 8, 11—13. & 8. 13. Eph. 6. 11. Gal. 2. 20. & 5. 24. Col. 2. 13. & 3. 8.
c Rom. 6. 2, 7, 9, 10. Gal. 2. 19, 20. Rom. 7. 4. Heb. 9. 14.
d Ver. 3. Rom. 13. 11—14. & 14. 7. Eph. 4. 17—19, 22. ch. 1. 14. Col. 3. 5, 8. see 13.
e Rom. 6. 11. & 7. 4. & 14. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Gal. 2. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 5. 10. & 4. 3—7. Exod. xx. Rom. xii. Eph. iv—vi. Heb. 9. 14.
f Ezek. 44. 6. & 45. 9. Rom. 13. 11—14. & 1. 21—32. & 2. 21, 22. & 3. 10—18. 1 Cor. 5. 11. & 6. 9, 10. & 8. 7. & 10. 7, 14. & 12. 2. Eph. 2. 2, 3, 11, 12. & 4. 17—19. & 5. 3—11, 15, 18. Gal. 5. 19—21. Col. 3. 5—8. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Thes. 4. 5. ch. 1. 14, 18. 1 John 5. 21.
g Is. 8. 18. Acts 2. 6, 16. & 14. 10, 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 20. 12. Acts 10. 42. & 17. 31. 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. 2 Tim. 4. 1. Heb. 10. 37. Jam. 5. 8. Phil. 4. 5. Rev. 1. 7. & 22. 7, 12, 20. John 5. 29.
h Eccl. 12. 14. Rom. 13. 45. 1 Cor. 4. 13. Jam. 2. 7. ch. 2. 12. & 3. 9, 16.
i Ch. 3. 19. or Rev. 14. 13. 1 Thes. 4. 14. Job 5. 25. Eph. 5. 14.
k Ps. 103. 14. Phil. 2. 19. Rom. 7. 22. 2 Cor. 4. 16. or Rom. 8. 17. John 16. 33. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 2. 12. ch. 4. 13, 14. & 5. 10. & 1. 6, 7. Rev. 7. 14—17.

Verses 1—6. The apostle here,

1. Draws an inference from what he had advanced. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind*, with patience and holy resolution; *for he that hath suffered in the flesh*, crucifying the body of sin through union with a dying Saviour, and willingly taking up any cross which the Divine providence may lay upon him, *hath ceased from sin*, from his former corrupt principles and practice, and is professionally by his baptism mortified to every corrupt affection, as a dead man ceases from the actions of life: *that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the will of men*, but the little space which yet remains he is earnest to redeem, and fain would spend it according *to the will of God. Note*, (1.) Nothing so effectually mortifies sin as a believing view of the cross of Christ. (2.) The will of God, not our vile affections, must be our guide. If we live after the flesh, we shall die eternally, whilst the paths of grace and holiness alone can lead us to immortal life and glory.

2. The apostle argues on the reasonableness of living unto God, from the consideration of the abuse they had made of the time that was past. *For the time past of our life may suffice us* to *have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when* (with shame and grief and anguish we remember it) *we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings*, and riot, *banquetings*, and luxurious carousals, *and abominable idolatries*, joining with the Gentiles in these horrid deeds: *wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them* still *to the same excess of riot* as before, *speaking evil of you* and your religion, as if it made you morose, unsociable, and poor despicable objects; *who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead*, at the great day of his appearing and glory. *Note*, (1.) The remembrance of our former evil ways should often dwell upon our minds for our deep humiliation before God. (2.) They who have tasted the bitterness of sin, can be tempted by no consideration to return to those destructive ways which they have forsaken. (3.) The conduct of a Christian appears very strange to an ungodly world, and they wonder what there is in religion which, for the sake of it, can induce men to forego all that they call enjoyment. (4.) They who speak evil of our good conversation in Christ, must shortly give a solemn account of their hard speeches before an awful tribunal.

3. The former saints of God were thus censured of the world, and saved by grace. *For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are* now *dead* in Christ, and departed in his faith and fear, *that they might be judged according to men in the flesh*, and undergo reproach, persecution, and some of them even death itself, for those tenets which the carnal world derides and abhors, *but* might, notwithstanding all their sufferings in the body, *live according to God in the spirit*, under the mighty influence of his grace in a holy conformity to his will, and expecting, through the power of the Holy Ghost, to be raised up at the last day to live with God eternally.

7. [l] But the end of all things is at hand: [m] be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. 8. [n] And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves:

l 1 Phil. 4. 5. 1 John 2. 18. Jam. 5. 8. Rom. 13. 12. Heb. 10. 25, 37 Rev. 22. 12.
m 1 Thes. 5. 6, 17. ch. 5. 8. Mat. 26. 41. Luke 21. 34.
—36. Eph. 6. 18, 19. Col. 4. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 17. ch. 1. 13. 2 Pet. 3. 9, 11, 14. Rev. 1. 3. & 22. 10—15. & 16. 15.
n 1 Cor. 13. 7, 13. Col. 3. 14. Heb. 13. 1. ch. 1. 22. & 2. 17. & 3. 8. Rom 12. 12. with Prov. 10. 12. Jam. 5. 20.

for charity * shall cover the multitude of sins. 9. [o] Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 10. [p] As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, [q] as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11. [r] If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; [s] if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: [t] that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

* Or *will.*

o Rom. 12. 8. 13. Heb. 13. 2. Philem. 14. Phil. 2. 14. 2 Cor. 9. 7. 1 Sam. 25. 11.

p Rom. 12. 6—8. 1 Cor. 12. 4—11, 28. Eph. 4. 11, 12. Mat. 25. 14, 15. Luke 19. 11. Prov. 3. 28. Acts 8. 4. 2 Cor. 8. 11.

q Mat. 25. 45. Luke 12. 42. 1 Cor. 9. 17. & 4. 1, 2. Tit. 1. 7.

r 1 Cor. 12. 4, 7. & 15. 10. Eph. 4. 11. & 3. 2.

s Ezra 2. 69. Neh. 5. 8. Acts 11. 29. 2 Cor. 8. 3.

t 1 Cor. 10. 31. Eph. 5. 20. 1 Tim. 6. 16. 2 Tim. 4. 18. ch. 2. 5. & 5. 11. Rev. 1. 5, 6. & 5. 9—13. Ps. 115. 1. see Rom. 16. 27.

Verses 7—11. We have here an awful position: *But the end of all things is at hand.* The Jewish state was soon to be destroyed, where dwelt the most inveterate persecutors of the Christian name; and to every individual is this truth most applicable, to whom death and eternity are approaching, and judgment is at the door; from which awful consideration the apostle enforces the following exhortations:

1. *Be ye therefore sober*, temperate in all things, not inordinately pursuing, nor immoderately using any thing in this world, knowing how short the time is. *And,*

2. *Watch unto prayer;* be on your guard against the numberless temptations which beset you, and especially be looking up by ceaseless prayer for strength to resist and overcome them. *Note*, Prayer is our great preservative; we shall never fail, whilst we continue waiting upon God.

3. *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves*, cordially and tenderly affected towards each other: *for charity shall cover the multitude of sins*, engaging you kindly to overlook the offences of your brethren, to cast the veil of oblivion over their many infirmities, and to conceal them from the censorious world.

4. *Use hospitality one to another, without grudging*, freely and cheerfully receiving those who, for righteousness' sake, are driven from place to place, or are travelling to spread the glad tidings of salvation, and trusting on the Divine Providence for their maintenance.

5. *As every man hath received the gift*, whatever talents he is blessed with, whether of wealth, abilities, or grace, *even so minister the same one to another*, laying out yourselves for your mutual edification and comfort, *as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*, from whom you have received all that you possess, and to whom you are accountable for the due improvement of it. *If any man speak*, therefore, as called to the office of a preacher, *let him speak as the oracles of God*, with strict adherence to the sacred doctrines therein revealed, presuming to add nothing thereunto, nor diminish ought therefrom: *if any man minister* in the office of a deacon, or out of his worldly substance to the necessitous, *let him do it as of the ability which God giveth*, with all fidelity, cheerfulness and diligence, *that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ*, and his name exalted in the advancement of his church and his kingdom in the world, *to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever*, to the incarnate Saviour, and to the Father through him. *Amen!* *Note*, (1.) Whatever we possess, we are but stewards, and must give an account to the great Master for the talents committed to our trust. (2.) God's glory should be the great end of our conversation, and in our lips and lives we should endeavour to show forth his praise.

12. Beloved, think it not strange concerning [u] the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13. [x] But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; [y] that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 14. [z] If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye;* [a] for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: [b] on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 15. [c] But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evil-doer, or *as* a busy-body in other men's matters. 16. [d] Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. 17. [e] For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: [f] and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18. [g] And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 19. Wherefore, let them that [h] suffer according to the will of God [i] commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

u See ch. 1. 6, 7. Ps. 17. 3. & 66. 10. Is. 48. 10. Jer. 9. 7. Dan. 11. 35. Zech. 13. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 13.

x Mat. 5. 13. Acts 5. 41. Heb. 10. 34. Jam. 1. 2, 11. Rom. 5. 3. 2 Cor. 1. 5. Phil. 3. 10. Col. 1. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 10, 12. Rev. 1. 9. Rom. 8. 17, 18.

y Mat. 25. 31. ch. 1. 6, 7, 13. 1 Cor. 1. 7. 2 Thes. 1. 7. Luke 17. 30. Mat. 19. 28, 29.

z Mat. 5. 10, 11. Jam. 1. 12. ch. 2 20. & 3. 14, 16.

a Is. 11. 2. 2 Cor. 12. 9.

b Jam. 2. 7. Phil. 2. 28.

c Ch. 2. 14, 20. & 3. 14, 17. 1 Thes. 4. 11. 1 Tim. 5. 13.

d Ver. 13, 14. ch. 3. 14, 17. 2 Tim. 1. 12. & 3. 10, 12. Phil. 1. 29. Acts 5. 41. Mat. 5. 12.

e Is. 10. 12. Jer. 25. 29. & 49. 12. Ezek. 9. 6. Amos 3. 2. Dan. 9. 27. Mal. 3. 5. Mat. 24. 9, 14. John 16. 2.

f Luke 23. 31. & 10. 12—15. & 21. 23, 24. Mat. 24. 21.

g Prov. 11. 31. Jer. 25. 29. Luke 23. 31. Mat. 25. 22. Jer. 30. 11. & 46. 28.

h See ch. 3. 14, 17. ver. 14, 16. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

i Ps. 31. 5. Luke 23. 46. 2 Tim. 1. 12. Rev. 2. 10.

Verses 12—19. The apostle here,

1. Encourages them to bear up boldly under their expected trials. *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you*, as gold in the furnace, *as if some strange thing happened unto you*, and your sufferings were uncommon, and such as God's children might not have expected. *But*, however severe your trials may be, *rejoice* in them, *forasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings*, and herein conformed to your glorious head: *that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy*, and reign with him, as you have suffered for him. And, in the lesser trials of reviling and slander, *if we are reproached for the name of Christ*, branded with some opprobrious name, and made the objects of derision and contempt, *happy are ye;* let it be your delight to be thus vile, and gladly bear this honourable badge of infamy; *for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you*, to comfort you under these reproaches, and to give you an earnest of that eternal glory to which these trials are the way: *on their part he is evil spoken of*, and his blessed operation reviled and blasphemed; *but on your part he is glorified*, and his name exalted by your faith and patience, and by the praises given him for the supports and comforts which you experience from him. *Note*, (1.) We must count no affliction strange; however grievous for the time; it is only permitted to be, because God sees we have much dross, and need that furnace to purge us from it. (2.) Our sufferings for Christ are our real honour, and should be our highest joy. (3.) In a day of recompense we shall never regret what we have endured for Christ and his cause. (4.) We need not wonder at any reproaches cast on ourselves, when even the blessed Spirit of God himself sustains the like blasphemies, and his operations are branded as delusion and enthusiasm.

2. He admonishes them not to give their enemies so much handle against them as they desired to have. *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer*, justly chargeable with any criminal conduct whatever, *or as a busy-body*

in other men's matters, prying into the concerns of his neighbours which do not belong to him, and neglecting his own. *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian*, and if, however innocent, through enmity to him on account of his religion, any of these atrocious crimes are charged upon him, *let him not be ashamed* of such malignant abuse, *but let him glorify God on this behalf*, that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ, and enabled to despise these calumnies.

3. He supports what he had advanced by the most weighty consideration. *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God*, not only in the destruction of the Jewish temple, but in very severe visitations upon his spiritual church and people, who need the correction of his rod; *and if it first begin at us*, and we undergo the severe discipline of the cross, *what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?* How fearful will be the vengeance executed upon the finally impenitent and unbelieving! *And if the righteous scarcely be saved*, plucked as brands from the burning, and hardly escaping, like Lot, from the flames of Sodom, *where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear*, who wilfully and obstinately reject all the warnings of God's providence, and the word of his grace, determined to abide in their iniquities, whatever the consequence may be? How terrible, sure, and inevitable must be their eternal perdition! *Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God*, patiently and submissively, *commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*, content to refer themselves to him, resigned to his will, and ready to do or suffer according to his pleasure, satisfied in his faithfulness to all his promises, and sure to reap their fulfilment in a blessed eternity. *Note*, (1.) God corrects his own children that they may not be condemned with the world. (2.) If the Lord chastises his own people for the evil he sees in them, shall the rebellious sinner go unpunished? No, verily; there is vengeance hanging over his devoted head. (3.) The gate of heaven is strait: they who strive to enter, scarcely are able; how surely then must they be excluded, who never so much as set their faces heavenwards! (4.) Come what will, we know that our sufferings are sent of God, and that his faithfulness, power, and love, are engaged to bring us safely through them: and this is sufficient to make us easy, yea, happy under them.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 60.

In which the apostle gives particular directions, first to the elders, how to behave themselves towards their flock, in the four first verses; then to the younger, to be obedient and humble, and to cast their care upon God, in the three next verses. From thence to the end he exhorts all to sobriety, watchfulness against temptations, and steadfastness in the faith, praying earnestly for them; and so concludes his epistle with a solemn doxology, mutual salutations, and his apostolical benediction.

1. THE [a] elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a [b] witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also [c] a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2. [d] Feed the flock of God * which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly: [e] not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: 3. [f] Neither as † being [g] lords over *God's* heritage, [h] but being ensamples to the flock. 4. And when the [i] chief Shepherd [k] shall appear, ye shall receive [l] a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 5. Likewise, [m] ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* [n] be subject one to another, and be clothed [o] with humility; for [p] God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6. [q] Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7. [r] Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

a Acts 14. 23. & 15. 6, 24. & 20. 17, 28. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 19. Tit. 1. 5, 7. 2 John 1. 3 John 1. Philem. 9.
b Luke 24. 48. Acts 1. 8, 22. & 2. 32. & 3. 15. & 5. 32. & 10. 39, 41.
c Rev. 1. 9. Rom. 8. 17, 18. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. 1 John 3. 2. Col. 3. 4. ver. 4.
d John 21. 15—17. Acts 20. 20, 28. 1 Cor. 9. 17. & 4. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 2, 5.
* Or *as much as in you is.*
e 1 Tim. 3. 3, 8, 16. Tit. 1. 7. 2 Cor. 12. 14, 15. Acts 20. 33, 34. f Mat. 20. 25, 26. 2 Cor. 1. 24. 1 Cor. 3. 5. Jam. 4. 12. † Or *overruling.* g Deut. 32. 9. Ps. 33. 12. & 74. 2. & 135. 4. Ezek. 34. 4. 1 Cor. 3. 9. & 6. 1, 20. Tit. 2. 14. ch. 2. 9. Rev. 5. 9. Acts 20. 28.
h Phil. 3. 17. 2 Thes. 3. 9. 1 Tim. 4. 12. Tit. 2. 7.
i Is. 40. 11. Ezek. 34. 23. & 37. 24. John 10. 11. Heb. 13. 20. ch. 2. 25.
k Tit. 2. 13. Mat. 25. 31—46. Acts 17. 31. 2 Thes. 1. 7—10. Rev. 1. 7. & 20. 11, 12.
l 1 Cor. 9. 25. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Rev. 2. 10. & 3. 11. ch. 1. 4.
m Lev. 19. 32. 1 Tim. 5. 1, 2.
n Rom. 12. 10, 16. Phil. 2. 3. Eph. 5. 21. ch. 3. 4.
o Job 37. 24. Prov. 3. 24. & 6. 16, 17. & 16. 5, 18, 19. & 18. 12. & 22. 4. & 29. 23. Is. 2. 11. & 13. 11. & 57. 15. & 6. 2. Mat. 23. 12. Luke 1. 51, 52. & 14. 11. & 18. 14. Jam. 4. 6.
p Job 22. 29. Jam. 4. 7, 10. Jer. 13. 18. Ps. 50. 15. & 91. 15. Prov. 29. 23. Mat. 23. 12. Luke 1. 52. & 14. 11. & 18. 14.
q Ps. 35. 5. & 55. 22. Mat. 6. 25—34. Luke 12. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 9, 10. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Tim. 6. 8. Heb. 13. 5.

Verses 1—7. The apostle here,

1. Exhorts the presbyters to a diligent discharge of their sacred trust. *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder*, put in trust with the same gospel, *and a witness of the sufferings of Christ*, bearing testimony to what I have seen, and ready to suffer with him and for him, *and a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed*, when the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls shall appear to reward his faithful ministers. In the view and expectation of which, *feed the flock of God which is among you* with fidelity, diligence, and zeal, preaching the sound doctrine, and maintaining the wholesome discipline of the gospel, considering at what a price this ransomed flock was purchased: *taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly*, watching over them with wisdom, and holy solicitude to promote their spiritual and eternal good; *not by constraint*, as compelled to do it against your inclinations, *but willingly*, delighting in your blessed office and employment, *not for filthy lucre*, as the motive to undertake the charge, *but of a ready mind*, free from every mercenary view, and influenced purely by zeal for the Redeemer and love towards immortal souls; *neither as being lords over God's heritage*, and ruling with arrogance and haughtiness, as if you had dominion over men's consciences, *but being ensamples to the flock*, in all humility, meekness, and holy conversation. *And* then know for your encouragement, that *when the chief Shepherd shall appear*, who hath appointed you to serve under him, *ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away*, the blessed reward of your fidelity. *Note*, (1.) The office of a presbyter is a high and honourable employment, and calls for suitable zeal and faithfulness to discharge it aright. (2.) None should ever enter the ministry by constraint, at the solicitation of friends, or as bred to it for a maintenance, but as prompted by a desire to glorify God, and to be instrumental in the salvation of lost souls. (3.) They who would profit others by their preaching, must second it by their examples; else how can we think that others will believe us, if it appear by our ill conduct that we do not believe ourselves! (4.) The reward of faithful ministers shall be eminently glorious: they shall shine as stars in the firmament for ever and ever.

2. He addresses himself to the younger, and all private members of the church. *Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder;* be guided by their advice, and attentive to their admonitions: *yea, all of you be subject one to another*, paying that deference and respect that is due to every one according to his station, age, rank, or office; *and be clothed with humility*, as a shining garb, which gives beauty to the whole conversation, and adds a lustre to every other grace; *for he resisteth the proud*, that is the character of all others which God abhors, *and* he *giveth grace to the humble*, who are peculiarly his delight, and enriched by him abundantly, and prepared for his presence in glory. *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God*, endur-

ing meekly whatever afflictions he is pleased to send upon you, and submissive to those whom he hath set over you; *that he may exalt you in due time*, lifting you above all your tribulations, and bringing you to a throne at his right hand: *casting all your care upon him*, whatever difficulties and trials you may be involved in, *for he careth for you*, will preserve your bodies and souls, give you a happy issue out of all your afflictions, and cause them to work together for your eternal felicity. *Note*, (1.) It is the wisdom of young men to pay deference and obedience to the advice and admonitions of their more aged and experienced friends. (2.) God is the enemy of the proud, as of Satan their chief: and in the unequal contest with Omnipotence, they must needs be undone. (3.) Humility is our greatest ornament, and in God's sight of great price, and those who possess it he delighteth to honour. (4.) God's time must be expected; he will send us relief in due season, if we faint not. (5.) No one ever cast his care upon God, and was confounded.

8. [r] Be sober, be vigilant; because [s] your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour: 9. [t] Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that [u] the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 10. But the [x] God of all grace, [y] who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, [z] after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*. 11. [a] To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

r Luke 21. 34, 36. 1 Thes. 5. 6. ch. 1. 13. & 4. 7. Rom. 13. 11—14.
s Job 1. 7. & 2. 2. Rev. 12. 9. & 20. 2. Luke 22. 31.
t Eph. 4. 27. & 6. 11, 13. Jam. 4. 7.
u John 16. 23. Acts 14 22. 1 Thes. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 12. ch. 1. 6. & 2. 20, 21. & 3. 14. & 4. 1, 12. Rev. 1. 9. & 6. 11. & 7. 14. & 13. 7.
x Exod. 34. 6, 7. Ps. 86. 5, 15. Mic. 7. 19, 20. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Eph. 1. 6, 7. & 2. 4, 6.
y Ch. 2. 9. 2 Pet. 1. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 7.
z 2 Cor. 4. 17. ch. 1. 6, 7. Rom. 16. 25. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 2 Thes. 2. 17. & 3. 3. 1 Tim. 6. 12. Heb. 10. 36, 37. & 13. 21. Jude 24.
a See Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 6. 16. 2 Tim. 4. 18. Eph. 3. 21. ch. 4. 11. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 13.

Verses 8—11. The apostle, in the view of the subtle enemy which they had to contend against,

1. Admonishes them to be on their guard. *Be sober, be vigilant;* weaned from all inordinate attachment to present things, and watchful in the use of every divine ordinance against the wiles of the great deceiver; *because your adversary the devil*, ever waiting for your halting, *as a roaring lion*, fierce and cruel, *walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;* restless and indefatigable in his attempts to murder immortal souls, and maliciously endeavouring to terrify those whom he is not permitted to destroy. *Note*, We have a deadly foe to conflict with, powerful, wily, watchful, experienced in deceit; we need be ever on our guard against his snares.

2. The only way in which we can overcome is here set before us. *Whom resist steadfast in the faith*, lifting up this impenetrable shield against all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and encouraged by the examples and victories of our suffering fellow-christians, *knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world;* they war against the same enemy, and are supported under all their trials, and through faith made more than conquerors. *Note*, (1.) The examples of others should be our encouragement. (2.) They who in faith resist the devil, will find the weakness of all his efforts, and that before this terrible shield he will be compelled to fly.

3. He offers up his fervent prayers on their behalf. *But the God of all grace*, the fountain and giver of it to all his people, never deserting them in any of their trials, *who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ*, to partake of unutterable blessedness in his presence for ever, through the redemption obtained by his dear Son, *after that ye have suffered a while* here below, *make you perfect*, in holiness and happiness, and in your way to this state of complete felicity, *stablish* you in the truth, *strengthen* your hearts with grace, and *settle you* on that foundation from which you never can be moved. *To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever;* be his name adored for all his past mercies and protection, and may we be enabled still to trust upon his care and love, *Amen!*

12. By [b] Sylvanus, a faithful brother unto you, (as I suppose,) I have written [c] briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the [d] true grace of God wherein ye stand. 13. The *church that is* at [e] Babylon, elected together with *you*, saluteth you; and *so doth* [f] Marcus my son. 14. [g] Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. [h] Peace *be* with you all that are [i] in Christ Jesus. Amen.

b 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Cor. 1. 19. Acts 15. 22, 27, 40.
c Heb. 13. 22. Eph. 3. 3.
d Gal. 1. 8, 9. Tit. 2. 11. Acts 20. 24. ch. 1. 13. & 2. 3. Rom. 5. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Heb. 13. 9.
e Gen. 10. 10. Dan. 4. 30. Ps. 87. 4. with ch. 1. 2, 9.
f Acts 12. 12, 25. & 13. 5, 13. & 15. 37, 38. Col. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 4. 11. Philem. 24.
g Rom. 16. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 20. 2 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 26.
h See ch. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 2.
i Rom. 8. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Eph. 1. 1. Col. 1. 2. & 3. 1, 3, 4. Gal. 2. 20. 1 Thes. 1. 1. 2 Thes. 1. 1, 2. Jude 1.

Verses 12—14. He concludes,

1. With giving an account of his design in this epistle, and the person who was the bearer of it. *By Sylvanus, a faithful brother unto you, (as I suppose)* (and conclude from the most substantial grounds) *I have written briefly* this short epistle, *exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand*, in the doctrine and practice of which you have hitherto persevered, and I trust will continue even unto the end. *Note*, They who have begun well must stand fast in the same grace which they have experienced.

2. He presents the salutations of the church at Babylon, from whence he seems to have written this epistle. *The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you*, through Jesus Christ unto life and glory, *saluteth you*, in all Christian wishes of peace and prosperity, *and so doth Marcus my son;* who was either really such, or spiritually; some suppose he means the evangelist Mark, who was sister's son to Barnabas.

3. He exhorts them to fervent charity among themselves. *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity*, in token of your mutual, unfeigned affection.

4. He pronounces his parting benediction upon them. *Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus*, and every blessing, spiritual, temporal, or eternal, which is the happy portion of those that are united to him their living head. May that portion, reader, be thine and mine. *Amen!*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL

OF

PETER.

Introduction.

THE penman of this epistle appears plainly to be the same who wrote the foregoing. He was one of the three apostles that were present at Christ's transfiguration, ver. 18. and says expressly, that he had written a former epistle to them, chap. iii. 1. and the design of this second epistle is the same with that of the former, as is evident from the first verse of the third chapter; whence observe, that in the things of God, we have need of *precept upon precept, and line upon line,* and all little enough to keep them in remembrance; and these are the things which should be most faithfully recorded, and frequently remembered by us.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 66.

In this chapter we have, 1. *An introduction,* ver. 1—4. 2. *An exhortation to advance and improve in all Christian graces,* ver. 5, 6, 7. *To enforce this exhortation, he adds,* (1.) *A representation of the very great advantage which will thereby accrue to them,* ver. 8—11. (2.) *A promise of the best assistance the apostle was able to give, to facilitate and forward this good work,* ver. 12—15. (3.) *A declaration of the certain truth and divine original of the gospel of Christ, in the grace whereof they were exhorted to increase and persevere.*

1. SIMON [a] PETER, [b] a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained [c] like precious faith with us [d] through the righteousness of [e] God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: 2. [f] Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3. According as his divine power hath given unto us [g] all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, [h] through the knowledge of him that hath [i] called us * to glory and virtue: 4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that [l] by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

a See 1 Pet. 1. 1. Mat. 10. 2.

b John 20. 21. & 21. 15—17. Mat. 28. 18—20. Mark 16. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 5. 1.

c Acts 11. 17. & 15. 9. Rom. 1. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 13. Eph. 4. 5. Tit. 1. 4. Jude 3.

d Phil. 1. 29. Eph. 2. 8. with Rom. 1. 17. & 3. 21—26. & 5. 15—21. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. Rev. 5. 9.

e Or *our God and Saviour.* Tit. 2. 13.

f Dan. 4. 1. & 6. 25. Num. 6. 24—26. Rom. 1. 7. Ps. 28. 9. & 29. 11. Jude 2. see 1 Pet. 1. 2. John 17. 31. John 2. 20—27. & 5. 20. Is. 5. 13. g Ps. 34. 10. & 84. 11. & 85. 12. Rom. 8. 28, 32. 1 Cor. 3. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 8. & 6. 6. h John 13. 17. 1 John 2. 20, 27. & 5. 20. ch. 3. 18. see ver. 2. i 1 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Gal. 1. 6. & 5. 8. Eph. 4. 1, 4. 1 Pet. 2. 9, 21. & 1. 3—5. 1 Thes. 4. 7. * Or *by.* k 2 Cor. 7. 1. Gal. 3. 16. Acts 13. 26. Is. 56. 5. Rom. 8. 15, 32. Ps. 147. 19.

l Ezek. 36. 26. John. 3. 6. & 1. 12, 13. Jam. 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1 3, 22, 23. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Eph. 4. 23, 24. Col. 3. 10. Heb. 12. 10. 1 John 3. 2, 3. ch. 2. 18, 20.

Verses 1—4. The apostle, being about to finish his glorious course, addresses his last epistle to his Hebrew brethren. We have,

1. The writer: *Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ.* In the dignity to which he was advanced, he did not forget that his office was not so much to rule as to serve the meanest member of the Redeemer's church.

2. The persons to whom the epistle is addressed. *To them that have obtained like precious faith with us,* and are interested in the same glorious salvation, *through the righteousness of God,* or, *of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ,* which is the meritorious cause by which we have obtained a sure title to eternal blessedness. *Note,* (1.) Divine faith may well be called precious, seeing the effects of it are so unspeakably glorious. (2.) Whatever faith we possess, it is because of our lot among the chosen, who are the objects of Christ's sovereign love, and undeserved favour. (3.) In the divine righteousness of God our Saviour we stand complete before God, and may by right claim all the blessings of perfect obedience.

3. His apostolical benediction. *Grace and peace,* with all the blessings of the everlasting gospel, *be multiplied unto you,* in more abundant manifestations and deeper inward experience of them, *through the knowledge of God,* as your covenant and reconciled God, *and of Jesus our Lord,* in all the blessed offices and relations he bears towards us his redeemed people.

4. The ground on which he built his confidence, that his prayers for them should be heard and answered. *According as his divine*

power hath given unto us freely *all things that pertain unto life and godliness,* bestowing every blessing and means of grace which can conduce to the furtherance of the divine life in our souls till it is perfected above, *through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue;* our acquaintance with Jesus, and acknowledgment of him as the only Saviour of souls being effectual to engage us in the pursuit of glory as our end, and with fortitude unshaken to walk in all his holy ways. *Whereby* (δι' ὧν) or *by whom,* even through the graces of these divine Persons, *are given us exceeding great and precious promises,* above all our conceptions, as well as beyond all our deserts; *that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature,* or *a divine nature,* by the gospel word, and the great and precious promises therein revealed, wherein beholding, as in a glass, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, you are transformed into the same image, not partaking of the divine essence, but formed anew after the divine likeness in righteousness and true holiness; *having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust,* flying from out of the world which lieth in wickedness, as from a city infected with the plague, and renouncing all the corrupt principles and practices that, through the natural concupiscence which reigns in every fallen heart, in time past defiled your whole body, soul, and spirit. *Note,* (1.) All that is good in us comes alone from the divine power and grace. (2.) The gospel calls us to glory and virtue; and at the same time communicates the effectual ability for the performance of all that it commands. (3.) The knowledge of God, as he is revealed to us in the gospel of his dear Son, is the grand means of engaging our hearts towards him. (4.) Exceeding great indeed and precious are those promises, that reach to the deepest state of human guilt and misery, and extend to an eternity of glory in the highest. (5.) They who, by the transforming vision of God in the gospel, are truly made partakers of a divine nature, will show it by their deadness to the world, and the subdual of every sensual appetite.

m Prov. 4. 23. Phil. 3. 13, 14. & 2. 12 ch. 3. 18. Rom. 5. 3—5. & 12. 10—21.
n John 13. 17. Gal. 5. 23. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Heb. 10. 36. & 12. 1. Jam. 5. 7, 8. 1 Tim. 4. 7. Tit. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. Gen. 5. 24. & 17. 1.
o John 13. 34, 35. Heb. 13. 1—3. 1 Pet. 1. 22. 1 Thes. 4. 9. & 3. 12. & 5. 15. 1 John 4. 20. 1 Cor. 13. 4—8. Gal. 6. 10. Rom. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 8.
p John 13. 17. & 15. 2, 5, 8, 16. Tit. 2. 12, 14. & 3. 8, 14. Ps. 119. 32.
† Or *idle.*
q Is. 6. 9, 10. & 59. 10. John 9. 39, 41. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. 1 John 2. 9, 11. John 3. 19.
r Ver. 4. ch. 2. 18, 20.
s Heb. 3. 1. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3.
t Rom. 12. 1, 2, 11. Phil. 2. 12, 13. 1 John 3. 19. Phil. 1. 27. & 4. 8. & 3. 13, 14. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. u Rev. 3. 10, 11. 1 Pet. 1. 5. x John 10. 9, 10, 28. 2 Cor. 5. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Rev. 3. 21. & 2. 26. Mat. 25. 34.

5. And, besides this, [m] giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6. [n] And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7. And to godliness [o] brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8. For if these things be in you, and abound, [p] they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* † barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9. But he that lacketh these things is [q] blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that [r] he was purged from his old sins. 10. Wherefore the rather, [s] brethren, give [t] diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, [u] ye shall never fall: 11. [x] For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Verses 5—11. Because they had already received so much from God, they were bound to make their profiting appear. We have,

1. A gold chain of graces, which we are called to put on. *And besides this,* or for this cause, seeing you are partakers of a divine nature, *giving all diligence* to increase with the increase of God, *add to your faith virtue,* courage and boldness in the profession of the gospel; *and to virtue knowledge,* prudently considering the company, place, and time, when our courage in vindicating the cause of Christ may be most successfully exerted; *and to knowledge temperance,* keeping our passions and appetites under strict government, and using all the creatures with a holy moderation; *and to temperance patience* under every provocation; bearing with the injuries, reproaches, and perverseness of others, and meekly submissive under affliction; *and to patience godliness,* exercising yourselves in every act of devotion and means of grace, from a principle of love to God, and desire of nearer communion with him; *and to godliness brotherly kindness,* feeling the tenderest sympathy and compassion towards your fellow-christians, and ready to every good word and work that may be helpful to them; *and to brotherly kindness charity,* having your heart enlarged to all mankind, with universal benevolence towards every human creature, and a desire to promote their temporal, spiritual, and eternal welfare, not excluding even your greatest and most inveterate enemies.

2. These graces will adorn our profession, as the want of them must necessarily prove us destitute of true Christianity. *For if these things be in you, and abound,* in lively exercise, *they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: but* as trees of righteousness the planting of the Lord, full of life, sap, and fruitfulness, which redound to his glory. Whilst *he that lacketh these things is blind,* whatever pretences to wisdom he may make; *and cannot see afar off,* at best hath but a glimmering and notional apprehension of divine truth, being a stranger to that realizing faith which brings near the distant objects of an eternal world: *and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins,* unfaithful to the profession which he made at his baptism, and negligent in his application to that blood which alone can cleanse him from all his iniquities.

3. He exhorts all believers to diligence in their Christian course. *Wherefore the rather, brethren,* considering how many have a name to live who are really dead in trespasses, *give diligence to make your calling and election sure,* in the lively use of every means of grace, which may bring the fullest assurance of it to your own souls, and in the practice of all holy conversation, which may demonstrate to others that ye are indeed chosen vessels, and called unto glory, *for, if ye do these things,* and live in the exercise of the graces above-mentioned, *ye shall never fall,* so as finally to apostatize from Christ, and perish with the world: *for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,* when at the last, triumphant over death and the grave, you shall be admitted into all the glories of the eternal world, and so shall be for ever with the Lord. *Note,* (1.) Though our election be sure in God's purpose, and in the event to all his people, yet He, who hath connected the means with the end, requires our diligence and care to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. (2.) They shall shortly enter an eternal world of glory, who now walk under the influences of a Saviour's grace.

12. Wherefore [y] I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though [z] ye know *them,* and be established in the present truth. 13. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in [a] this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance; 14. [b] Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. 15. Moreover, [c] I will endeavour that ye may be able after my

y Rom. 15. 14, 15. Phil. 3. 1. ch. 3. 1. Jude 3. ver. 13, 15.
z 1 John 2. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 9, 12. ch. 3. 17. Rev. 3. 10.
a 2 Cor. 5. 1, 4. ch. 3. 1. Heb. 13. 3.
b Deut. 4 21, 22. & 31. 14. 1 Kin. 2. 1. 2 Tim. 4. 6. John 21. 18, 19. Prov. 27. 1.
c Deut. 31. 16, 19. 28. 2 Tim. 2. 2. ch. 3. 1. ver. 12.

decease to have these things always in remembrance.

Verses 12—15. The apostle appears careful to discharge his own solemn trust towards them.

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, as matters of the last importance, *though ye know them,* in a good measure: *and be established in the present truth,* fully satisfied in general of the necessity of holiness, in order to an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle* of clay, *to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance,* that your hearts may be suitably affected, and your practice correspondent with your Christian principles. And hereunto I give the greater diligence, *knowing that I must shortly put off this my tabernacle* of the body, and be soon silent in the dust, *even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover, I will endeavour,* both by my labours among you and these epistles, which, when I am dead, will yet speak, *that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance. Note,* (1.) Even the truths we know, we need to be often reminded of, and urged to show their influence on our conduct. (2.) A minister's work is never done till he closes his eyes: his deathbed must be his farewell sermon. (3.) We live in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust; but, blessed be God, we need not regret the dissolution of this wretched tabernacle, when we are to exchange it for a mansion of glory.

16. [d] For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were [e] eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17. For he received from [f] God the Father [g] honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18. And this voice which came from heaven [h] we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. 19. [i] We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, [k] as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts: 20. Knowing this first, that [l] no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21. For [m] the prophecy came not ‡ in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

d 1 Cor. 1. 17, 23. & 2. 1, 13, 14. & 4. 20. 2 Cor. 2. 17. & 4. 5. & 6. 7. ch. 3. 4.
e 1 John 1. 1, 3. & 4. 14. Mat. 17. 1—4.
f John 20. 17. 2 Cor. 1. 3. & 11. 31. Eph. 1. 3. & 4. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3.
g Mat. 17. 5. & 3. 17. Mark 1. 11. & 9. 7. Luke 3. 22. & 9. 35. John 12. 28. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 13. Is. 42. 1.
h Mat. 17. 6, 12. with Exod. 3. 5. Josh. 5. 15.
i Is. 8. 20. John 5. 39. Acts 17. 11. Ps. 19. 9. Luke 16. 29, 31.
k Ps. 119. 105. John 5. 35. Acts 2. 25—35. & 13. 26—46. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Rom. 13. 12. Rev. 2. 28. & 22. 16.
l Rom. 12. 6. 2 Tim. 3. 16.
m 2 Tim. 3. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 11. 2 Kin. 4. 27. Amos 7. 14, 15. Num. 16. 28. & 23. 12, 20, 26. 2 Sam. 23. 2. Luke 1. 70. Eph 2. 20.
‡ Or *at any time.*

Verses 16—21. We have here a reason given for the importunity and seriousness with which he pressed the foregoing exhortations. *For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables* like the Gentile legends or Jewish traditions, *when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,* at the last great day of his appearing and glory, to judge the assembled world of men and angels. *But,*

1. We *were eye-witnesses of his majesty,* on the mount of transfiguration, and attest that of which we had the fullest demonstration: not only seeing his glorified body shining in all the brightness of the meridian sun, but hearing the voice of God. *For he* there *received from God the Father honour and glory,* who bore the fullest testimony to the transcendent dignity of his divine character as his Son Messiah, *when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory,* the bright cloud which overshadowed him, the symbol of the divine presence, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,* in his person, offices, and all his undertakings. *And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard* distinctly and clearly, *when we were with him on the holy mount.* So that they could not be mistaken themselves in the things which they testified.

2. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy,* wherein a more direct attestation is borne to the power and coming of Jesus to judgment, than might be inferred from what we saw and heard. Or, *we have a most sure word of prophecy,* wherein this second appearing of the Lord to judgment, is most expressly and repeatedly affirmed; *whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place,* (and a dark world indeed would this be without the word of God,) *until the day,* the great, the expected day of our final redemption, *dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts,* to shine henceforward with unclouded lustre on his chosen, when the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and our God our glory. *Knowing this first, that,* till the day of Christ appears, we may surely depend upon his prophetic word as our guide: *for no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation,* (ἐπιλύσεως,) is not of human invention or composition, but of celestial origin: *for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God,* whom he had sanctified to be instruments in his hands to deliver his messages, *spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,* directing and dictating both the matter and expression. *Note,* (1.) The scriptures alone are our guide to glory. All our wisdom is ignorance, and our light darkness, without a divine revelation. (2.) The more diligently we take heed to the word of God, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, the more surely shall we walk in holiness and happiness here, and be brought to the perfection of both in heaven hereafter. (4.) The scriptures carry their own divine authority along with them, and, through the energy of that Spirit who indited them, impress this full conviction on the conscience. (4.) Though the Bible was written by men, we must say, as of the tables which Moses hewed, that the writing was of God. They were but organs and instruments, and did not themselves often comprehend the full meaning of what they delivered. With what sacred reverence and awe then should we open that holy book, where God himself is heard still speaking!

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 66.

The apostle here gives them fair warning of false teachers, by whom they might be in danger of being seduced. To prevent this, 1. *He describes these seducers as impious in themselves, and very pernicious to others,* ver. 1, 2, 3. 2. *He assures them of the punishment that shall be inflicted on them,* ver. 3, 4, 5, 6. 3. *He tells us how contrary the method is which God takes with those who fear him,* ver. 7, 8, 9. 4. *He fills up the rest of the chapter with a farther description of those seducers of whom he would have them beware.*

1. BUT [a] there were false prophets also among the people, even as [b] there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even [c] denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2. [d] And many shall follow their * pernicious ways; by reason of whom

a Deut. 13. 1—3. 1 Kin. 18. 19. 22. & 21. 6. Is. 56. 10, 11. Jer. 14. 14. & 23. 16, 25, 26. Ezek. 13. 3—6, 16, 17 Hos. 9. 8. Mic. 2. 11. & 3. 5, 11.
b Mat. 24. 11, 24. Acts 20. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 11. 19. 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2. 1 John 4. 1. Rev. 2. 9.
c Jude 4, 18.
d Acts 20. 30. 1 Tim. 3. 1—6. & 4. 3, 4, 2 Thes. 2. 3. 1 John 2. 18, 19. Rev. 11. 2. & 13. 3, 4, 7. & 17. 2. Mat. 24. 11, 24.
Deut. 32. 6. Phil. 3. 19. ver. 3, 9.
* Or *luxurious ways.*

the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3. And [e] through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: [f] whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. 4. For if [g] God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; 5. And [h] spared not the old world, but saved Noe the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6. And [i] turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes, condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; 7. And [k] delivered just Lot, [l] vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: 8. (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds:) 9. [m] The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to [n] reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

e Ver. 14. Ezek. 13. 19. Mic. 3. 11. Luke 22. 47. Rom. 16. 18. Tit. 1. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 5. with 1 Thes. 2. 5. ch. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 7. 2. & 12. 14, 17. 2 Tim. 3. 6.

f Ver. 1, 9. Jude 4, 19. Deut. 32. 35.

g Job 4. 18. Luke 8. 31. Mat. 8. 29. John 8. 44. 1 John 3. 8. Jude 6. Rev. 20. 2, 10. Mat. 25. 41.

h Gen. ii—viii. Job 22. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20. Heb. 11. 7. ch. 3. 6.

i Gen. 19. 24, 28. Deut. 29. 23. Is. 13. 19. Jer. 50. 40. Ezek. 16. 49. Hos. 11. 8. Is. 1. 9. Amos 4. 11. Zeph 2. 9. Luke 17. 29. Jude 7. Num. 26. 10.

k Gen. 19. 10, 15, 16, 22, 24. Job 5. 19. Ps. 34. 19. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

l Gen. 13. 13. & 19. 7, 8. Jer. 9. 1—6. & 23. 9. Ezek. 8. 17. & 9. 4. Ps. 120. 5. & 55. 5, 10, 11. & 119. 136, 139, 158.

m 1 Cor. 10. 13. Job 5. 19. Ps. 34. 19.

n Job 21. 30. Prov. 16. 4. ver. 4. Deut. 32. 3.

Verses 1—9. False teachers in the church have ever been more dangerous and destructive than all the persecutions of the enemies without. Against these the apostle here warns the people.

1. He describes them. *But there were false prophets also among the people* of Israel of old, *even as there shall be false teachers among you, who,* under pretences to divine inspiration, *privily shall bring in damnable heresies,* craftily perverting the word of God, and adulterating the doctrines of the gospel; *even denying the Lord that bought them,* redeemed them from Egypt with his mighty hand, and in a long succession of miracles repeatedly delivered them out of the hands of their enemies, Deut. xxxii. 6. yet they both doctrinally and practically renounced and disowned him: *and,* as the dreadful consequence of their disobedience, *bring upon themselves swift destruction,* which shall quickly come upon them to the uttermost. *And many shall follow their pernicious ways,* seduced by their cunning and ill examples; *by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of,* and blasphemed by the enemies of the Christian name: *and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you;* influenced merely by the detestable principles of avarice, and, amidst all their specious professions, making religion their trade, and designing wholly their secular advantage. *Note,* (1.) They who enter the ministry for gain must needs be deceivers, and perish in their wickedness. (2.) Deluding teachers are sure to find followers; error being much more acceptable to the fallen heart than holy truth.

2. He foretells their destruction. *Whose judgment, now of long time* suspended, yet *lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not,* but soon shall it terribly overtake them in the midst of their security and sensuality. *Note,* Vengeance against sinners is often slow, but always sure. Three awful instances here are produced of God's judgments.

(1.) The fallen angels. *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell,* though creatures of so much higher rank than men; *and,* on their first offence, *delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment* at the great day; much less will he spare these obstinate offenders.

(2.) The antediluvian world. *And* God *spared not the old world,* when abandoned to wickedness; *but saved Noe the eighth person,* with whom only seven more escaped in the ark, *a preacher of righteousness,* both of the imputed righteousness, and that moral righteousness to which he exhorted the men of his generation, calling them to repent of their iniquities: and, when they continued obstinate against his warnings, God issued forth the dread decree, opening the windows of heaven, *bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly,* and swallowing them up in the mighty waters. If, therefore he executed such vengeance upon them, let not other incorrigible sinners think at present to escape.

(3.) The destruction of Sodom. *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes,* he *condemned them with an overthrow,* raining fire and brimstone upon them: *making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly,* that, taking warning by their fearful punishment, they might avoid or repent of their crimes before it be too late; otherwise the same wrath shall still seize upon the ungodly and the sinner.

3. For the encouragement of the faithful, he mentions the wonderful escape of Lot from the flames. When God destroyed the cities where he dwelt, he *delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked,* grieved for the dishonour brought thereby upon God, and for the ruin which must infallibly descend upon their devoted heads: *for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds,* enduring the most painful reflections in the view of their wickedness, and the vengeance which hung over them. *The Lord knoweth,* as is evident by this instance, *how to deliver the godly out of temptations:* and he will do it in his own good time; *and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished,* who, though they should escape any signal stroke of divine vengeance in this life, are reserved unto the last dreadful day, when their iniquities shall receive their just reward.

10. [o] But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise † government: presumptuous *are they,* self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities: 11. [p] Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation ‡ against them before the Lord. 12. But these, [q] as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish [r] in their own corruption; 13. [s] And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure [t] to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings whilst they feast with you; 14. [u] Having eyes full of ‖ adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: 15. Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of

o Jude 4, 7, 8, 10, 16. 1 Thes. 2. 15. Tit. 1. 7.

† Or *dominion.*

p Ps. 103. 20. & 104. 4. Jude 9. Dan. 3. 14.

‡ Some read, *against themselves.*

q Jude 10. Ps. 94. 8. Jer. 12. 3. & 10. 21. & 12. 3. ch. 3. 3, 4. Mat. 22. 29. Is. 27. 11. & 3. 11.

r Ver. 19, 22. Prov. 14. 32. ch. 1. 4. John 8. 21. Is. 66. 4. Jer. 2. 19.

s Phil. 3. 19. Rom. 2. 8, 9. Rev. 18. 7.

t Jude 12, 19. Rom. 16. 18. 1 Cor. 11. 20, 21. 1 Thes. 5. 7. 2 Tim. 3. 6.

u Jer. 5. 8. Mat. 5. 28. Jude 4, 8, 11, 18. Mic. 3. 11. ch. 3. 3. 2 Tim. 3. 6.

‖ Gr. *an adulteress.*

x Num. 22. 7, 18, 22. & 23. 3, 12, 26. & 24. 1. & 31. 56. & 25. 1, 2. Jude 12. Rev. 2. 14. Acts 2. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 10.

y Num. 22. 22—33.

z Jude 12, 13. Eph. 4. 14. Jam. 1. 6. ver. 3, 9, 13.

a Ver. 4. Job 20. 26. Mat. 22. 13. & 8. 12. & 25. 30. Jude 6, 13.

b Jude 16. ver. 10, 19. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 22. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Tit. 2. 12.

* Or *for a little, or a while.*

c Acts 2. 40. ch. 1. 4. ver. 20. Mat. 13. 20, 21.

d Gal. 5. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 16.

e John 8. 34. Rom. 6. 16. Jude 19.

f Mat. 12. 43—45. Luke 11. 24—26. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26, 27, 38. Ps. 125. 5. with ch. 1. 2, 4.

g Luke 12. 47, 48. John 9. 41. & 15. 22.

h Prov. 26. 11. Mat. 12. 43—45. Luke 11. 24—26. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26, 27, 38.

[x] Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 16. [y] But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet. 17. [z] These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest, to whom [a] the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 18. For [b] when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were * clean [c] escaped from them who live in error. 19. While they promise them [d] liberty, they themselves are [e] the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 20. For [f] if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21. [g] For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, [h] The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Verses 10—22. The apostle here,

1. At large describes the seducing teachers, whose practices were copied after the vilest of those ungodly workers whom he had mentioned, and who with them behoved to perish. *But chiefly them* will God reserve unto judgment, *that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness*, like the men of Sodom; *and despise government*, seditious and refractory, unwilling to submit to any restraint: *presumptuous are they*, and *self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities*, reviling both the ministers and apostles of Christ, and the civil magistrates set over them for the restraint of evil-doers. *Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might* than every earthly potentate, yet *bring not a railing accusation against them before the Lord*, reviling their persons or government. *But these* despisers of God's ordinances, *as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed* by men, for whose use they were created, *speak evil of the things that they understand not*, reviling persons and things, civil and religious, of whose excellence they have not the least knowledge: *and shall utterly perish in their own corruptions*, abandoned to their wicked hearts, and left to their ruin: *and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day-time*, daring and impudent in sin, not even waiting for the night to cover their shame. *Spots they are, and blemishes*, a reproach to the name of Christian which they presume to bear; *sporting themselves with their own deceivings, whilst they feast with you*, and live in the indulgence of their sins, whilst they outwardly appear to maintain communion with you; *having eyes full of adultery*, whose wanton looks bespeak the impurity of their hearts; *and that cannot cease from sin*, enslaved by their sensual appetites, and insatiate in the indulgence of them; *beguiling unstable souls*, as Satan beguiled Eve through his subtilty, and tempting them to comply with their corrupt and lewd desires. *A heart they have exercised with covetous practices*, all their contrivances and pursuits being to amass wealth; *cursed children*, under the wrath of a holy God; *who have forsaken the right way* of salvation by Jesus Christ, *and are gone astray* from the paths of truth and holiness, *following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness*, and, notwithstanding his specious professions to Balak's messengers, really coveted the king of Moab's offers; *but was rebuked for his iniquity*, in a very signal manner, *the dumb ass*, on which he rode, *speaking with man's voice*, by miraculous powers, *forbade the madness of the prophet* in presuming to go, after the warnings to the contrary which he had received, or to attempt the cursing of that people whom the Lord had blessed. *These are wells without water*, pretending to piety, but disappointing those who, like the thirsty traveller, come to them for the water of life: *clouds that are carried with a tempest*, that promise rain, but prove noxious vapours; *to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever*, going from the darkness of sin and error to the horrible and eternal darkness of hell. *For when they speak great swelling words of vanity*, pretending to high flights of science, and boasting their vast attainments, *they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness*, by temptations suited to the corrupt inclinations of their hearers, *those that were clean escaped from them who live in error*, and had made a credible profession for a season, but now relapse into all their former abominations. *While they promise them liberty*, a carnal liberty, to live as they list without restraint, *they themselves are the servants of corruption*, the veriest slaves in nature to base and vile affections: *for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage;* and no bondage is so dreadful as that of sin and Satan. *Note*, (1.) The sins of lewdness are the dreadful rock on which unstable souls make shipwreck of the faith. (2.) They who have hearts set on their covetousness are hardly turned away from their vile pursuits, though conscience, like the faithful monitor of Balaam, often startles and accuses them. (3.) None are so far escaped from the world, but they have need to watch and pray that they fall not into temptation. (4.) However speciously the snare may be laid, and whatever liberty we may promise ourselves in sin, to our cost we shall find the dire delusion, and prove how fearful is the bondage of corruption.

2. He warns them, by all the dreadful consequences of apostasy, to beware of these seducers. *For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, and from the preaching of the gospel have been laid under such restraints as for a while to appear creditable in their profession, *they are again entangled therein, and overcome*, so as to become thorough slaves to their lusts and appetites, *the latter end is worse with them than the beginning*, and their state more guilty than when they lay before in utter darkness, ignorance, and error. *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness*, or to have heard of Christ and his salvation, *than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it hath happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire. Note*, (1.) Under convictions of sin, many for a while nauseate their former lewdness, who soon return to their forsaken iniquities with greediness, when the impressions which have been made die away. (2.) Whatever outward reformation may be made, if the heart is not right with God, all is still naught within; the swinish nature is not changed by the washing, and apostasy will inevitably be the issue. (3.) None perish with such aggravated guilt as those who have made the fairest professions, and seemed to begin well, but fail in their course, and relapse into iniquity. Woeful will be the end of apostates.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 66.

The apostle, drawing towards the conclusion of his second epistle, begins this last chapter of it with repeating an account of his design and scope in writing a second time to them, ver. 1, 2. 2. *He proceeds to mention one thing that induced him to write this second epistle, namely, the coming of scoffers, whom he describes,* ver. 3—7. 3. *He instructs and establishes them in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to judgment,* ver. 8, 9, 10. 4. *He sets forth the use and improvement which Christians ought to make of Christ's second coming, and that dissolution and renovation of things which will accompany that solemn coming of our Lord,* ver. 11—18.

1. THIS [a] second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your [b] pure minds by way of remembrance; 2. That ye [c] may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3. [d] Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4. And saying, [e] Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. 5. For [f] this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth * standing out of the water and in the water: 6. [g] Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7. [h] But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

a Ch. 1. 12—15. Rom. 15. 14, 15. Phil. 3. 1. Jude 3.

b 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3, 22, 23. & 2. 1. Jam. 1. 21, 27. ch. 1. 3—8. Heb. 3. 1.

c Ch. 1. 19. Jude 17. Acts 17. 11. John 5. 39. Is. 8. 20. Ps. 119. 105. Is. 34. 16. Deut. 6. 6, 7.

d 1 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Tim. 3. 1. Jude 18. ch. 2. 1, 10—18. Is. 5. 19. & 28. 14, 15, 22.

e Is. 5. 19. Jer. 17. 15. Ezek. 12. 22. Mal. 2. 17. Mat. 24. 48. Luke 12. 45. 1 Cor. 15. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

f Ps. 28. 5. & 33. 6. & 24. 2. & 136. 6. Heb. 11. 3. Gen. 1. 6, 9. Job. 38. 4—11. Exod. 20. 11.

* Gr. *consisting.*

g See ch. 2. 5. Gen. 7. 10, 11, 21. Job 22. 16.

h Ps. 102. 26. Is. 34. 4. & 51. 6. & 65. 17. Heb. 1. 11. Mat. 13. 40. & 25. 41. 2 Thes. 1. 8. ver. 10.

Verses 1—7. The apostle sets forth his design of writing both these epistles. *This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance,* that you may be guarded against the arts of deceivers, and *that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour,* who in perfect conformity with the inspired penmen of the old scriptures, as in other things, so particularly with regard to the coming of the Lord to judgment, have forewarned and admonished you. *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers* at revelation, and all its glorious and distinguishing doctrines; *walking after their own lusts,* given up to sensuality and brutish appetites; *and* with daring infidelity, and defiance of the divine declarations, *saying, Where is the promise of his coming,* so much talked of? when is this Jesus of Nazareth to come and take vengeance on his enemies and to destroy the world? *for since the fathers fell asleep* (say they) during so many hundred years, *all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.* Thus they vainly argue; and, because judgment is not speedily executed upon the workers of iniquity, they would conclude that there is nothing to be feared. *For,* though the scripture assures them that God hath already eminently manifested his righteous wrath by the general destruction of an ungodly world, *this they willingly,* and wilfully, *are ignorant of, that the heavens were of old* created by the almighty word, *and the earth standing out of the water and in the water,* rising from the abyss of waters which covered it at the first, moistened still by this element and compacted together, and surrounded with waters above, and full of waters in its bowels: *whereby the world that then was, being overflowed* at the general deluge, *perished,* and the scoffers of that day met their righteous doom. *But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same* almighty *word are kept in store* as treasures *reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.* And however the scoffers of this day may despise God's warnings, yet the evident marks which still remain of what he hath done by the deluge, are speaking evidences of his power to fulfil a more terrible denunciation, when his fire shall descend, and a general conflagration ensue. A day, which will spread terror and dismay through an ungodly world, and, too late, convince those infidel mockers, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

8. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that [i] one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9. [k] The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; [l] but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10. [m] But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which [n] the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. 11. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, [o] what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 12. [p] Looking for and † hasting unto the coming of the day of God, [q] wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

i Ps. 90. 4. Job 10. 5. & 36. 26. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 6. 16. Is. 57. 15.

k Is. 46. 13. Hab. 2. 3. Heb. 10. 37. Ezek. 12. 22. Mat. 24. 48. ver. 4.

l Is. 30. 18. Rom. 2. 4. 1 Pet. 3. 20. ver. 15. Ezek. 18. 23, 32. & 33. 11. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Rev. 6. 10. Ps. 86. 15.

m 1 Thes. 5. 2. Mat. 24. 43. Rev. 3. 3. & 16. 15.

n Ps. 102. 26. & 96. 11. & 98. 7. & 50. 3. Is. 51. 6. Mat. 5. 18. & 24. 35, 44. Luke 12. 39. 1 Cor. 3. 13. 2 Thes. 1. 8. Rev. 20. 11. & 21. 1.

o Mat. 24. 42. Luke 21. 34, 36. Tit. 2. 12, 13. 1 Pet. 1. 15. ch. 4. 8. Phil. 4. 8. Amos 4. 12. ver. 14.

p Mat. 25. 6. Tit. 2. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28. Luke 12. 35. 1 Pet. 1. 13.

† Or *hasten the coming.*

q Ps. 50. 3. Is. 64. 1. & 34. 4. Mic. 1. 4. 2 Thes. 1. 8. ver. 10.

Verses 8—12. The apostle having warned them against the scoffers, encourages the saints of God to expect their Lord's second coming.

1. He will *surely* come. *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* Though we measure time by succession, to the eternal God, the past, the present, and the future appear in one comprehensive view, and as nothing compared with his eternity. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (as some men count slackness)* too impatient for his appearing, *but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any* of his redeemed people *should perish, but that all should come to repentance,* called in due time to the acknowledgment of the truth, and saved by grace; and when the number of his elect shall be accomplished, then he shall hasten, his kingdom will come at the appointed period and not tarry a moment longer. *Note,* (1.) The great design God hath in view is the salvation of his own people. (2.) The way in which any can meet the Lord with comfort is, by being converted and turned to him now by faith; the impenitent and unbelieving must assuredly perish.

2. He will come *suddenly. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night,* with such a terrible surprise to an ungodly

world; *in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise*, when nature in convulsions shall utter her expiring groans, *and the elements shall melt with fervent heat*, dissolved amidst the universal conflagration, *the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up*, and not a wreck remain of all its glorious structures.

3. What influence ought such an expectation to have upon us? *Seeing then all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?* How dead to the world, how loose to its enjoyments, how patient under the present momentary afflictions, how wholly engrossed with one great concern, to secure a part in that eternal world whither we are going, *looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of the Lord*, keeping it abidingly in view, and living in a constant preparation for that solemn hour, *when the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?* *Note*, It is the character of a disciple of Jesus, that he is ever looking for his Lord's return as the glorious hope which animates him for every duty, and supports him under all his trials.

r Is. 65. 17. & 66. 21. & 26. 2. & 66. 22. Rev. 21. 1, 27. Heb. 2. 5.

13. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for [r] new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

s See ver. 11. Mat. 24. 42. Rom. 5. 1, 10. 1 Cor. 1. 8. Eph. 1. 4. & 5. 27. Phil. 1. 10. & 2. 15. Col. 1. 22. 1 Thes. 3. 13. & 5. 23. Jude 24.

14. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, [s] be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless:

t Rom. 2. 4. Heb. 9. 28. & 10. 36. 1 Pet. 3. 20. ver. 9.

15. And account *that* [t] the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother

u Rom. 1. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 7, 16. Eph. 3. 3, 4. Col. 1. 25—27. 1 Cor. 15. 10.

Paul also, according to [u] the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you;

x Rom. 8. 19—24. 1 Cor. xv. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1. Thes. 4. 15—17. 2 Thes. 2. 3.

16. As [x] also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are

y Deut. 29. 29. & 30. 11. Ps. 19. 8. & 119. 105. Prov. 6. 23. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 5. 13.

[y] some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

z Mark 13. 23. Eph. 4. 14. ch. 1. 10, 12. & 2. 1, 17, 18. Jude 12, 13. Jam. 1. 8.

17. Ye therefore, beloved, [z] seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.

a Ch. 1. 5—8. Eph. 4. 13, 15, 16. Mat. 13. 23. 2 Thes. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 2. Col. 1. 10.

18. [a] But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. [b] To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.

b Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 18. 1 Pet. 4. 11. Rev. 1. 6. & 5. 13.

Verses 13—18. We have here,

1. The Christian's expectations when this heaven and earth shall be dissolved. *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*, even that blessed abode which Everlasting Love hath prepared for the redeemed from the earth, where nothing shall ever enter which defileth, and where our bliss and glory will be eternal.

2. He exhorts them, in the prospect of such an inheritance,

(1.) To be faithful in their holy profession. *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent* in the use of every appointed means of grace, and in all holy watchfulness, *that ye may be found of him in peace*, possessing a sure interest in his love, *without spot* of sin, *and blameless* in his presence at that great day. *Note*, They are truly safe and happy for ever, whose consciences are now purged through the Saviour's blood, and by the power of his grace.

(2.) Patiently to persevere, though the time should yet be distant. *And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation*, and that the reason of his delay is for the benefit of his people's souls, that his elect may all be finally gathered in; *even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things*, of God's long-suffering, and the coming of the Lord to judgment; *in which* doctrines *are some things hard to be understood*, being of a sublime and spiritual nature, *which they that are unlearned and unstable*, who are not divinely taught of God, and whose principles are fluctuating and unsettled, *wrest* and distort from their true meaning, *as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Note*, The more dangerous it is to be ignorant in the scriptures, the more diligently should we search them, and pray God to enlighten our minds that we may be made wise unto salvation.

(3.) To beware of all deceivers. *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before*, that Christ will surely come and take vengeance of the ungodly, *beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked*, by their flatteries and seductions, *fall from your own steadfastness*, and depart from the purity of that gospel, which you have hitherto so nobly maintained. *Note*, (1.) When deluding teachers are at work, we need be deeply on our guard. (2.) They who fall into erroneous principles grow soon unsettled in their practice, and show the baleful influence of this poison.

(4.) To advance in the divine life. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, gaining a deeper and more experimental acquaintance with his love, a more unshaken dependence upon him, and an increase of every divine and spiritual disposition in consequence thereof.

3. He concludes with an ascription of praise to the Divine Redeemer. *To him be glory both now and for ever.* May every creature in heaven and earth unite in ceaseless worship, praise, and adoration to the great Immanuel! *Amen!*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL

OF

JOHN.

Introduction.

THIS epistle is universally ascribed to the apostle John, and it indeed contains in itself the fullest evidence that it flowed from the same pen which wrote the Gospel and Revelation. Though the precise time when he wrote is not certain, it seems, from chap. ii. 18. and iv. 1. to have been a little before the destruction of Jerusalem. The epistle is styled General, as not being addressed to any particular church, but to the body of Christian believers throughout the world, in order to confirm their faith in the glory and divinity of the Lord Jesus; to maintain the sacred doctrines of his person and offices against heretical seducers; to quicken them to the practice of righteousness and true holiness; and to engage them to the exercise of fervent charity towards each other; that, thus united, they might be preserved from the world which lieth in wickedness, and come to the eternal enjoyment of their ever blessed God and Saviour.

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 90.

Evidence given concerning Christ's person and excellency, ver. 1, 2. *The knowledge thereof gives us communion with God and Christ*, ver. 3. *And joy*, ver. 4. *A description of God*, ver. 5. *How we are thereupon to walk*, ver. 6. *The benefit of all such walking*, ver. 7. *The way to forgiveness*, ver. 9. *The evil of denying our sin*, ver. 8, 9, 10.

1. THAT [a] which was from the beginning, [b] which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of [c] the Word of life; 2. (For [d] the life was [e] manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was [f] with the Father, and was manifested unto us; 3. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have [g] fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4. And these things write we unto you, [h] that your joy may be full.

a Prov. 8. 23. Mic. 5. 2. John 1. 1, 2. & 8. 56. ch. 2. 13. Ps. 2. 7. Rev. 1. 8. & 21. 6. & 22. 13. Is. 41. 4. & 44. 6.

b 2 Pet. 1. 16, 18. John 1. 14. ch. 4. 14. Acts 4. 20. Mat. 3. 16, 17. Luke 24. 39. John 20. 27. & xiii.

c John 1. 1, 4, 14. & 5. 26. ch. 5. 7. Rev. 19. 13.

d Ver. 1. John 1. 4. & 11. 25. & 5. 25, 26. & 10. 28. & 14. 6. Heb. 5. 9. ch. 5. 11, 20.

e John 1. 14. & 3. 13. & 7. 34. & 21. 24. 1 Tim. 3. 16. ch. 3. 5, 8. & 4. 14. Acts 2. 32. & 3. 15. & 5. 32. & 10. 41. Rom. 16. 26. Col. 1. 26, 27. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Tit. 1. 2.

f Ps. 2. 7, 8. Prov. 8. 23—31. John 1. 1, 2, 18. & 3. 13, 31. & 7. 29. Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 8. 3. Zech. 13. 7. John 10. 30. ch. 2. 24. ver. 7.

g John 17. 21. & 14. 21, 23. & 15. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 9, 30. ch. 3. 23. h John 15. 11. & 16. 24. 2 John 12. Is. 61. 10. Hab. 3. 17, 18. Rom. 15. 13. Phil. 3. 3. & 4. 4. Luke 1. 47, 48. 2 Cor. 1. 12, 24.

Verses 1—4. The blessed penman of this epistle immediately enters into his subject. Full of Christ, he breaks forth;

That which was from the beginning, that glorious and divine person, who from eternity as the Son, subsisted with the Father in the same undivided essence, *which*, in the fulness of time, became incarnate, *we have heard*, preaching his everlasting gospel, *which we have seen with our eyes*, living and dying, *which we have looked upon*, attentively regarding him both before and after his resurrection from the dead, *and our hands have handled*, so that we have the strongest and most indubitable evidence of his true humanity, and of the reality of his resurrection in the same body which before his death he had assumed into personal union with himself, who emphatically bears the name *of the Word of life*, being the fountain of natural life to every creature, and the giver of spiritual and eternal life to his redeemed people; *(for the life*, the Lord of life and glory, *was manifested* in the flesh, *and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life*, who from everlasting existed in the unity of the Godhead, *which was with the Father*, one with him in co-essential glory, *and was*, in the fulness of time, according to the prophetic word, *manifested to us* in the human nature,) *that* adored personage, *which we have seen and heard*, and concerning whom we are most incontestably assured that our record is true, *HIM we declare unto you*, as God and Man in one Christ, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour, through whom all blessings in time and eternity are obtained for his people; and we publish his offices, glory, and gospel, *that ye also may have fellowship with us* in all the inestimable privileges which he bestows on his chosen, on us, and all who believe on his name: *and truly* this communion is of the most transcendently glorious nature, for *our fellowship is with the Father* himself, *and with his Son Jesus Christ*, in and through whom we are admitted into the nearest, most honourable, and

eternal union and friendship with the God of glory. *And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full*, abounding with consolation in the experience of the present invaluable privileges of pardon, adoption, and grace, and advancing to the perfection of joy in heaven, and to the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore. *Note*, (1.) It is the dignity of every faithful soul that he is admitted into communion with God, and is one with Jesus, as a member of his body mystical. (2.) They who know the Saviour experimentally, as united to him in faith and love, have within them a fund of never-ending consolation, a well of living waters springing up into everlasting life.

i Ch. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 11. 23. Mat. 28. 20.
k John 1. 9. & 8 12. & 9. 5. & 12. 35, 36. Jam. 1. 17. 1 Tim. 6. 16. ver. 7. Job 11. 7. Ps. 147. 5. Exod. 15. 11. Hab. 1. 12, 13.
l Ch. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 6. 14. Ps. 5. 4—6. & 94. 20.
m 2 John 4. 3 John 4. Col. 2. 6. Tit. 2. 12. Eph. 5. 8, 9, 15. Col. 1. 9, 10. 1 Thes. 5. 5—8. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.
n 1 Cor. 6. 11. Heb. 9. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 19. ch. 2. 1, 2, 12, 24. Rev. 1. 5. & 7. 14.

5. [i] This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that [k] God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6. [l] If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7. But if we [m] walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and [n] the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Verses 5—7. Having mentioned the Author of the everlasting gospel, the apostle passes on to the message which they had received from him to deliver unto men.

1. Concerning God. *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light;* a Spirit absolutely pure, infinite in all perfections: without the least shadow or possibility of imperfection; *and in him is no darkness at all. Note*, Our poor and finite ideas are unable adequately to comprehend the divine excellencies: nay, angels before him veil their faces, for he dwelleth in that light which no creature can approach unto, so as fully to discern his glory. What we know of him is rather by removing every defect from him, and saying what he is not, rather than what he is.

2. Concerning those who professed to believe in him. [1.] *If we say that we have fellowship with him*, through the gospel of his dear Son, *and* yet notwithstanding *walk in darkness*, the allowed servants of sin, which is so opposite to his essential purity, *we lie, and do not the truth;* our falsehood is evident to his all-searching eye, and our practice contradicts our professions, and proves our hypocrisy. *But*, [2.] *if we walk in the light* of truth and holiness, under the guidance of his Spirit, and according to our Christian profession, *as he is in the light*, resembling him in his communicable perfections; then *we have fellowship one with another;* we dwell in God, and God in us, enjoying the most distinguishing communion with him in spirit; *and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;* completely justified in God's sight, free from all condemnation, and assured also that the being of sin in us shall be shortly for ever rooted out. Blessed and happy are they whom this blood cleanses, and who are admitted into this holy fellowship.

o 1 Kin. 8. 46. 2 Chr. 6. 36. Prov. 20. 9. Eccl. 7. 20. Job 9. 2. & 15. 14. & 25. 4. & 14. 4. Ps. 143. 2. Jam. 3. 2. & 2. 10. ch. 2. 4. ver. 6, 10.
p Prov. 28. 13. Ps. 51. 1. & 32. 5. Acts 10. 43. Jer. 3. 12, 13.
q Ch. 5. 10. Job 14. 4. & 15. 4. Ps. 130. 3. & 143. 2. Rom. 3. 23. Jam. 3. 2. & 2. 10. see ver. 8.

8. [o] If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9. [p] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10. [q] If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Verses 8—10. The apostle, to prevent all misconception, as if perfection were to be attained here below, plainly declares, that sin still cleaves to those who are nearest and dearest to God. For,

1. *If we say that we have no sin*, not that we never had, but that we have it not now; if we, even the highest apostles, dare make such an arrogant boast, *we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;* we are under a most dangerous error and delusion. And he repeats the admonition, ver. 10. to guard more strongly against all the pride of pretended perfectionists; *If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar*, by directly contradicting his truth; because being by nature corrupted creatures, we remain, and must remain whilst in the body, imperfect; *and*, if we deny it, *his word is not in us*, which every where supposes and declares us to be such; for if we were not, the exercise of faith in the atoning blood, and of daily repentance, would be at an end.

2. *If we confess our sins*, and humbly, through faith in Jesus Christ, apply for the promised mercy of God, *he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins: faithful* to the covenant of grace, and to his promise made therein to the Redeemer on the behalf of his people; *just*, because having received the ransom of atoning blood, it is become an act of justice to pardon those who plead it, *and to cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Note*, Our acceptance with God stands not on the footing of mercy only, but is assured to us by that very perfection of holiness which seemed most strongly to militate against the sinner's hope.

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 90.

Here the apostle encourages against sins of infirmity, ver. 1, 2. *Shows the true knowledge and love of God*, ver. 3—6. *Renews the precept of fraternal love*, ver. 7—11. *Addresses Christians of several ages*, ver. 12—14. *Warns against worldly love*, ver. 15—17. *Against seducers*, ver. 18, 19. *Shows the security of true Christians*, ver. 20—27. *And advises to abide in Christ*, ver. 28, 29.

a 1 Cor. 4. 15. Gal. 4. 19. ver. 12, 13, 28. ch. 3. 7, 18. & 4. 4. & 5. 21. 3 John 4. John 13. 35.
b Tit. 2. 11, 12. 2 Pet. 1. 15, 16. Phil. 4. 8.
c Rom. 8. 34. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Heb. 7. 24, 25. & 9. 24. 1 Pet. 3. 18, 22.
d Rom. 3. 24, 25. & 5. 6—11, 15—19. John 1. 29. & 4. 42. & 11. 51. 2 Cor. 5. 18—21. Col. 1. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 3. 18. Heb. 2. 17. ch. 1. 7. & 4. 10, 14.
e Ver. 4—6. ch. 5. 3. John 14. 14, 24. & 15. 10, 14. Heb. 5. 9. Ps. 119. 6, 32.
f Ch. 1. 6. & 4. 20. & 5. 10.
g John 14. 15, 21, 23. & 13. 35. ch. 4. 12, 13. Ps. 119. 9, 11. Tit. 2. 11, 12, 14.
h John 6. 56. & 15. 4, 5, 10. John 13. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 20, 21. 1 Cor. 11. 1. Eph. 5. 2. ch. 1. 7.

1. [a] MY little children, these things write I unto you, [b] that ye sin not. And if any man sin, [c] we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2. And [d] he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world. 3. And [e] hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4. [f] He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not him. 5. [g] But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. 6. [h] He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Verses 1—6. We have here,

1. The design which the apostle chiefly aimed at in what he had written. *My little children*, whom I regard with the tenderest sensations of paternal love, *these things write I unto you that ye sin not;* watchful against every surprise and temptation, and never allowing yourselves in the practice of it. *And if any man*, through the infirmity of his nature, be drawn aside from the way of God's commandments, *we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*, who shall still plead our cause,

when we with shame and sorrow return to him, whose everlasting righteousness shall stand us in stead before the throne of God. *And he is the* abiding *propitiation for our sins*, having made the full atonement, and obtained eternal redemption for us, paying that ransom which is available not only for all past, but for all future transgressions to our lives' end; *and not for our sins only*, who were once, as Jews, his peculiar and covenant people; *but for the sins of the whole world*, of Gentile believers also, who were admitted to the participation of the same privileges, and become the children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. *Note*, (1.) The advocacy of Jesus is founded upon his everlasting righteousness, and perfect atonement, and therefore is ever available: no cause put into his hand can miscarry. (2.) Whilst with holy jealousy we war against sin, we must not, if at any time cast down, sink into despair: we have one before the throne, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and God for his sake will abundantly pardon. (3.) Christ's salvation is universal to sinners of all ranks and nations, who come to God by him: none shall be in any wise cast out.

2. The rule of judgment concerning our real knowledge of Christ. *And hereby we do know that we know him*, and have the fullest demonstration of our real acquaintance with him, and of our genuine faith and love, *if we keep his commandments*, and unreservedly yield up ourselves to be guided by his holy word and will. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments*, living in the allowed and habitual practice of iniquity, *is a liar, and the truth is not in him*, however confident his boasts may be, and however high his pretensions. *But whoso keepeth his word*, in doctrine and practice, faithfully desiring to correspond therewith in all things, *in him verily is the love of God perfected*; its prevailing influence, and unfeigned sincerity is *hereby* manifested; and by this *know we that we are in him*; vitally united to the living Head, eternally interested in all the privileges of his gospel, in which the hypocrite hath neither part nor lot. *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked*; copying the divine pattern, and, though at an humble distance, following the footsteps of the holy Jesus. *Note*, The profession of Christianity, without the practice of true godliness, is but an empty name. They who are truly Christ's will prove it not only in their lips, but by their lives.

7. Brethren, [i] I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. 8. Again, [k] a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is [l] true in him and in you: because [m] the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. 9. He [n] that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10. [o] He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none * occasion of stumbling in him. 11. [p] But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

i Ch. 3. 11. 2 John 5. Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 5. 43. John 15. 12.

k John 13. 34. ch. 4. 21.

l Ch. 3. 16. John 15. 12, 13. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 21.

m Rom. 13. 12. 1 Thes. 5. 5, 8. Acts 17. 30. Mat. 4. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 9, 11. John 1. 9. & 8. 12. & 12. 35. Eph. 5. 8. ch. 1. 7. Tit. 2. 11, 12. 2 Tim. 1. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 4, 6.

n 1 Cor. 13. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 9. ch. 3. 14, 15. John 12. 35. ver. 11.

o Ch. 3. 14. Ps. 119. 165. John 12. 35. Rom. 14. 13. 2 Pet. 1. 10.

* Gr. *scandal.*

p Lev. 19. 17. Tit. 3. 3. ch. 3. 14, 15. with ver. 9. John 12. 35. 2 Cor. 4. 4.

Verses 7—11. The apostle in the most distinguishing character of true discipleship, and in obedience to the great command of the Divine Master, earnestly inculcates the great duty of brotherly love.

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but remind you of *an old commandment which ye had from the beginning*; written upon the heart of man in innocence, and enforced in that revelation which God from the first made unto men. *The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning*, wherein love is enjoined as the fulfilling of the law. *Again, a new commandment I write unto you*, the same indeed in substance, but enforced by new motives, encouragements, assistances, and examples; *which thing is true in him and in you*; manifested most strikingly in that divine pattern of love which he set before you, and which you have in a gracious measure humbly imitated. *Because the darkness* of the former dispensation *is past, and the true light now shineth*, the Sun of righteousness is arisen, and the shadows are fled, the glorious gospel bringing us forth as if were into the meridian light of truth, and demanding from us a conversation suitable to the peculiar advantages which we enjoy. *He that saith he is in the light*, and professes faith in Jesus, the light of the world, *and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now*, a stranger to the godlike spirit of charity which the gospel breathes, and covered with the black night of sin and error. *He that loveth his brother*, as a fellow-member of Christ's mystical body, and because he is the child of the same heavenly Father, *abideth in the light* of truth, *and there is none occasion of stumbling in him*; he will carefully avoid whatever would offend or weaken his brother's soul. *But he that hateth his brother*, and harbours an uncharitable, envious, proud, and revengeful disposition, *is in darkness*, under the evident dominion of Satan and sin: *and walketh in darkness*, all his ways being perverse before God: *and knoweth not whither he goeth*, nor is aware of the dreadful issue of his ways, *because that* the *darkness* of his fallen heart *hath blinded his eyes* to all the dire consequences of sin. *Note*, (1.) Charity is the distinguishing characteristic of the Christian. (2.) If there be any creature living, against whom we harbour allowed envy, malice, or revenge, in whose misery we should delight, or whose good we desire not to promote, we brand ourselves the children of darkness.

12. I write unto you, little children, [q] because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13. I write unto you, [r] fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I write unto you, [s] young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I [t] write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because [u] ye are strong, and the word of God [x] abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 15. [y] Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16. [z] For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17. [a] And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but

q Luke 24. 47. Acts 4. 12. & 10. 43. & 13. 38. ch. 1. 7. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14.

r 1 Cor. 10. 15. & 14. 20. with ch. 1. 1. & 5. 20. Dan. 7. 9. Ps. 90. 2.

s Ver. 14. Eph. 6. 10, 12. 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. ch. 4. 4. & 5. 4, 5. Rom. 16. 20. & 8. 13. & 7. 24, 25.

t Gal. 1. 8, 9. Phil. 3. 1. 2 Pet. 3. 1. & 1. 12—15. Is. 28. 10. Heb. 5. 12—14. & 6. 1.

u Eph. 6. 10—17. 2 Tim. 2. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. ver. 13.

x John 5. 38. & 8. 31. Col. 3. 16. Ps. 119. 11. Jer. 31. 33.

y Rom. 12. 2. Col. 3. 1, 2. Mat. 6. 24. Luke 16. 13. Gal. 1. 10, 16. Jam. 4. 4. 1 Cor. 7. 31. ver. 16.

z Rom. 13. 13, 14. Eccl. 5. 10—12. Eph. 2. 2, 3. Tit. 3. 3.

a Ps. 90. 9. & 102. 26. Is. 40. 6. Jam. 1. 10. & 4. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 24. 1 Cor. 6. 13. & 7. 31.

b John 6. 58. Ps. 125. 1, 2. Prov. 10. 25. John 10. 28, 29. 1 Pet. 1. 5. John 4. 14.

[b] he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Verses 12—17. The great duty of love is equally the concern of all ranks and degrees of Christians, whatever their several attainments may be in the divine life.

1. He addresses himself to Christians in every stage of their profession.

I write unto you, little children, and as a powerful incentive to the exercise of charity, urge this duty upon you, *because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake;* and having much forgiven, you should love much. *Note,* The lowest in the Christian life have received the free and full pardon of all their sins, this being the first great privilege of the gospel, of which every babe in Christ is immediately a partaker.

I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning, and by long acquaintance with his grace and love, are peculiarly called and engaged to show the same divine charity to others: and none are so far advanced, as not to need the word of exhortation.

I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one, and have been made more than conquerors over sin, and Satan, and the world, through him that loved you. And to impress more deeply my exhortation, I repeat my words,

I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father; and, young as you are in the Christian life, have tasted of the goodness and love of your heavenly Father. *I have written unto you, fathers,* grown old in the happy experience of the good ways of Christ, *because ye have known him that is from the beginning,* and entered deep into the mysteries of his everlasting grace, and his transcendent excellences. *I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong* in faith and knowledge, and the exercise of every heavenly temper; *and the word of God abideth in you,* Christ being formed in your hearts, and his gospel dwelling in you richly, and influencing all your conversation; *and ye have overcome the wicked one,* and hitherto effectually defeated all his efforts against your souls, and will, I trust, go on still conquering and to conquer; and blessed are they who are thus strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

2. He solemnly warns them all, whatever their several attainments may be, to beware of this present evil world. *Love not the world,* set not your affections thereon; *neither* inordinately seek, nor be immoderately delighted with, *the things that are in the world. If any man* supremely *love the world,* and set his heart upon it, as his home and his happiness, *the love of the Father is not in him;* it is evident that such a one is not the object of his choice and regard; hath never experienced a sense of his love, nor felt any real heart-attachment to God in Christ, as his portion and exceeding great joy. *For all that is in the world,* to engage and seduce the heart from God, *the lust of the flesh,* whatever ministers to the lawless gratification of appetite, and leads to excess, sloth, intemperance, luxury, drunkenness, revellings, and every kind of impurity, *and the lust of the eyes,* the gain, possessions, wealth, and glittering riches which the covetous eye gazes upon with such rapture, and eager desire after; *and the pride of life,* the pomp and splendour of titles, show, equipages, honours, magnificence, which gratify the vanity, and inflame the ambition of the fallen mind: of all and either of these we must say, that it *is not of the Father;* worldly things were not given to be thus abused, nor are these the objects on which God's children place their affections; *but* we know, that each of these things *is of the world;* they are the flattering baits which the god of this world, the devil, spreads to insnare the sensual and earthly hearts of fallen men, and to seduce them from their true Lord and Master. *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof;* great and desirable as the things of it appear in the eye of sense, they are poor, perishing, unsatisfactory in the enjoyment, and transitory; often in time flying our grasp, and certainly at death must fail us; *but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever;* hath a more enduring substance; his fidelity to death shall be crowned with immortal life and glory; his pleasures in eternity shall be infinitely superior to all the delights of sense; and his inheritance above incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away. Oh! that thou mayest be wise, reader, and learn to weigh time and eternity, this world and the next, in the balance of the sanctuary!

18. Little children, it is the last time: [c] and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19. [d] They went out from us, but they were not of us; for [e] if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out,* that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 20. [f] But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 21. [g] I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. 22. [h] Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? he is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. 23. [i] Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [*but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*] 24. [k] Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall [l] remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25. [m] And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life. 26. [n] These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27. But [o] the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; and [p] ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in † him.

c Mat. 24. 5, 11, 24. John 5. 43. Acts 20. 29, 30. 2 Thes. 2. 3—12. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6. & 4. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 2. 1. ch. 4. 3. ver. 19. 2 John 7. Rev. ix.

d Deut. 13. 13. Ps. 41. 9. & 55. 12—14. Acts 20. 29, 30. 1 Cor. 11. 19.

e Job 17. 9. Ps. 125. 1, 2. Prov. 10. 25. Mat. 24. 24. John 6. 37. & 10. 28, 29. 2 Tim. 2. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 2—5. Heb. 10. 39. Jude 1. John 4. 14.

f Ver. 27. ch. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 21, 22. Is. 44. 3, 4. Ezek. 36. 27. Zech. 12. 10. John 7. 38, 39. & 14. 16, 17, 26. & 15. 26. & 16. 13. 1 Cor. 2. 15. Prov. 28. 5. Mat. 11. 25.

g Ch. 1. 4. & 5. 13. ver. 12—14, 26.

h 2 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 9, 12. ch. 4. 3. 2 John 7.

i Ver. 22. Luke 12. 9. John 6. 53. & 8. 19. & 14. 9, 10. & 10. 30. & 15. 23. 2 Tim. 2. 12. ch. 4. 15. 3 John 9.

k Ps. 119. 11. Prov. 23. 23. John 15. 7. Col. 3. 16. Luke 9. 44. Rev. 3. 3, 11. Heb. 3. 6, 14. 2 John 6. Jude 3.

l John 14. 23. & 15. 9, 10. & 17. 21—24. ch. 1. 3, 7. & 4. 15, 16.

m Is. 45. 17. & 54. 8. 9, 19. Mat. 19. 29. John 3. 14—17, 36. & 6. 32—58. & 8. 51. & 17. 2, 3. & 5. 24. Rom. 5. 10, 15—21. Tit. 1. 2. ch. 1. 2. & 5. 11.

n Ch. 3. 7. 2 John 7. Acts 20. 29, 30. Phil. 3. 2. Col. 4. 3, 18. 2 Pet. 1. 12—15. & 2. 1. & 3. 1, 17.

o See ver. 20. ch. 3. 24. Rom. 8. 9. Gal. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 12. 2 Tim. 1. 14. Heb. 8. 10, 11. John 14. 26. & 16. 13. 1 Cor. 2. 15.

p Jer. 31. 33, 34.

† Or *it.*

Verses 18—27. As the mystery of iniquity had begun already to work, the apostle,

1. Reminds them, that the Jewish dispensation was now ready to expire utterly with the destruction of their temple, city, and nation. *Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists;* either those who among the Jewish people set up themselves for the Messiah; or rather, who under the Christian profession opposed and denied the person, offices, and gospel of Christ; broaching their heretical tenets, and perverting many from the truth. *They went out from us,* from our communion and society;

but they were not of us, nor had ever truly been renewed by grace: *for if they had been of us*, and partakers of the like precious faith with us, *they would no doubt have continued with us*, and persevered in the principles and practice of the gospel: *but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us*, but from the beginning were false-hearted professors, who never tasted of the grace of God in truth. *Note*, They who fall away finally, we may assuredly conclude, never were truly converted, whatever specious professions they might have made.

2. He encourages them to trust, and not to be afraid, since no seducers shall ever be able to move them from their steadfastness. *But ye have an unction from the Holy One*, from the Spirit of grace and truth, which, through the exalted Saviour, hath been bestowed upon you; *and ye know all things* necessary to preserve you from the wiles of deceivers, and to bring you to everlasting salvation. *I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it*, and are established in the principles of the gospel, and the fundamental doctrines of Christ; *and* know *that no lie is of the truth*, but the very reverse, that it proves the hypocrisy and apostasy of those who by fraud and error would support their heretical doctrines. *Note*, They who are truly taught of God shall be preserved from every fatal delusion.

3. He particularly points out these seducers, by their tenets. *Who is a liar*, and to be deemed an impostor, *but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ*, rejecting him as the true Messiah? *He is antichrist*, and bears the brand of this hateful name, *that denieth the Father and the Son*, either confounding the persons in the Godhead, or dividing the substance; or denying that flood of evidence, wherewith God the Father hath borne witness to the mission and incarnation of his dear Son. *Whosoever denieth the Son*, his personality and essential Deity, or the office he bears as Mediator, *the same hath not the Father*, holds not the true doctrine of the persons in the undivided Godhead, and of the relation which God the Father bears to God the Son; and therein denies all that revelation which he hath made of pardon and reconciliation, through the substitution of the incarnate Redeemer; *but he that acknowledges the Son, hath the Father also;* he that receives the Lord Jesus by faith as the only Saviour, and confesses him to be the eternal Son of God, he hath the true knowledge of God the Father, and an interest in his favour and love.

[The last clause of this text is wanting in many editions, but appears in others of great authority, and is admitted into our version, though marked with Italics, as a supplement which elucidates the foregoing part of the verse.]

4. He exhorts them to cleave to the old truth, for novelty of doctrine is the sure proof of error. *Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning*, when the gospel was first preached unto you. *If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father*, and holding the profession of your faith unwavering, shall enjoy the most happy communion with the Father through the Son, until you come to his kingdom in glory. *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life*, which he will infallibly fulfil to those who abide in him, and will bring them to the beatific vision and enjoyment of his blessed self for ever and ever.

5. He mentions one great purpose of this epistle. *These things have I written unto you concerning them that* labour to *seduce* and pervert *you* from the simplicity which is in Christ. *But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you*, the Spirit which he hath given you shall continue to teach, direct, and lead you aright; *and ye need not that any man teach you;* cannot want the help of those pretended wise men to instruct you above what is written; *but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things*, and hath opened your eyes to see in the revealed word all things that pertain unto life and godliness, *and is truth, and is no lie*, but directly contrary to the spirit of error which actuates these seducers: *and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him*, your living head, and continue under the blessed influence and guidance of his truth and grace unto the end.

28. And now, little children, [q] abide in him; that, [r] when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. 29. If ye know that he is righteous, ‡ ye know that [s] every one that doeth righteousness is [t] born of him.

q John 15. 4—7. Col. 2. 6.
r Ch. 3. 2. Col. 3. 4. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Luke 21. 36. Mark 8. 38. ch. 4. 21. Is. 25. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb 9. 28. Rev. 22. 14.
‡ Or *know ye.*
s Ch. 3. 7, 10. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Gal. 5. 22, 23. 1 Pet. 1. 15. Tit. 2. 12, 14.
t Ezek. 36. 26. John 1. 13. & 3. 3, 5, 6. Jam. 1. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 23. 2 Pet. 1. 4. ch. 3. 9. & 5. 18.

Verses 28, 29. From what he had said, the apostle closes with this affectionate exhortation to them:

And now, little children, abide in him, maintaining the closest communion with Jesus, and walking in the lively exercise of faith and hope, and love towards him, unmoved from the doctrines of his gospel by the wiles of deceivers: *that when he shall appear* on the throne of judgment at the last day, *we may have confidence* and boldness to appear in his presence, *and not be ashamed before him at his coming*, when we your ministers shall not be disappointed of our hopes, but meet you as our joy and crown, and, together with you, stand forth without fault, and blameless, acknowledged by him as his people, and admitted into the joy of our Lord. *If*, or *since, ye know that he is righteous*, perfectly righteous himself, the lover and author of all righteousness in his redeemed, *ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him*, and thereby gives a demonstration that he is a partaker of a divine nature, and hath the possession of spiritual life, which is the pledge of that which will be eternal. *Note*, (1.) They only will have boldness in a day of judgment who are found in Christ, and perseveringly cleave to him. (2.) Everlasting shame and contempt will cover those, who ungratefully, unfaithfully, and perversely have departed from the truth, and shall be disowned of Jesus in the day of his appearing and glory. (3.) The evidence of a divine nature must be manifested in a good conversation, for whatever conceits men may entertain of themselves, it is by their fruits they must be known.

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 90.

The apostle here magnifies the love of God in our adoption, ver. 1. 2. *He thereupon argues for holiness*, ver. 3. *and against sin*, ver. 4—10. *He presseth brotherly love*, ver. 11—18. *How to assure our hearts before God*, ver. 19—22. *The precept of faith*, ver. 23. *And the good of obedience*, ver. 24.

1. BEHOLD, [a] what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, [b] that we should be called the sons of God! therefore [c] the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2. Beloved, [d] now are we the sons of God, [e] and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but [f] we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we [g] shall see him as he is. 3. And [h] every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

a John 3. 16. Ps. 36. 6, 7. & 89. 1, 2, 28. Jer. 31. 3. Rom. 5. 8. ch. 4. 9, 10, 16, 19. Mat. 5. 45.
b Jer. 3. 4, 19. John 1. 12. 2 Cor. 6. 18. Rom. 8. 16, 17.
c Col. 3. 3. John 15. 18, 21. & 16. 3. & 17. 25.
d Is. 56. 5. Rom. 8. 14—17. Gal. 3. 26, 29. & 4. 6, 31.
e Ps. 31. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 9. Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 17.
f 2 Cor. 5. 1—7. Eph. 1. 14. Rom. 8. 28, 29. 1 Cor. 15. 49. Phil. 3. 21. Col. 3. 4. Eph. 5. 26, 27. Jude 24.
g Job 19. 26, 27. 1 Cor. 13. 12. Mat. 5. 8. Ps. 17. 15. & 16. 11. John 17. 24. Rev. 22. 4, 5.
h 2 Cor. 7. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 4. & 3. 14. Col. 1. 12. ch. 4. 17. Heb. 12. 14. & 7. 26.

Verses 1—3. The apostle here,

1. Breaks forth with admiration in the view of the love of God toward his people. *Behold,* with wonder and amaze; *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,* in Jesus Christ, *that we,* by nature and practice so vile, corrupt, and sinful, *should,* notwithstanding, be adopted into his family, and *be called the sons of God,* advanced to that transcendent dignity and honour: *therefore the world,* who have their minds wholly engrossed with sensible objects, and have no discernment of spiritual things, *knoweth us not;* far from esteeming and valuing us, they deride and persecute us for that image which we bear, *because it knew him not,* they are ignorant of God; and when his Son appeared incarnate, they nailed him to a tree. *Note,* (1.) The meanest child of God hath a dignity infinitely greater than the first-born of princes. (2.) It will be matter of everlasting wonder and praise to the redeemed, that ever God should set his love upon them. (3.) If we are treated with derision and contempt by this wicked world, we should remember the cross which Jesus bore, and be ashamed to murmur.

2. He declares the high expectations of God's children. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God;* this is our present honour; *and it doth not yet appear what we shall be:* greater blessedness is in store for us than eye hath seen, or ear heard, or it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive: *but we know that, when he shall appear,* who is our head, even Christ, *we shall be like him,* admitted to his presence, and partakers of all his glory: *for we shall see him as he is,* and our bodies as well as souls shall be fashioned after his bright image. *Note,* The day of judgment will be a day of triumph to every redeemed soul; then at least they shall be perfected in holiness and happiness for ever.

3. Such a hope cannot but have the most powerful influence upon our conduct. *And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure,* setting Christ's glorious pattern before him, and earnestly desirous to obtain a holy conformity to him in all things. *Note,* The hope that doth not lead us to holiness, is but the hope of the hypocrite, which perisheth.

4. Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: [i] for sin is the transgression of the law. 5. And ye know that [k] he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6. [l] Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7. Little children, [m] let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8. [n] He that committeth sin is of the devil: for the devil sinneth from the beginning. [o] For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9. Whosoever is born of God [p] doth not commit sin; for his [q] seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10. [r] In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

i Rom. 4. 15. & 7. 12, 14. ch. 5. 17.
k Is. 5. 4—12. Mat. 1. 21. & 20. 28. Rom. 3. 24—26. & 4. 25. & 5. 6—21. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22, 24. & 3. 18. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Tit. 2. 14. ch. 1. 7. & 4. 9, 10. Rev. 1. 5. Eph. 5. 2, 25—27. Heb. 1. 3. & 4. 15. & 9. 26, 28. & 7. 26. Luke 23. 41. John 8. 46. & 14. 30. ch. 2. 1.
l John 15. 4—7. & 8. 34, 36. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Col. 1. 2. & 2. 6. ver. 9. ch. 5. 18. & 2. 4. & 4. 8. 3 John 11.
m 1 Cor. 6. 9. Gal. 6. 7. ch. 2. 26, 29. ver. 10. ch. iv. & 5. 1—3, 21. 2 John 6. Ezek. 18. 5—9.
n John 18. 44. Mat. 13. 38. Eph. 2. 2. ch. 5. 19. ver. 10.
o See ver. 5. Mat. 12. 29. Luke 10. 18. John 12. 31. & 16. 11. Col. 2. 15.
p John 18. 34. ch. 2. 29. & 5. 18. Rom. 7. 15—24.
q 1 Kin. 14. 8. Ezek. 36. 26. Job 19. 28. John 3. 3, 5, 6. 1 Pet. 1. 23. 2 Pet. 1. 4. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Eph. 2. 5, 10. & 4. 23, 24.
r Ch. 2. 29. 2 Cor. 1. 12. John 8. 44. Acts 13. 10. ch. 4. 8.

Verses 4—10. Nothing can more strongly urge the believer to strive against sin, than the arguments which the apostle here urges upon him.

1. Sin is the breach of God's holy law. *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.* Every deviation from that perfect rule brings guilt upon the conscience, and so far clouds our hope; and where sin is the allowed practice, there all hope towards God must be delusion.

2. The very end of Christ's redemption was to cleanse us from all iniquity. *And ye know that he was manifested* in the flesh on purpose *to take away our sins,* both the guilt of them from the conscience, and to break the power of them in our hearts; *and in him is no sin:* all, therefore, who belong to him, must show that the design of his incarnation is answered respecting them, in their deliverance from the bondage of corruption, and in their growing conformity to his blessed image.

3. An allowed and habitual course of sin is utterly contradictory to real union with Christ. *Whosoever abideth in him,* as the branch in the vine, deriving constant supplies of grace out of his fulness, *sinneth not* with freedom, choice, delight, and perseverance, but hates sin as the greatest evil, and desires to keep at the greatest distance from it: *whosoever sinneth* determinedly with satisfaction, and full purpose to abide in the practice of it, *hath not seen him, neither known him,* but is an utter stranger to Christ, and his great salvation.

4. It is the most fatal deceit to imagine, that without the practice of righteousness we can ever be like him or with him. *Little children, let no man deceive you* with any vain suggestions: *he that doeth righteousness,* in the constant and habitual course of his temper and conduct, and conscientiously towards God and man desires to be found without offence, he *is righteous, even as He is righteous,* and thus resembles in a measure the Holy One of God.

5. The allowed and avowed practice of sin is a virtual compact with the devil, and renunciation of Jesus Christ. *He that committeth sin,* as his trade, delight, and choice, *is of the devil,* bears his image, and is under his influence, *for the devil sinneth from the beginning,* was the author of evil, and continues to spread the dreadful poison; having tempted angels from their allegiance, and seduced man in paradise, with unrelenting malice he persists in labouring for men's eternal ruin. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil,* and rescue his people from Satan's hateful power, breaking his yoke from off their neck now, and by and by destroying the very being of sin in them: all who are his chosen, therefore, experience his power, and are delivered from the bonds of the wicked one.

6. Every regenerate soul cannot but renounce his connection with iniquity. *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;* it is contrary to that divine nature which he hath received; and he can never sin in the same manner that he did before; *for his seed remaineth in him;* he has that principle of grace implanted in his heart, that makes sin odious and hateful to him: *and he cannot sin;* not that he is literally impeccable, but that the new nature he hath received is utterly averse to it, opposes the carnal mind, and never suffers him to rest under the power of evil, *because he is born of God.*

7. *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil;* their works always evidence what spirit is in them: *whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God,* hath no part nor lot in his kingdom, *neither he that loveth not his brother;* these two things, neglect of godliness, and an uncharitable spirit, are the sure bands of Satan's slaves.

11. For [s] this is the * message that [t] ye heard from the beginning, that we

* Or *commandment.*

s Ch. 1. 5. & 2. 7.
t John 13. 34, 35. & 15. 11. Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Gal. 6. 2. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 22. & 3. 8. & 4. 8. Jam. 2. 8. ch. 4. 21. ver. 16, 23.

should love one another. 12. Not as [u] Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 13. Marvel not, my brethren, [x] if the world hate you. 14. [y] We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. 15. [z] Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16. [a] Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us: and [b] we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. 17. But [c] whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18. My little children, [d] let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. 19. [e] And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall† assure our hearts before him. 20. [f] For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 21. Beloved, [g] if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God. 22. [h] And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

u Gen. 4. 4—8. Jude 11. Heb. 11. 4. Prov. 25. 8. with John 15. 19. 1 Pet. 4. 4. Prov. 29. 27.

x John 15. 18, 19. & 17. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 12. John 16. 33. Acts 14. 22.

y Ch. 2. 10. & 5. 13. ver. 15. John 5. 24. & 13. 35. with ch. 2. 9, 11. & 4. 7, 8, 20, 21. 1 Thes. 4. 9.

z Lev. 19. 17. Mat. 5. 21, 22. Tit. 3. 3. ch. 4. 20. Gal. 5. 21.

a Ch. 4. 9, 10. John 3. 16. & 15. 13. Rom. 15. 8. Eph. 5. 2, 25. John 10. 15. Tit. 2. 14. Mat. 20. 28. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. & 2. 24. & 3. 18. Rev. 1. 5. & 5. 9.

b Rom. 16. 4. Phil. 2. 17.

c Luke 3. 11. ch. 4. 20. & 5. 1. Deut. 15. 7. Jam. 2. 15.

d Rom. 12. 9. Jam. 2. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 22. & 3. 8. & 4. 8. ver. 11. with Ezek. 33. 31.

e See ver. 14. ch. 5. 1, 2. & 4. 17, 20, 21. John 13. 35. & 18. 37. & 8. 31, 32. 2 Tim. 1. 11.

† Gr. *persuade.*

f Rom. 2. 15. Ps. 50. 16—21. & 90. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 4.

g 2 Cor. 1. 12. Heb. 10. 22. ch. 2. 28. & 4. 17. ver. 22.

h Ps. 10. 17. & 34. 15. & 66. 18. Prov. 15. 29. & 28. 9. Jer. 29. 12. Mat. 21. 22. & 7. 7, 8. Luke 11. 9. John 15. 7. & 9. 31 & 14. 13. & 16. 23. Jam. 1. 5. & 5. 16. ch. 5. 14.

Verses 11—22. The apostle having mentioned the want of brotherly love as the sure evidence of exclusion from God's favour, enforces the practice of that most excellent of graces, charity. *For*,

1. *This is the message that ye heard from the beginning*, and one of the chief precepts of the Redeemer, *that we should love one another.*

2. He mentions the dire example of the wicked Cain, to show the hatefulness of such a spirit as he possessed. *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one*, a child of the devil, *and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous*, and he could not bear the rebukes of his pious example, and the approbation which God testified of Abel's sacrifice, when his own was rejected. And if this was the case so early, and the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent appeared then so malignant, *marvel not, my brethren, that the world hate you;* the same diabolical nature will produce exactly similar effects. *Note*, (1.) Anger, envy, and hatred in the heart, is murder begun. (2.) We need not wonder at the world's enmity; such is the lot of all the saints.

3. Brotherly love is the sure proof of our spiritual life. *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;* to love them as children of God, and for the sake of him whose image they bear, evidences the life of God in our own souls.

4. The contrary is a sure sign of the remaining power of spiritual death over the soul. *He that loveth not his brother abideth in death*, in a state of nature, and of wrath under the curse of the law. For *whosoever hateth his brother is*, in the eye of the law, *a murderer; and ye know that no murderer*, who continues under the power of his malignant spirit, *hath eternal life abiding in him*, nor the least prospect of attaining it; eternal death is the wages of his sin.

5. The love of Jesus to us should engage our love to our brethren. *Hereby perceive we the love of God*, the Son towards us, *because he laid down his life for us* on the accursed tree; an instance of love so stupendous, as passes all understanding; *and we*, animated by such an example, *ought*, if duty so require, *to lay down our lives for the brethren;* and if our lives must readily be offered for their service, how much more our substance, when their necessities call for our relief? *But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* Such a conduct must necessarily show the absence of that divine principle, and prove the hypocrisy of every pretension to the high relation of children of God. *My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue*, merely, *but* give the more substantial evidences of our charity *in deed and in truth*, acting according to our professions, with an open hand and open heart towards every Christian brother, for his sake whose love we in common share.

6. *And hereby we know that we are of the truth;* such a conversation demonstrates the reality of our interest in the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, *and shall assure our hearts before him*, bearing witness to our simplicity and godly sincerity, and giving us rejoicing in the testimony of our conscience. *For if our heart condemn us* of allowed hypocrisy, and we cannot stand before our own tribunal within, *God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things*, and must therefore much more condemn us, as his piercing eyes can discover hidden iniquities which we pass by unregarded. *Beloved, if our heart condemn us not*, not the stupified hearts, and seared consciences of the unregenerate, but the enlightened minds of the faithful, where, though many infirmities may be seen and lamented, allowed guile is not harboured, this consciousness of our simplicity gives an humble boldness to the soul, and *then have we confidence towards God*, a holy freedom and liberty of soul in our approaches to a throne of grace. *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight*, asking always according to his will, and aiming at his glory in all our conversation.

23. And [i] this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, [k] and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24. And [l] he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. [m] And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

i John 6. 29. & 17. 3. Ps. 2. 12. John 3. 14—16. & 9. 31. Mark 16. 15, 16. Acts 16. 31. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

k Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 8. & 3. 8. ch. 4. 12. 21. ver. 11. John 13. 34, 35. & 15. 12.

l John 14. 23. & 15. 10. & 6. 54, 56. & 17. 21. ch. 4. 12.

m Rom. 8. 9. ch. 4. 13. & 2. 20, 27. Ezek. 37. 27. Zech. 12. 10. Is. 44. 3—5.

Verses 23, 24. We have here,

1. The great commandment of the gospel. *And this is his commandment*, (1.) *That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of lost sinners, renouncing every other hope and dependence, and with satisfaction resting our souls on him for pardon and acceptance with God: *and*, (2.) That we should, in consequence of faith in him, *love one another, as he gave us commandment*, exercising the most enlarged, unfeigned, and cordial affection towards all the members of his body mystical in particular, and showing a general benevolence to mankind.

2. Great will be the blessedness resulting from hence. *And*

he that keepeth his commandments, from this principle of faith which worketh by love, *dwelleth in him, and He in him,* abiding in a state of vital union with the exalted Jesus: *and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us,* whose mighty energy effectually influences our hearts and conduct, and who bears witness to his own work to our increasing comfort and joy.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 90.

In this chapter the apostle exhorts to try the spirits, ver. 1. *Gives a note to try by,* ver. 2, 3. *Shows who are of the world, and who of God,* ver. 4—6. *Urges Christian love by divers considerations,* ver. 7—16. *Describes our love to God, and the effects of it,* ver. 17—21.

1. BELOVED, [a] believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2. [b] Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3. [c] And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

a Acts 17. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 21. Jer. 29. 8, 9. Mat. 7. 15, 16. & 24. 4, 5, 24. Eph. 5. 6. Phil. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 2 John 7. Acts 20. 29, 30. Col. 2. 8, 18.

b Ch. 5. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 12. 3.

c Ch. 2. 18, 22, 23. & 5. 10. 2 John 7. 9. 2 Thes. 2. 7.

Verses 1—3. The apostle,

1. Warns them against seducing teachers. *Beloved, believe not every spirit,* nor credit rashly each pretender to inspiration: *but try the spirits,* by the infallible oracles of truth, *whether they are of God,* and speak agreeably to his revealed will: *because many false prophets are gone out into the world,* and we need be on our guard, proving all things, and holding fast that which is good.

2. He gives them a certain rule to direct their judgment in this matter. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God,* and those who are influenced by it: *every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,* or *that confesseth Jesus Christ, who is come in the flesh,* receiving him in his divine person and mediatorial character and offices as the true Messiah, from whom alone life and salvation are to be expected, he *is of God,* and speaks according to his mind and will. *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,* but denies his divine glory, his real incarnation, and mediatorial undertaking, *is not of God,* but is under the spirit of Satan and delusion: *and this is that spirit of antichrist,* that is, enmity against Christ and his gospel, *whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world,* the mystery of iniquity having already begun to work, and wo to those over whom it prevails!

4. [d] Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because [e] greater is he that is in you, than [f] he that is in the world. 5. [g] They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. 6. [h] We are of God: [i] he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. [k] Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

d Ch. 3. 9. & 5. 18—20. & 4. 5. Rev. 12. 11. ch. 2. 13. ver. 16.
e John 10. 28—30. 1 Pet. 1. 5. ch. 3. 24. Eph. 3. 1.
f John 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 12. & 6. 2, 3.
g 2 Pet. 2. 10—17. Jude 16. John 3. 31. & 15. 19. & 17. 14. & 7. 7.
h Rom. 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 1. Jam. 1. 1. Jude 1.
i John 8. 47. & 10. 27. & 18. 37. 1 Cor. 14. 37. 2 Cor. 10. 7.
k Is. 8. 20. Acts 17. 11. John 14. 17.

Verses 4—6. To encourage them against the fears of being drawn aside by seducers, the apostle,

1. Assures them, that as they belonged to God, they were safe. *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them* hitherto, and shall be still superior to all their arts: *because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world,* and he will preserve you from the power of evil.

2. He describes these seducers. *They are of the world;* whatever pretences they make, they are wholly engrossed and influenced by the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life; *therefore speak they of the world,* expect a temporal Messiah, and seek a worldly kingdom, *and the world heareth them,* greedily drinking in a doctrine so suited to their carnal hearts.

3. He shows the different character of God's true ministers and people. *We are of God,* appointed by him, and owned of him, having his glory singly in view, and walking under the guidance and influence of his word and Spirit: *he that knoweth God, heareth us,* and receives our testimony as divine: *he that is not of God,* not enlightened by him nor born of him, *heareth not us,* disregarding our doctrine and counting it foolishness. *Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Note,* They who reject the warnings of God's ministers, speaking according to his holy word, evidently show themselves to be under the spirit of error.

7. [l] Beloved, let us love one another: [m] for love is of God; [n] and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8. [o] He that loveth not knoweth not God; [p] for God is love. 9. [q] In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10. [r] Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. 11. Beloved, [s] if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12. [t] No man hath seen God at any time. [u] If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13. [x] Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

l See ch. 3. 11, 18, 23. & 5. 1. ver. 20, 21.
m Phil. 1. 29. Gal. 5. 6. Rom. 5. 5. Deut. 30. 6.
n Ch. 3. 14. & 2. 29
o Ch. 2. 4. & 3. 6. ver. 20.
p Ver. 16. Ps. cxxxvi. & 86. 5, 15. Exod. 34. 6, 7. Mic. 7. 18, 19.
q John 3. 16. Rom. 5. 8 & 8. 32. ch. 3. 16. & 5. 11.
r Deut. 7. 7, 8. John 15. 16. Rom. 8. 3, 4, 32. & 3. 24, 25. & 5. 8, 10 20, 21. 2 Cor. 5. 19—21. Col. 1. 20. Tit. 3. 4. ch. 2. 2
s Mat. 18. 33. John 15. 12, 13. ch. 3. 16, 17, 23.
t Exod. 33. 20. Deut. 4. 12. John 1. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 17. & 6. 11.
u John 17. 21. ch. 3. 24. & 2. 5.
x See Ch. 3. 24. & 2. 20, 27. John 14. 20, 23, 26. & 17. 21. ver. 15, 16.

Verses 7—13. The apostle returns to recommend the exercise of fervent charity, as the genuine evidence of a right spirit. *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God,* his genuine offspring, and his brightest image: *and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God;* he evidences hereby his experimental acquaintance with God, and shows himself a child of his family of love. *He that loveth not knoweth not God,* whatever he may pretend, *for God is love,* and the true knowledge of him hath ever a transforming efficacy, to change us into his blessed image. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us,* and shone forth with the most distinguished lustre, *because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world,* to become incarnate, to live and die for us, *that we might live through him,* redeemed from the sentence of death, quickened to newness of life, and through his divine righteousness entitled to immortal bliss and glory. *Herein is love,* surpassing strange! *not that we loved God,* no; just the reverse; we were sinners, ungodly, enemies; *but* even when we had every thing which could render us the objects of his loath-

ing, even then, *that* he might magnify the wonders of his grace, *he loved us*, and gave the most astonishing demonstration of it, when he *sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*, with his own blood making atonement for us, and purging us from our iniquities by this amazing sacrifice. *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* Who can possibly offend us so highly as we have offended God? yet he forgives and pardons abundantly; yea, he spared not his own Son, but freely gave him up for us all: what then can we withhold from our brethren, when we have such an example before us? Surely, if we belong to him, we shall be like him, and prove it by this Spirit of love. *No man* indeed, *hath seen God at any time*, for he is a spirit, invisible and incorporeal. But *if we love one another, God dwelleth in us;* by his Spirit manifesting his presence in our hearts; *and his love is perfected in us*, our love to him is proved to be sincere and genuine, and will grow up unto absolute perfection in glory. *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit*, whereby we become one with him, united to him in faith and love, and experiencing the most gracious manifestations of his presence with our souls. Thou God of life and love, give me more abundantly of this blessed Spirit!

y Ch. 1. 1, 2. & 2. 1, 2. & 3. 5, 16. John 1. 14. & 3. 14—17. Gal. 4. 4, 5. Mat. 1. 21. & 20. 28. Luke 19. 10.
z Acts 8. 37. Rom. 10. 9. ver. 2. ch. 5. 1, 5. 1 Cor. 12. 3.
a Ch. 3. 6, 24. John 14. 20, 23. & 17. 21.
b Ch. 3. 1, 16. ver. 9, 10. Heb. 11. 13. Acts 15. 11. Gal. 2. 20. Ps. 18. 1—3. & 14. 2, 5.
c See ver. 8, 12, 13.

14. [y] And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world. 15. [z] Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, [a] God dwelleth in him, and he in God. 16. [b] And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. [c] God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Verses 14—16. We have here,

1. The apostolic testimony. *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son*, in his infinite grace and love, *to be the Saviour of the world*, of both Jews and Gentiles, even of all that believe in him without exception.

2. The true evangelical confession. *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God*, owning him as the divine and true Messiah, and making open profession of his faith, in the face of every danger, *God dwelleth in him and he in God*, being happily joined to him in one spirit for eternity.

3. The experience of all true Christians. *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us*, the astonishing manifestation of which, in sending his Son, leaves us no room to doubt of his transcendent and distinguishing grace towards us. God *is love*, pure, perfect love, *and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him;* there subsists a holy union between them, and it will be everlasting.

d Ch. 2. 5. & 3. 3. ver. 12, 18.
* Gr. *love with us.*
e Jam. 2. 13. ch. 3. 19, 21. & 5. 14.
f Rom. 8. 29. 1 Cor. 15. 48, 49. 1 Pet. 1. 15. or 2 Tim. 2. 12. Mat. 10. 25. John 15. 20.
g 2 Tim. 1. 7. Luke 1. 74, 75. Heb. 12. 28, 29. ver. 12, 17.
h Luke 7. 47. Ps. 116. 1, 12, 16. & 119. 32. 2 Cor. 5. 14.
i Ch. 2. 4. & 3. 17.
k John 13. 34, 35. & 15. 12. ch. 3. 11, 18, 23. Lev. 19. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Eph. 5. 2. Rom. 12. 9, 10. & 13. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 14. Jam. 2. 8. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 8. & 4. 8.

17. [d] Herein is * our love made perfect, [e] that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because [f] as he is, so are we in this world. 18. [g] There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. 19. [h] We love him because he first loved us. 20. [i] If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21. And [k] this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Verses 17—21. The apostle proceeds to set forth the blessed effects of Christian love. *Herein is our love made perfect*, proved to be genuine and sincere, by our union of heart to God, and charity to the brethren; and where this is the case, then, it becomes evident *that* we are born of God.

1. *We may have boldness in the day of judgment*, and confidently appear before the throne of Jesus, assured of acceptance in that great day: *because, as he is, so are we in this world*, and he cannot but receive into the bosom of his love those who bear his own bright image.

2. We are delivered from all slavish fear. *There is no fear in love*, nothing distressing, terrifying, and servile, *but perfect love casteth out fear*, a real consciousness of love to God, and of an interest in his favour, silences all fearful apprehensions of death or judgment: *because fear hath torment*, and where it prevails, must make the soul miserable and unhappy: *he that feareth*, and trembles before God as his enemy, *is not made perfect in love*, nor hath yet seen him in the delightful character of a reconciled God and Father. *We love him, because he first loved us;* his love shed abroad in the heart, must kindle ours, and the view of those amazing manifestations of it which he hath made, should every day add fuel to the sacred fire, and raise the flame of holy affections still higher and higher, till at last we are wholly assimilated to his image, and made absolutely perfect in love.

3. Love to God necessarily includes love to the brethren. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar;* his uncharitableness proves the hypocrisy of his pretensions: *for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen*, with his bodily eyes, and beheld his distresses, which should excite compassion; or the divine image in him, which should engage his regards; *how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* how absurd is the supposition! *And this commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also*, and prove thereby the unfeigned sincerity of his professions.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 90.

In this chapter the apostle asserts, 1. *The dignity of believers*, ver. 1. *Then*, 2. *Their obligations to love, and the trial of it*, ver. 1—3. *Then*, 3. *Their victory*, ver. 4, 5. *Then*, 4. *The credibility and confirmation of their faith*, ver. 6—10. *Then*, 5. *The advantage of their faith in eternal life*, ver. 11—13. *Then*, 6. *The audience of their prayers, unless for those that have sinned unto death*, ver. 14—17. *Then*, 7. *Their preservation from sin and Satan*, ver. 18. *Then*, 8. *Their happy distinction from the world*, ver. 19. *Then*, 9. *Their true knowledge of God*, ver. 20. *Upon which they must depart from idols*, ver. 21.

1. WHOSOEVER [a] believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and [b] every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 2. [c] By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3. [d] For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and [e] his commandments are not grievous. 4. For [f] whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. 5. [g] Who is he that over-

a Mat. 16. 16. John 6. 69. Acts 8. 37. Rom. 10. 9, 10. John 1. 12, 13. ch. 2. 22, 23. & 4. 2, 14, 15. & 2. 29.
b Ch. 3. 14, 17, 23. & 4. 7, 8, 12, 20, 21. with Esth. 2. 10. Jam. 1. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 23.
c Ch. 3. 14. & 4. 20. John 13. 35.
d Ch. 2. 13. John 14. 15, 21, 23. & 15. 10, 14. & 13. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 5. Mat. 22. 37—40. 2 John 6.
e Mat. 11. 28—30. Rom. 7. 22. Jer. 31. 33. Mark 9. 23. Phil. 4. 13.
f Ch. 4. 4. & 2. 13. & 3. 6. Gal. 6. 14. John 16. 33. Rom. 8. 35, 37. 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4. Eph. 6. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 9. ver. 5.
g 1 Cor. 15. 57. ch. 4. 2, 4, 15. see ver. 1.

cometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Verses 1—5. The apostle shows,

1. The genuine marks of a child of God. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ*, the true Messiah, placing his whole dependence for pardon, life, and salvation upon him, *is born of God*, adopted into his blessed family, and dignified with all the honours of a son and heir of the Almighty: *and every one that loveth him that begat*, the blessed God, the Author of all grace to his people, *loveth him also that is begotten of him*, and delights in his image wherever it appears.

2. *By this we know that we love the children of God*, as his children, and purely for his sake, *when we love God* unfeignedly, *and keep his commandments* from a principle of faith which worketh by love. *For this is the love of God*, the most undoubted evidence of it, *that we keep his commandments*; counting them all holy, just, and good, and having respect unto them without partiality or hypocrisy; *and his commandments are not grievous*; love makes the labour light, and the obedience cheerful and willing.

3. This is what will gain the conquest over an insnaring world. *For whatsoever is born of God*, and partakes of a new and a divine nature, *overcometh the world*, and triumphs over both its terrors and allurements: *and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*, which realizing unseen and eternal things, stamps vanity upon all present objects; and deriving strength from the Redeemer's fulness, enables us to be more than conquerors over all our trials. *Who is he that overcometh the world?* none ever did or can, *but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God*; and dependent upon him for life and salvation, holds on his heavenly way, and is neither to be seduced nor terrified from his holy profession. Lord, give and increase this victorious faith!

6. [h] This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And [i] it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7. [k] For there are three that bear record in heaven, the [l] Father, the [m] Word, and the [n] Holy Ghost: and these three are [o] one. 8. And there are three that bear witness in earth; [p] the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. 9. [q] If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

h John 19. 34, 35. & 7. 38, 39. & 1. 14, 29, 36. Eph. 5. 25—27. Tit. 2. 14. & 3. 5. Acts 3. 26. & 5. 31. Heb. 9. 24. 1 Pet. 2. 24. & 1. 18, 19. Rom. 5. 9. Gal. 3. 13, 14. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14.

i Ver. 7, 8. John 15. 26. & 16. 13. & 14. 17.

k Ps. 33. 6. Is. 11. 2. & 48. 16. & 61. 1. & 63. 9, 10. Hag. 2. 5, 7. Zech. 12. 10. Mat. 3. 16, 17. & 28. 19. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Rev. 1. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 12. 4—6.

l Mat. 3. 17. & 17. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 17. John 12. 28. & 8. 18, 34. & 10. 25, 37, 38. Eph. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3.

m John 1. 1. Rev. 19. 13. ch. 1. 1. John 8. 13, 14. & 5. 17. & 10. 24, 30. Acts 7. 55, 56. & 9. 3—5.

n Mat. 3. 16. John 1. 32, 33. Acts ii. & 8. 7. & 10. 44. John 15. 26.

o John 10. 30. Deut. 6. 4. Mat. 19. 17.

p Ver. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 2. Rev. 22. 1. or Heb. 2. 4. Mat. 28. 19. & 26. 26—28.

q John 8. 17, 18. & 5. 36, 37.

Verses 6—9. Faith in the divine Messiah being of such essential consequence to our souls, we have here the foundation on which this faith is built.

1. *This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood:* he at his baptism entered upon his office, and on the cross finished the great atonement; and the blood and water which flowed from his wounded side declared the purposes of his coming, both to pay a ransom for our sins, and to cleanse us from the defilement of them, by the renovation of our nature through the mighty energy of his Spirit; for which glorious purposes faith looks to Jesus Christ, as appointed of the Father to his mediatorial office, and able and willing in both these respects to perfect the salvation of his people.

2. Christ hath the strongest attestation borne to his divine person *and* character. *It is the Spirit that beareth witness*, in the miraculous powers bestowed upon the ministers of the gospel, and to the consciences of believers; *because the Spirit is truth* itself, and his testimony cannot deceive. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; the Father*, at his baptism and transfiguration, bore witness to him; *the Son* repeatedly asserted his own divine glory and office, and appealed to the miracles he wrought, for a proof of the truth of what he advanced; *the Holy Ghost*, by his descent on Jesus at his baptism, and the miraculous powers with which he invested the apostles and others, added his full attestation to the great Redeemer: *and these three*, though personally distinct, *are*, in essence, *one. And there are three that bear witness on earth; the Spirit*, in his gifts and graces; *the water*, wherewith every believer is baptized in the name of the Son of God, as a divine person; *and the blood*, which Jesus shed upon the cross, and instituted in his last supper a constant memorial of it to be observed in his church: *and these three agree in one*, and bear testimony to the divine character and complete redemption of our adored Immanuel. *If we receive the witness of men*, attesting any fact, and every court of human judicature admits their oath and evidence as satisfactory; *the witness of God is greater*, which both Father, Son, and Spirit, severally bear to the dignity and glory of the Lord Jesus, and with whom the appointed witnesses on earth agree: *for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son*, as the true and divine Messiah, whom we by faith and love must embrace, and in whom alone salvation can be attained.

10. He that believeth on the Son of God [r] hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God [s] hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. 11. And this is the record, [t] that God hath given to us eternal life; [u] and this life is in his Son. 12. [x] He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13. [y] These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on [z] the name of the Son of God.

r John 3. 1, 33. Rom. 8. 16. Gal. 4. 6. Eph. 2. 10. Heb. 12. 2. & 11. 13.

s John 3. 33. & 5. 38. Is. 53. 1. Heb. 3. 12. & 4. 11.

t John 3. 36. & 6. 40, 47. ch. 2. 25. & 4. 9, 14.

u John 1. 4. & 17. 2, 3. & 14. 6. & 11. 25. Col. 3. 3, 4.

x John 3. 36. & 5. 24. & 1. 12. Eph. 3. 17. Gal. 2. 20.

y Ch. 1. 4. & 2. 26. & 3. 14. 2 Cor. 13. 5. 2 Pet. 1. 10. John 20. 31.

z Acts 4. 12. Mat. 16. 16. John 6. 6, 9. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

Verses 10—13. We have here,

1. The happy state of the true believer. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself;* he feels the suitableness of the Saviour to his state of guilt and misery, and knows by happy experience his excellence, fulness, and all-sufficiency. *He that believeth not God*, and receiveth not his testimony concerning his only begotten Son, *hath made him a liar*, and denied his truth, *because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son*, and submits not to the witness which he hath borne to the character of Jesus as the true Messiah.

2. The perpetuity of his felicity. *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life;* the earnest, foretaste, and beginning of it, and the sure title to it through the Redeemer's righteousness; *and this life is in his Son*, secured by him, treasured up in him, and communicated from him to his people. *He that hath the Son*, is by faith united to him, and interested in his redemption, *hath life;* hath spiritual life here, and possesses the title to eternal life hereafter: *and he that hath not the Son of God*, doth not by faith embrace him, and derive grace from him, *hath*

not life, is dead in trespasses and sins, and the wrath of God abideth on him.

3. The knowledge he hath of his invaluable privileges. *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life;* and rejoice in this distinguished gift of God; *and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God;* engaged more steadfastly to cleave to him, and with unshaken perseverance maintaining your holy profession. *Note*, (1.) That we have life, eternal life in Christ Jesus, is to be known: the Lord seal this knowledge to our consciences! (2.) They who have begun well should be encouraged to persevere, assured that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

14. And this is the confidence that we have * in him, that, [a] if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: 15. [b] And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him. 16. [c] If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, [d] he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: [e] I do not say that he shall pray for it. 17. [f] All unrighteousness is sin: and [g] there is a sin not unto death.

* Or *concerning him.*

a Ch. 3. 22. Jam. 4. 1, 3, 5, 6. Jer. 29. 12, 13. Mat. 7. 7—11. & 21. 21. John 14. 13. & 15. 7. & 16. 24. Is. 45. 11.

b See ver. 14. Mark 11. 24. Luke 11. 9. Mat. 17. 20.

c Job 42. 8. Jam. 4. 14—16. Gen. 20 7, 17. Ps. 106. 23. Ezek. 22. 30.

d Num. 15. 30. 1 Sam. 2. 25. Mat. 12. 31, 32. Heb. 6. 4—8. & 10. 26, 27, 29, 38. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 22.

e Jer. 7. 16. & 11. 14. & 14. 11. & 15. 1. John 17. 9.

f Ch. 3. 4. Rom. 4. 15. Deut. 5. 32. & 12. 32.

g Is. 1. 18. & 43. 25. & 55. 7. & 44. 22. Eph. 1. 7. Tit. 2. 14. Rom. 5. 20, 21.

Verses 14—17. The apostle adds to all the other blessings flowing from faith in Christ,

1. Access to God in prayer, and the sure answer to all our petitions. *And this is the confidence that we have in him*, and boldness to approach a throne of grace; *that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us;* accepts our prayers, and will grant our requests. *And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him*, in manner, time, and measure bestowed, as he sees most for his own glory and our good. *Note*, (1.) If we would obtain an answer to our prayers, God's revealed will must be the rule of them. (2.) When we pray in faith, we may confidently rest ourselves upon God's promise: he will hear and help us.

2. Our prayers for others, as well as for ourselves, shall meet with kind acceptance. *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death;* though it deserves death as its wages, yet is not in its nature unpardonable; *he shall ask* God to pardon his offending brother, *and he shall*, in answer to his prayer, *give him life for them that sin not unto death*, and renew them again unto repentance. *There is a sin unto death*, which never can be forgiven, either in this life, or in that which is to come: *I do not say that he shall pray for it:* blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and wilful apostasy, seem to be beyond the reach of prayer. *All unrighteousness* indeed *is sin; and* if God were to execute his righteous law on the offender, he must perish. But every sin is not unpardonable: *there is a sin not unto death*, for which prayer can be available, and pardon and restoration may be obtained. What an encouragement is this to fervent and ceaseless intercession on the behalf of others!

18. [h] We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God [i] keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. 19. *And* [k] we know that we are of God, and [l] the whole world lieth in [m] wickedness. 20. And [n] we know that the Son of God is come, [o] and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: [p] and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. [q] This is the true God, and eternal life. 21. [r] Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

h Ch. 3. 9. & 2. 29. Rom. 7. 14—24.

i Ch. 2. 13, 14. & 3. 12. Ps. 15. 23. & 39. 1. Prov. 4. 23. Jude 21. Jam. 1. 27.

k Rom. 8. 16. ver. 13. ch. 3. 14, 24. 2 Cor. 1. 12. 2 Tim. 1. 12.

l Eph. 2. 2, 12. Tit. 3. 3. Rom. 1. 28—32. & 3. 10—18.

m Or *the wicked one.* John 12. 31. & 14. 30. & 16. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Eph. 2. 2.

n Ch. 4. 2. & 5. 1. John 17. 3.

o Mat. 13. 11. Luke 24. 45. Eph. 1. 17, 18. & 3. 18, 19.

p Ch. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 17, 21. Phil. 3. 9. Jude 1. John 17. 21.

q Is. 9. 6. & 44. 6. & 54. 5. John 17. 3. & 20. 28. Rom. 9. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Tit. 2. 13. ver. 11, 12.

r Exod. 20. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 10. 7, 14. 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17.

Verses 18—21. The apostle concludes,

1. With a recapitulation of the believer's privileges and practice. *We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not* that unpardonable sin, nor continues allowedly in any course of iniquity; *but he that is begotten of God*, and thus partaker of a new and divine nature, *keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not;* the power of Satan is broken, and he never can again bring the redeemed soul into the like condemnation with himself that it should perish by apostasy. *Note*, A truly regenerate soul can never die eternally.

2. He mentions their happy separation from the world. *And we know that we are of God;* his children; renewed in the spirit of our minds, and separated for him to be a peculiar people from the corrupted mass of mankind: *and the whole world* beside *lieth in wickedness*, (εν τω πονηρω) in the wicked one, under his power, influence, and dominion, and must be condemned together with him. *Note*, It is most indubitably certain, that the far greater part of the world, even the Christian world, lieth in wickedness: and as certain, that they will perish everlastingly. It becomes us therefore seriously to inquire, whether we are of the world: for then must we be condemned with the world. When but few shall be saved, it should awaken our solicitude to be of that few.

3. They knew the Son of God, and enjoyed a blessed union with him. *And we know that the Son of God is come*, in the human nature, to take away our sins by the sacrifice of himself; *and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true*, by his Spirit opening the eyes of our mind, and shining into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory: *and we are in him that is true*, vitally united to him who is the truth itself: *even in his Son Jesus Christ*, as living members of his mystical body. And *this* Jesus *is the true God*, the self-existent Jehovah, *and eternal life*, the purchaser, fountain, and bestower of it on all his people; and they who know him now by faith, will live eternally with him in glory. *Note*, (1.) Either Jesus Christ is the true God, or the scriptures are a fiction. (2.) They who know him as their Saviour, by real union of heart with him, can never perish, but shall have everlasting life.

4. He closes with a solemn admonition. *Little children*, dear to me as the offspring of eternal love, *keep yourselves from idols;* abhorring and avoiding the hated idolatry of paganism, and the use of images as mediums of worship, and let the triune God be the only object of your adoration. *Amen.*

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

SECOND EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

Introduction.

SINCE in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, but all, without distinction of sex, are admitted to the privileges of the gospel, we need not wonder to have an inspired epistle directed to an honourable matron and her children. The style marks the penman, and the similitude of expression shows him to be the same who wrote the foregoing Epistle, and probably about the same time; accordingly it hath been generally received in the church as canonical.

ANNO DOMINI, 90.

The apostle here salutes an honourable matron and her children ver. 1—3. *Recommends to them faith and love,* ver. 5, 6. *Warns them of deceivers,* ver. 7. *and to take heed to themselves,* ver. 8. *Teaches how to treat those that bring not the doctrine of Christ,* ver. 10, 11. *And referring other things to personal discourse, concludes the epistle,* ver. 12, 13.

1. THE [a] elder unto the [b] elect lady and her children, whom [c] I love in the truth: and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; 2. [d] For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever. 3. [e] Grace be with you, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, [f] in truth and love. 4. [g] I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. 5. And now I beseech thee, lady, [h] not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. 6. [i] And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

a 1 Pet. 5. 1. 3 John 1, 6.
b Acts 13. 48. Eph. 1. 4, 5.
c 1 John 3. 18. Mat. 22. 39. Gal. 2. 5, 14. & 3. 1, 5, 7. Eph. 1. 15. 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Heb. 10. 26. Jam. 1. 18. & 5. 19. 1 Pet. 1. 22. 3 John 1, 3, 8.
d Phil. 1. 6. 1 John 2. 14, 23. Col. 23. 16. John 15. 7.
e Rom. 1. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 2.
f Zech. 8. 19. Gal. 5. 6.
g Phil. 4. 1. 1 Thes. 2. 19. 3 John 3, 4.
h John 13. 34. & 15. 11, 12. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 8. 1 Thes. 4. 9. 1 John 2. 7, 8. & 3. 11, 23. & 4. 21.
i John 14. 15, 21. & 15. 10, 14. Rom. 13. 8, 9. Gal. 5. 14. 1 John 5. 3. & 2. 5, 24.

Verses 1—6. The epistle opens,

1. With the inscription. *The elder,* John, now far advanced in age, and by office an elder, as well as an apostle, *unto the elect lady,* chosen among the not many noble, to be a partaker of the gospel salvation; *and* to *her children,* heirs with her of the same promises; *whom I love in the truth,* unfeignedly, and for the sake of him whose image they bear: *and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth,* who cannot but respect and delight in those who adorn so eminently the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things: *for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us,* which renders the possessor more respectable than all riches, birth, or titles: *and shall be with us for ever;* for this truth is an incorruptible seed, and, where planted in the heart, springs up into eternal life.

2. We have the apostolic benediction. *Grace be with you,* in all its happy fruits and effects, of pardon, strength, and consolation, with *mercy and peace,* and every blessing that we can ask, or the Lord hath promised to give, *from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ,* to whom we are indebted for all, and who is *the Son of the Father, in truth and love;* one with him in essence and glory, the divine Son of the divine Father, and the object of his eternal love.

3. His congratulation. *I rejoiced greatly, that I found of thy children walking in truth,* as it is in Jesus, and in their spirit and conduct a credit to the holy profession which they make, guided by the oracles of God, *as we have received a commandment from the Father. Note,* (1.) It is a singular joy to ministers, to behold the rising generation ornaments to religion. (2.) We then walk in the truth, when we make God's word our constant rule of conduct.

4. His request and exhortation. *And now I beseech thee, lady,* as the chief design of my epistle, *not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another,* out of a pure heart fervently, from the divine principle of faith which worketh by love. *And this is*

love, the infallible test of true love to God and man, *that we walk after his commandments*, with a universal and conscientious respect to all his holy will. *This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it*, under the influence of this great law of love. *Note*, Kind exhortations are preferable to authoritative commands, and usually much more available.

7. [k] For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. 8. [l] Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have * wrought, but that we receive a full reward. 9. [m] Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10. [n] If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: 11. For he that biddeth him God speed is [o] partaker of his evil deeds. 12. [p] Having many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak † face to face, that [q] our joy may be full. 13. The children of thy [r] elect sister greet thee. Amen.

k Mat. 24. 5, 24. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 John 2. 18, 22. & 4. 1—3. 2 Thes. 2. 7, 11.
l Mark 13. 9. Gal. 3. 4. Heb. 10. 32. Mat. 13. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 19. 1 Cor. 15. 58. Ps. 19. 11.
* Or *gained*. Some copies read, *which ye have gained, but that ye receive*, &c.
m Is. 8. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 2. Col. 3. 16. 1 John 2. 23, 24.
n Rom. 16. 17. Gal. 1. 8, 9. Prov. 4. 14, 15. Tit. 3. 10. ver. 8. 2 Tim. 3. 5. 6. & 4. 14. 1 Cor. 16. 22.
o 1 Tim. 5. 21. Eph. 5. 11. Prov. 1. 10—19.
p 3 John 13. Rom. 1. 10—12. John 16. 12.
† Gr. *mouth to mouth*.
q John 17. 13. 1 John 1. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 4.
r Ver. 1. Rom. 8. 30. 1 Pet. 1. 2. 2 Thes. 2. 13. Eph. 1. 4. Rom. 11. 7.

Verses 7—13. The apostle proceeds,

1. To warn and guard this honoured family against the wiles of seducers. *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*, broaching the most fatal and heretical doctrines, as that Jesus Christ assumed not a real human nature, but lived and died in appearance only; or that he who was born at Nazareth was not the true expected Messiah. *This is a deceiver and an antichrist*, an avowed enemy to the Redeemer's glory and gospel, and a destroyer of the souls of men. Therefore *look to yourselves* with holy jealousy and watchfulness, *that we lose not those things which we have wrought*, and be at last disappointed of our hopes of you, whilst you come finally short of the grace of God, and, after all the most promising appearances, be seduced by the error of the wicked; *but* hold fast the truth, and, whereunto ye have already attained, walk by the same rule, mind the same things, *that we receive a full reward*, when you shall appear our joy and crown in the great day, and we with you shall obtain the glorious recompense promised to those who are faithful unto death. *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God*, is not influenced by his Spirit, and hath no part in his salvation: *he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ*, with regard to his divine person, real incarnation, mediatorial offices, and complete redemption, professing boldly his faith in defiance of all opposition, *he hath both the Father and the Son*, is admitted into a holy and happy communion with them, and hath the most assured interest in their love and favour.

2. They are enjoined not to give the least countenance to these seducers. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house*, nor afford him ought of that hospitable entertainment which you kindly give to the faithful ministers of Christ; *neither bid him Godspeed*, nor wish the least success to such ungodly attempts as the propagation of these poisonous errors; *for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds*, and an abettor of his wickedness. *Note*, We need to be very cautious not only to keep from evil ourselves, but to avoid being partakers of other men's sins.

3. He concludes with informing the lady, that he hoped shortly to have a more full personal conference with her on this subject. *Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink; but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face*, more at large; *that our joy may be full*, and we may be happy together in the experience of the true grace of God, and be preserved from all deluders. *The children of thy elect sister greet thee!* How happy is it where grace thus diffuses itself through a whole family, and those who are united by the ties of blood are thus more nearly united in the bonds of God's everlasting love! *Amen!* Would to God that this were the case in every family!

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

THIRD EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

Introduction.

The epistle to Gaius, like the former, is written to an individual; but of general use to the church, and universally admitted as canonical. Whether this Gaius is the same whom the apostle Paul calls his host, (Rom. xvi. 23.) is uncertain.

ANNO DOMINI, 90.

In this epistle the apostle congratulates Gaius upon the prosperity of his soul, ver. 1, 2. *Upon the fame he had among good Christians,* ver. 3, 4. *Upon his charity and hospitality to the servants of Christ,* ver. 5, 6. *He complains of contemptuous treatment by the ambitious Diotrephes,* ver. 9, 10. *Recommends Demetrius,* ver. 12. *And hopes to visit Gaius shortly,* ver. 13, 14.

1. THE [a] elder unto the well-beloved [b] Gaius, [c] whom I love * in the truth. 2. Beloved, [d] I † wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as [e] thy soul prospereth. 3. For [f] I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of [g] the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. 4. I have no greater joy than to hear that [h] my children [i] walk in truth. 5. Beloved, [k] thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; 6. Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church; whom if [l] thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: 7. [m] Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. 8. [n] We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be [o] fellow-helpers to the truth.

a See 2 John 1.
b Acts 19. 29. & 20. 4. Rom. 16. 23. 1 Cor. 1. 14.
c See 2 John 1. 1 John 3. 18.
* Or *truly.*
d Rom. 13. 10. Ps. 122. 6, 8. Phil. 2. 4.
† Or *pray.*
e 2 Cor. 1. 5. & 2. 14. & 4. 16—18. & 3. 18. 2 Pet. 1. 3—9. & 3. 18.
f 2 John 4. ver. 4. Phil. 4. 1. 1 Thes. 2. 19, 20.
g 2 John 2. 1 John 2. 14, 24. John 15. 7. Col. 3. 16, Phil. 1. 6. Ps. 119. 11. & 51. 6. John 1. 47.
h Philem. 10. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Gal. 4. 19. Is. 8. 18.
i Eph. 4. 21. & 6. 15. Prov. 23. 23. Col. 3. 16. Jude 3. Mat. 28. 20.
k Luke 12. 42. 1 Pet. 4. 9, 10. Heb. 13. 1—3.
l Tit. 3. 13. Col. 1. 10.
m Acts 8. 4. 1 Cor. 9. 12, 15. 2 Cor. 11. 7, 9. & 12. 13. n Mat. 10. 14. Luke 10. 7. o Zech. 8. 19. Prov. 23. 23. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Jude 3. 2 Tim. 1. 13. & 2. 15. Tit. 1. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 18, 19. & 6. 20.

Verses 1—8. We have here,

1. The inscription and salutation. *The elder,* John, *unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth,* as a faithful member of Jesus Christ. *Beloved, I wish above all things, that thou mayest prosper, and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth;* and may thy success in all temporal things, and thy bodily health, bear pace with thy spiritual prosperity. *Note,* (1.) The true prosperity, and that which is most desirable, is the health of the soul. (2.) Bodily health is a singular mercy, especially as it enables us more eminently to improve our spiritual gifts and graces for the good of mankind.

2. He testifies the satisfaction he felt in the report which he had heard. *For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee,* of thy faith and love unfeigned; *even as thou walkest in the truth,* adorning with all manner of holy conversation thy Christian profession. *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. Note,* It is a most sincere and heartfelt delight to every faithful minister of Christ to behold the children, whom they have begotten in the gospel, walk worthy of their vocation.

3. He commends his kind and charitable conduct. *Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;* such hospitality and generosity are the genuine characteristics of thy faithful heart, and have been justly praised by those *who have borne witness of thy charity before the church,* and gratefully acknowledged the kindnesses which they have received: *whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort,* and assist those itinerant preachers of the gospel who devote their time and labour to this blessed work of spreading the glad tidings through the earth, *thou shalt do well,* and act a noble part in thus advancing the blessed cause of our divine Redeemer; *because that for his name's sake they went forth,* giving up all the world, that they might addict themselves wholly to the ministry, and with a spirit uninfluenced by any mercenary views, *taking nothing of the Gentiles,* but preaching the gospel of God freely. *We therefore,* who wish well to that service, and whom God hath blessed with ability, *ought to receive such,* and afford them a comfortable maintenance; *that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth,* and, though not ordained to be preachers, may hereby receive a preacher's reward. *Note,* They who devote themselves to the ministry, foregoing all worldly pursuits for the love of Christ and of immortal souls, deserve every kindness at our hands that we can show them.

9. I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who [p] loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, ‡ receiveth us not. 10. Wherefore, if I come, [q] I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church. 11. Beloved, [r] follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. [s] He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God. 12. Demetrius hath [t] good report of all *men,* and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear record; and ye know that [u] our record is true. 13. [x] I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: 14. But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak ‖ face to face. Peace *be* to thee. *Our* friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

p 1 Cor. 1. 24. Mark 9. 34. Luke 22. 24.
‡ Refuseth to own my authority.
q 2 Cor. 10. 6, 9, 10. Is. 65. 5. John 16. 2.
r Exod. 23. 2. Num. 16. 20. Ps. 37. 27. Is. 1. 16. 2 Tim 3. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 11.
s 1 John 2. 29. & 3. 6, 9.
t 1 Tim. 3. 7. 1 Thes. 4. 12. & 2. 6—10.
u John 19. 35. & 21. 4.
x 2 John 12.
‖ Gr. *mouth to mouth.*

Verses 9—14. The apostle here,

1. Points out a man of a very different character. *I wrote unto the church,* or, as some render the words, *I would have wrote unto the church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them,* and proudly lords it over them, *receiveth us not,* and pays no regard to our apostolic injunctions. *Wherefore, if,* or *when, I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth,* and sincerely animadvert upon his imperious and uncharitable conduct, *prating against us with malicious words,* assuming the most insolent airs, and daring even to cast reproach on the divinely constituted apostles of the Son of God: *and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren* to any hospitable entertainment in his house, *and forbiddeth them that would; and,* when any, notwithstanding, disobey his mandates, and receive, assist, and further in their way, those faithful ministers of Christ, who travel preaching his gospel, he *casteth them out of the church,* merely for presuming to disobey his wicked commands, and usurped authority. *Note,* (1.) Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of a Christian minister, than overbearing arrogance and pride. (2.) They are doubly wicked, who neither will do good themselves, nor allow those who are willing to do it.

2. He dissuades Gaius from copying so bad an example. *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good;* let no height of station or office lead you to copy a bad man, but ever imitate the excellent and the generous. *He that doeth good is of God,* proves that he is born of him, and partakes of his Spirit:

but he that doeth evil hath not seen God; whatever pretensions to religion he may make, he is a stranger to all experimental knowledge of divine things.

3. He mentions Demetrius as an excellent man, and worthy of imitation. *Demetrius hath good report of all men;* all who know him bear testimony to his amiable and pious conversation, *and of the truth itself;* every one, who would speak the truth, must acknowledge his excellence; and we, who are ministers of truth, declare our full approbation of him: *and ye know that our record is true,* and may be assuredly depended upon. *Note,* It is a noble character indeed so to behave as to be entitled to universal applause, and to be approved of God and all men of truth and integrity.

4. He concludes his epistle with the hopes of a personal interview shortly. *I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: but I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face,* when I can more fully communicate all my mind. *Peace be to thee;* prosperity of every kind attend thee in body and soul. *Our friends salute thee,* joining in all Christian wishes. *Greet the friends* with thee *by name,* presenting to each my most affectionate remembrances.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

JUDE.

Introduction.

THIS epistle, written shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, is styled general or catholic; for that it is not immediately directed to any particular person, family, or church, but to the whole society of Christians at that time, lately converted to the faith of Christ, whether from Judaism or Paganism. And it is, and will be of standing, lasting, and special use in and to the church as long as Christianity, that is, as time shall last.

Some of the chief things contained in it summarily are, 1. An account of the penman of it, a character of the church, the blessings and privileges of that happy society, ver. 1, 2. 2. The occasion of writing this epistle, ver. 3. 3. A character of evil and perverse men, who were already sprung up in that infant state of the church, and would be succeeded by others of the like evil spirit and temper, in after times, ver. 4. 4. A caution against hearkening to and following after such, from the severity of God towards the unbelieving, murmuring Israelites, at their coming out of Egypt, the angels that fell, the instance of Sodom and Gomorrha, their sin and punishment, ver. 5, 6, 7. 5. To these the apostle likens the seducers, against whom he was warning them, and describes them at large, from ver. 8—13. inclusive. 6. Then (as specially suitable to his argument) he cites an ancient prophecy of Enoch, foretelling and describing the future judgment, ver. 14, 15. 7. Enlargeth on the seducer's character, and guards against the offence which honest minds might be apt to take at the so early permission of such things, by showing that it was foretold, long before, that so it must be, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19. 8. Exhorts them to *perseverance in the faith, fervency in prayer, watchfulness against falling from the love of God, and a lively hope of eternal life,* ver. 20, 21. 9. Directs them how to carry themselves towards the erroneous and scandalous, ver. 22, 23. And, 10. Closes with an admirable doxology in the two last verses.

[a] Luke 6. 16. John 14. 22. Acts 1. 13.
[b] Rom. 1. 1. Jam. 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 1.
[c] Lev. 22. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 2.
[d] John 6. 39. & 10. 28. & 17. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 1. 5.
[e] 1 Pet. 2. 9. Heb. 3. 1. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Rom. 8. 30.
[f] Rom. 1. 7. 2 Cor. 1. 2. & 13. 14.

1. JUDE, [a] the [b] servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that [c] are sanctified by God the Father, and [d] preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* [e] called. 2. [f] Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. 3. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the [g] common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you,* that [h] ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the

[g] Gal. 3. 28. Is. 45. 17, 22. Acts 13. 26, 46, 47. & 28. 28. & 4. 12.
[h] Jer. 9. 3. Phil. 1. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 18. & 6. 12. 2 Tim. 1. 13. & 4. 7. Tit. 1. 4. Prov. 23. 26. Rev. 2.

saints. 4. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who [k] were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, [l] turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

i Gal. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 2. 1—3, 18, 19. & 3. 17. Eph. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 6. & 2. 17, 18.
k Rom. 9. 21, 22. 1 Pet. 2. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 3.
l John 1. 17. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Acts 20. 32. with Tit. 1. 16. Heb. 12. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 18, 22.

Verses 1—4. The epistle opens,

1. With an account of the sacred penman. *Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ,* whose highest honour it is to minister in the gospel, *and brother of James,* the son of Alpheus.

2. The persons to whom it is addressed. *To them that are sanctified by God the Father,* set apart for himself in the purpose of his eternal love, *and preserved in Jesus Christ,* as the glorious covenant head of his people, who loses none of those whom the Father hath given him, *and called,* in the fulness of time, to the actual participation of those gospel privileges which Jesus hath purchased, and God the Father promised to bestow on the redeemed, of pardon, grace, holiness, and comfort here, and of everlasting blessedness hereafter. *Note,* (1.) All those, who are called to partake of the grace of the gospel, are sanctified. Hope towards God, without holiness, is but delusion. (2.) Christ's people are preserved by him, and none can ever pluck them out of his hands.

3. The apostolical benediction. *Mercy unto you,* from a pardoning God, *and peace,* flowing from a sense of his reconciliation, *and love,* both to him and towards each other, *be multiplied.*

4. He exhorts them to hold fast the truth which they had received both in doctrine and practice. *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation,* which all believers enjoy through our adored Redeemer and Saviour; it *was become needful for me to write unto you,* because of the multitude of deceivers, *and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,* firmly holding fast the unadulterated doctrines of truth, and zealously maintaining them against all heretical opposers. *Note,* (1.) The salvation of the gospel is a common salvation for Jews and Gentiles, and sinners of every kind, without exception. (2.) They who have received the truth, in the light and love of it, need to be exhorted still to stand fast against all the wiles of deceivers. (3.) That faith which God, by his inspired servants, once delivered to his saints, for the use of his church to the latest ages, we must contend for, not with anger, or carnal weapons, but with holy zeal, tempered with meekness, and arguments drawn from the sacred treasury of the scriptures.

5. He describes the false teachers against whom they need to be on their guard. *For there are certain men crept in unawares,* by craft and subtilty into the church and the ministry, *who were before of old ordained to this condemnation,* in God's wise and righteous counsels, *ungodly men,* whose spirit, temper, and conduct are directly opposite to the divine will and word, *turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness,* perverting the richest doctrines of grace to the vilest purposes of impurity, and abusing them to encourage men in all immorality with the hopes of impunity; *denying the only Lord God,* in works, if not in words; practical, if not speculative atheists: *and* rejecting also the gospel testimony concerning the person, character, and offices of *our Lord Jesus. Note,* (1.) Deceivers have risen in every age; we need not wonder therefore if such ungodly men are found in our own, perverting the glorious grace of the gospel. (2.) They who are vile upon principle, and plead God's word to countenance their impurities are of all men most desperately wicked. (3.) When ungodly men meet their appointed condemnation, they receive but the just reward of their deeds.

5. I [m] will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. 6. And [n] the angels which kept not their * first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. 7. [o] Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after [p] strange flesh, [q] are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

m Rom. 15. 15. Num. 14. 37. 1 Cor. 10. 5, 10. Heb. 3. 17, 19. with 2 Pet. 1. 12, 13. & 3. 1.
n 2 Pet. 2. 4. John 8. 44. Mat. 25. 41. & 8. 29.
* Or *principality.*
o Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 20. & 19. 5, 24, 26. Deut. 29. 5, 23. Is. 1. 9. & 13. 19. Jer. 20. 16. & 50. 40. Lam. 4. 6. Hos. 11. 8. Amos 4. 11. Luke 17. 29 2 Pet. 2. 6.
p Gr. *other.* Gen. 19. 5. Rom. 1. 26, 27. 1 Cor. 6. 9.
q 1 Cor. 10. 6, 11. 2 Pet. 2. 6. Mat. 11. 24.

Verses 5—7. The apostle, to enforce his warnings, reminds them of the judgment which God formerly executed on such ungodly men. *I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this,* the perpetual memory of which needs to be preserved, and it is good to be often reminded of these things, that they may be present before our minds, and the impression of them more deep and lively.

Three awful instances of divine vengeance here stand forth to warn and deter others from the like crimes. Remember,

1. *How that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not,* though he had done so great things for them; and if he spared not these, let not the perverters of the gospel, whose crime is so much more aggravated, expect a less fearful doom. *And* remember also,

2. That *the angels,* though creatures of such superior excellence and dignity, *who kept not their first estate,* were not content with the station allotted them, *but left their own habitation,* affecting to be as the Most High, and were therefore hurled from those bright regions which were before their blessed abode; *he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness,* like criminals fast bound in prison, and kept in custody under his eternal and unchangeable decree, in spiritual darkness, misery, and black despair, *unto the judgment of the great day,* when sentence will be finally executed upon them, and their torment be complete as eternal. And if God thus punished rebel angels, what severity shall not they meet with who fight against the word of his truth, and the honour of his Son! Apostates in heaven or earth must perish together.

3. Another instance of God's wrath is produced. *Even as Sodom and Gomorrha and the cities about them,* Admah and Zeboim, *in like manner* abandoned to impurity, *giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh,* guilty of the most shocking acts of uncleanness, and the most unnatural crimes, *are set forth for an example* of God's tremendous wrath, *suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;* the liveliest image of what the damned must endure in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone for ever and ever. Wo to those who are partakers of their sins! the same fearful vengeance awaits them.

8. [r] Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. 9. Yet [s] Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, (he disputed about the [t] body of Moses,) [u] durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. 10. [x] But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute

r 2 Pet. 2. 10, 11. Jer. 23. 25, 28, 32. Exod. 22. 28.
s Dan. 10. 13, 21. & 12. 1. Rev. 12. 7.
t Deut. 34. 6. Zech. 3. 1.
u 2 Pet. 2. 11. Zech. 3. 2.
x 2 Pet. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 16. & 2. 12. Rev. 13. 6.

beasts, [y] in those things they corrupt themselves. 11. Woe unto them! for they have gone [z] in the way of Cain, and [a] ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in [b] the gainsaying of Core. 12. [c] These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: [d] clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; 13. [e] Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, [f] to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

y Rom. 1. 21, 22. 1 Cor. 1. 21. Jam. 4. 3.
z Gen. 4. 5, 8, 14. 1 John 3. 12.
a 2 Pet. 2. 14, 16. Rev. 2. 14. Num. xxii—xxiv. Deut. 23. 4. Mic. 6. 5.
b Num. xvi. Deut. 11. 6. Ps. 106. 16, 18. Num. 26. 10.
c 1 Cor. 11. 21. Ezek. 34. 8, 13. Phil. 3. 18, 19. 2 Pet. 2. 13. Jam. 5. 5.
d 2 Pet. 2. 17. Prov. 25. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Hos. 10. 1, 2. Heb. 6. 8. & 10. 26. 2 Pet. 2. 18, 22.
e Is. 57. 20. Eph. 4. 14. Phil. 3. 19. 2 Tim. 3. 13. & 4. 3, 4.
f 2 Pet. 2. 17. Mat. 8. 12. & 22. 13. & 24. 51. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Rev. 14. 10, 11. & 20. 15. & 21. 8.

Verses 8—13. The apostle describes these seducing teachers as guilty of the same crimes which had before brought down wrath both on sinning angels and ungodly men.

1. Their impurities were great. *Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh;* sleeping and waking their minds are ever running after impure objects; dishonouring their own bodies by their lewd practices, and drawing in others to gratify their lawless appetites.

2. They cast off all respect for lawful authority. They *despise dominion,* treating the civil government with insolence and contempt, *and speak evil of dignities,* reviling the persons of magistrates, and those who are high in office, whether in church or state. *Yet* even *Michael the archangel,* eminent as his rank and station is, *when contending with the devil about the body of Moses, durst not bring a railing accusation against him,* wicked as he was, *but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*

Some refer this to a contention which they suppose really passed on the mountain where Moses died, whose dead body, they conceive, the devil desired to possess, in order to lead Israel to idolatry, though nothing is mentioned of this in the Scriptures.

Others by Michael suppose, that Christ, the great angel of the covenant is meant; and by the body of Moses, understand the Mosaical economy, and refer to Zech. iii. 1, 2. but though the former sense hath its difficulties, the latter seems unnatural and strained. However, the argument is plain, that if the devil himself, wicked as he is, was not rebuked with railing, much less ought any magistrates or rulers which God hath ordained, in church or state, to be treated with insolence and malignity. *But these* seducers *speak evil of those things which they know not,* ignorant of the excellence and importance of religion and of the Scriptures, and of the usefulness of that ministry and magistracy against which they rail: *but what they know naturally, as brute beasts,* governed merely by their sensual appetites; *in those things they corrupt themselves,* giving a loose to all their brutish passions, without fear or shame, till they bring upon themselves swift destruction. *Note,* When men live like beasts, they may expect to perish like devils.

3. They copied the vilest examples. *Woe unto them!* the most fearful vengeance hangs over them: *for they have gone in the way of Cain,* filled with his malignant spirit of envy, hatred, and murder towards the righteous, *and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward,* ambitious, proud, covetous, and, like that wicked prophet, insatiate after gain, *and* they have *perished in the gainsaying of Core,* like those rebels who rose up against Moses and Aaron, and ready with them to be swallowed up in the yawning pit of hell. *Note,* Companions with sinners must expect to share their plagues.

4. He describes these deluders under a variety of images. *These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves with fear;* whether in a way of civil intercourse, or religious communion, they let loose their luxurious appetites, without any fear of that judgment which awaits them; *clouds they are without water,* that seem to promise rain, but prove like noxious meteors, or noisome fogs *carried about with winds,* variable, and tossed to and fro by every blast of error: *trees whose fruit withereth,* deceiving our expectations, and bringing nothing to maturity; *without fruit,* their specious appearances like blasted fruit drop off, and the hypocrite and apostate is detected; *twice dead,* by nature, and by a revolt from their profession; *plucked up by the roots,* and thus irrecoverably ruined; all hope respecting them is become desperate, and they are now only fit fuel for the flames; *raging waves of the sea,* turbulent, ungovernable, *foaming out their own shame,* belching forth their blasphemies against Christ, and reproaches against his cause and people; *wandering stars,* resembling fiery meteors that kindle in the atmosphere, and after a momentary blaze, are extinguished; or, like the comets, wandering wide from the system of truth and holiness; *to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever,* in that place where total despair completes the misery of the damned, whose worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.

14. And [g] Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, [h] Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, 15. [i] To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them [k] of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their [l] hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. 16. [m] These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; [n] and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words,* [o] having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

g Gen. 5. 18, 22, 24. 1 Chr. 1. 1—3. Heb. 11. 5.
h Acts 1. 11. Rev. 1. 7. & 22. 20. Dan. 7. 10. Zech. 14. 5. Mat. 24. 30, 31. & 25. 31. 1 Thes. 3. 13. 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8.
i 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rom. 14. 10. Rev. 20. 12. & 22. 12. & 1. 7.
k Eccl. 12. 14. Rom. 14. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Mat. 12. 36. 1 Cor. 4. 5.
l 1 Sam. 2. 3. Ps. 31. 18. & 94. 4. Mal. 3. 13. 2 Thes. 1. 7. Rev. 13. 5, 6.
m 2 Pet. 2. 14, 18 Tit. 3. 3.
n Ps. 17. 10. & 73. 9, 11. 2 Pet. 2. 18. Ps. 12. 3, 4.
o Lev. 19. 15. 2 Chr. 19. 7. Job 32. 21, 22. Is. 9. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 5. Job 21. 14, 15.

Verses 14—16. We have here,

1. A prophecy of Enoch's recorded concerning these men. *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam,* in the line of descent, *prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,* in glorious majesty, swift to avenge the wrongs of his people, and the blasphemies against himself; *to execute judgment upon all,* who must stand at his bar, and receive from his lips their decisive sentence; *and to convince all that are ungodly among them,* by the vengeance he will inflict, *of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed,* in defiance of his authority; *and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. Note,* (1.) There is a dreadful day of judgment at hand, when vengeance shall overtake the ungodly. (2.) However impious and stout-hearted sinners may now be, every impenitent heart in that day will tremble, and every hardened face gather blackness. (3.) Though mockers now make light of ridiculing the word, the ways, and the people of God, they will find a fearful reckoning for their hard speeches in the day of recompense.

2. A farther description of these wicked men. *These are murmurers,* against God and his providences; *complainers,* dis-

contented with their condition in life: finding fault with the doctrines and dispensations of the Lord; *walking after their own lusts*, gratifying every vile and sensual appetite without restraint: *and their mouths speaketh great swelling words*, making an ostentatious display of their knowledge and piety, when in the very depth of error, and in the gall of bitterness; *having men's persons in admiration because of advantage*; caressing and flattering those, however vile, who are rich, in order to make gain of them. *Note*, (1.) Discontent with our lot is, in God's sight, rebellion against his providence. (2.) Men-pleasers, and smooth-tongued flatterers of the great, have the sure brand upon them of ministers of Satan.

17. But, beloved, [p] remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; 18. How that they told you [q] there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. 19. [r] These be they who separate themselves, [s] sensual, having not the Spirit. 20. But ye, beloved, [t] building up yourselves on your most holy faith, [u] praying in the Holy Ghost, 21. [x] Keep yourselves in the love of God, [y] looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22. [z] And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23. [a] And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; [b] hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. 24. Now unto him [c] that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25. [d] To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

p 2 Pet. 2. 2. John 14. 26.
q Acts 20. 29. 1 Tim. 4. 1—4. 2 Tim. 3. 1—13. & 4. 3, 4. 2 Pet. 2. 1. & 3. 3, 5.
r Prov. 18. 1. Ezek. 14. 7. Hos. 4. 14. & 9. 10. Heb. 10. 25.
s Jam. 3. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 14.
t Col. 1. 23. & 2. 7. Tit. 2. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 2. 5. Eph. 2. 20, 22.
u Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 8. 26, 27. John 14. 26. Ps. 119. 2, 5. Is. 26. 9.
x 1 John 4. 16. John 15. 9, 10. 14. & 14. 21, 23.
y 2 Tim. 4. 8. & 1. 18. Tit. 2. 13, 14. Heb. 9. 28. Mat. 25. 34. Rom. 6. 23.
z Ezek. 34. 17. 1 Cor. 9. 20. Gal. 4. 19.
a 1 Cor. 5. 3, 4. Rom. 11. 14. 1 Tim. 1. 20. & 4. 16. 1 Cor. 3. 15. Amos 4. 11. Zech. 3. 2.
b 1 Cor. 5. 9, 11. 2 Tim. 3. 5. 2 Thes. 3. 14. Rev. 3. 4. with Lev. 14. 46. & 15. 4, 17. Is. 64. 6.
c Rom. 14. 4. & 16. 25. Eph. 1. 4. & 3. 20. & 5. 26, 27. Col. 1. 22. & 2. 4. Phil. 3. 20, 21. Heb. 13. 20, 21.
d Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17. & 2. 3. Tit. 1. 3. & 3. 4. Rev. 4. 8, 11. & 5. 9, 11. & 7. 10, 12. & 15. 3, 4. & 19. 1. Eph. 3. 20, 21.

Verses 17—25. The apostle concludes,

1. With his kind admonitions. *But beloved*, be deaf to the arts of these seducers, and *remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which now have received their fulfilment, and should confirm the doctrines which they taught: *how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts*; scoffing at the religion of Jesus, that without restraint they may give a loose to every lawless passion. And *these be they*, of whom the apostles spake, *who separate themselves*; fomenting factions, and, under pretences of purer worship, forming new sects and parties, withdrawing from the communion of the apostolic church; when, notwithstanding all their professions of piety, they are utterly *sensual*, the slaves of worldly-mindedness and fleshly lusts, *having not the Spirit*, and strangers to his grace and influence. *Note*, (1.) The only way to be preserved from the wiles of deceivers, is to cleave to our Bibles. (2.) We need not think it strange that so many divisions rend the church, and so many factious spirits endeavour to draw away disciples after them; how else should the scripture be fulfilled? (3.) We must not be ashamed of mocking; remember who will mock last. See Prov. i. 26.

2. With warm exhortations. *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith*, on the glorious foundation of it, Jesus Christ, continuing steadfast in your holy profession, and seeking to establish each other in the truth; *praying in the Holy Ghost*, under his gracious teaching and influences, who helpeth our infirmities; *keep yourselves in the love of God*; use all appointed means to preserve and increase the heavenly fire, and to approve yourselves in all holy obedience and humble resignation; *looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus unto eternal life*, and that complete felicity, both in body and soul, for which you must own yourselves wholly indebted to the riches of his sovereign grace. *And of some have compassion, making a difference* between those who err wilfully, and those who are misled through weakness and the wiles of deceivers, whom with all kindness and tenderness labour to recover from the snare; *and others save with fear*; using that sharpness, severity, and terror with them, which their more dangerous state requires; *pulling them*, if possible, *out of the fire*, which is ready to consume them; *hating even the garment spotted by the flesh*; detesting all impure conversation, and testifying an unremitting displeasure against sin, and whatever would lead thereto; as the Jews were under the law obliged to shun every touch that communicated defilement, and the garment that had the spot of leprosy must be burned. *Note*, (1.) Faith in lively exercise is the great preservative from all delusion. (2.) Prayer must be our daily employment; *spiritual* prayer, not the task of the lip and the knee, but the warm effusions of the heart, where the Holy Ghost abdies. (3.) They who would keep themselves in the love of God, must carefully shun whatever they know must offend him. (4.) Mercy, not merit, must be our hope, even in a judgment-day: and eternal life be expected merely as the sovereign gift of God in Jesus Christ. (5.) We should show a holy jealousy over our brethren, tenderly desirous to snatch them from the dangers to which they are exposed; kindly warning them; and where sharpness is needful, faithfully declaring those terrors of the Lord, which may rouse the lethargic conscience.

3. He closes with a solemn doxology. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling*, that blessed Jesus, in and by whom alone you can be preserved (see ver. 1.) from all evil or apostasy; *and to present you faultless*, in his own divine righteousness, *before the presence of his glory*, in the great day of his appearing, *with exceeding joy*, when every tear shall be wiped from your eyes, and eternal triumphs fill your happy souls; *to the only wise God our Saviour*, in whom dwell all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, *be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Note*, (1.) We are in his hands who is not only able, but hath engaged to keep us from falling; therefore we may trust, and not be afraid. (2.) Whatever infirmities still cleave to us, we shall be presented faultless before the throne, for if we are Christ's, we are complete in him. (3.) The service of eternity will begin even here below, and every redeemed soul will delight to proclaim the Saviour's praise.

A PRACTICAL COMMENT

UPON THE

REVELATION

OF

ST JOHN THE DIVINE.

Introduction.

WE are now entering upon the last volume in the canon of the scriptures, and the most difficult of the whole to be understood; as must needs be the case with prophecies which wait for the key of time to open them.

It is generally admitted, that this book contains an account of the state of the church to the end of time; then at least we shall fully understand its contents. Meantime, whilst we are humbly searching what and what manner of time the Spirit speaking in it doth signify, we shall find much profitable matter for our soul's health; and though we may mistake in the application of some of the prophecies, yet shall we obtain the blessing promised to those who read and hear the things written in this book, chap. i. ver. 3.

I concur with those who suppose, that the events from chap. iv. to the end follow in a regular series; and am content to select from the labours of the most wise and judicious interpreters, the sense which appears most probable; though withal acknowledging, that in many places the prophecies are covered with deep obscurity, and the wisest conjectures dubious. We must be content for a while to wait the explication of them. *The vision is for an appointed time, and in the end it shall speak.*

CHAP. I.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

This chapter is a general preface to the whole book, and contains, 1. *An inscription, declaring the original and the design of it,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *The apostolic benediction pronounced on all those that shall pay a due regard to the contents of this book,* ver. 3—8. 3. *A glorious vision or appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the apostle John, when he delivered to him this revelation from* ver. 9. *to the end of the chapter.*

a John 3. 32. & 8. 26. & 12. 49.
b Ch. 22. 6. Amos 3. 7. Ps. 25 14. & 119. 125. Dan. 12. 10.
c Ver. 3. ch. 22. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 8. ch. 4. 1.
d Ch. 22. 6, 16. Dan. 8. 16. & 9. 21—23. John 7. 17. Ps. 25. 14.
e 1 Cor. 1. 6. 1 John 1. 1—3. John 19. 35. & 21. 24. ch. 6. 9. & 12. 17. ver. 9.
f Prov. 8. 34. Luke 11. 28. Mat. 7. 24, 25. Jam. 1. 25. ch. 2, 7. & 2. 5, 25. & 3. 3, 8, 19.

1. THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, [a] which God gave unto him, [b] to shew unto his servants things which must [c] shortly come to pass; [d] and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John: 2. [e] Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3. [f] Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; [g] for the time *is* at hand.

g Rom. 13. 11. Jam. 5. 8. 1 Pet. 4. 7. ch. 22. 7, 12, 20.

Verses 1—3. The book opens,

1. With a preface declaring its sacred contents. *The revelation of Jesus Christ, which* comes from him, as the great prophet of his church, and which *God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;* some of them to be quickly accomplished, and the rest in order till the end of time; *and he sent and signified it by his angel,* whom he employed on this errand, *unto his servant John, who bare record of the word of God,* and had before, in his gospel and epistles, spoken of the glory and offices of the incarnate Word, *and* was one of the faithful witnesses *of the testimony of Jesus Christ,* of his gospel, *and of all things that he saw;* the miracles, life, death, and resurrection of the great Redeemer, and those amazing visions which are here recorded.

2. A blessing is pronounced on the hearers, readers, and observers of this book. *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy,* attentively remarking the prophecies here revealed, and inquiring into the mind of the Spirit; *and keep those things which are written therein;* retaining them in their memory, and directed by them in their practice; *for the time is at hand,* when their fulfilment will begin. *Note,* (1.) They who diligently study the scriptures, will find the happy fruit of their labours. (2.) The shorter the period of time

allotted to us is, the greater diligence should we give to improve it.

4. JOHN to the [h] seven churches which are in Asia: [i] Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him [k] which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from [l] the seven spirits which are before his throne; 5. And from Jesus Christ, *who is* [m] the faithful witness, *and* the [n] first-begotten of the dead, and [o] the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that [p] loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6. And [q] hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; [r] to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 7. [s] Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and [t] they *also* which pierced him: [u] and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. 8. [x] I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, [y] the Almighty.

h Ver. 11. ch. ii, iii. Acts 16. 6. & 19. 10.
i Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 2. Jude 2. 2 Cor. 13. 14.
k Exod. 3. 14. Jam. 1 17. Ps. 90. 2. ch. 16. 5. & 11. 7. & 4. 8. see ver. 8.
l Zech. 3. 9. & 4. 10. ch. 3. 1. & 4. 5. & 5. 6. John 14. 26. 1 Cor. 12. 4—13.
m Ch. 3. 14. John 8. 14. & 18. 37. 1 Tim. 6. 13. Is. 55. 4. & 43. 10. Ps. 89. 37.
n Ch. 3. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 20, 23. Acts 26. 23. Col. 1. 18.
o Ch. 2. 15. & 17. 14. & 19. 16. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Ps. 89. 27.
p Heb. 9. 12, 14. 1 John 1. 7. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Acts 20. 28. Gal. 2. 20. ch. 5. 9. & 7. 14. Zech. 13. 7.
q Ch. 5. 10. & 20. 6. Dan. 7. 27. 1 Pet. 2. 5.
r Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 6. 13—16. 1 Pet. 4. 11. & 5. 11. Heb. 13. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 17.
s Ps. 50. 3. & 18. 11. Dan. 7. 13. Acts 1. 11. Mat. 24. 30. & 25. 31. & 26. 64. t Zech. 12. 10. John. 19. 37. u Jude 15. 2 Thes. 1. 7—10. Rev. 20. 10, 12. & 22. 12.
x Ch. 21. 6. & 22. 13. ver. 11, 13. ch. 4. 8. & 11. 17. & 16. 5. Is. 41. 4. & 44. 6. & 48. 12. Exod. 3. 14. Heb. 1. 12. & 13. 8. y Gen. 17. 1. Is. 9. 6. & 63. 1. Heb. 7. 25.

Verses 4—8. The apostle,

1. Addresses *the seven churches which are in Asia:* and adds his benediction, *Grace be unto you* in all its fulness of blessings, *and peace* in your consciences from a sense of redeeming love, flowing *from him which is, and which was, and which is to come,* from the eternal Father, in his nature and perfections unchangeably the same for ever and ever: *and from the seven spirits which are before his throne,* even that Holy Ghost whose gifts and graces are various and perfect, having all fulness to communicate to these seven churches, and to all the members of them; *and from Jesus Christ,* through whom as Mediator all the blessings of the triune God descend upon his people; *who is the faithful witness,* the anointed prophet to declare the Father's will; *and the first-begotten of the dead,* who rose as our glorious high-priest, with his own blood to appear in the presence of God for us; *and the Prince of the kings of the earth,* exalted to the mediatorial throne, and become the Head of all principalities and powers, as the universal *King* to protect his people and subdue their enemies.

2. He ascribes glory to the incarnate Jesus. *Unto him that loved us* with an everlasting love, *and washed us from our sins in his own blood,* which he shed to redeem us from all iniquity: *and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,* investing us with dominion over all the power of evil, and consecrating us for his blessed service, to offer those spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; *to him,* even to this amiable and adorable Jesus, *be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen! Note,* (1.) Jesus by his blood hath purged our sins; and nothing but this could ever have cleansed our guilty souls. (2.) Every child of God is now consecrated to the highest office and dignity; is heir to a throne of glory, and hath access with boldness into the holiest of all through atoning blood. (3.) They who know the divine Redeemer, and are interested in his love, will be ceaseless in their adorations of him.

3. With rapture the apostle looks forward to the glorious coming of Jesus as the eternal judge, and considering him as present for the comfort and joy of his people, cries out with wonder and delight, *Behold, he cometh with clouds;* in awful majesty, surrounded with angels and archangels, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; *and every eye shall see him,* seated on the throne of judgment; *and they also who pierced him,* with impious and bloody cruelty nailed him to the tree; *and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him,* whose guilt unpardoned now shall stare them in the face, and horrors unutterable seize upon their consciences; whilst with transport the faithful shall welcome his arrival, approving and applauding all his righteous decisions; and are now wishing for the day of his appearing: *even so, Amen!* come quickly. *Note,* (1.) A day of judgment will spread terror through a wicked world. Wo then to those who have pierced the Redeemer, whether in his own person, or in the insults shown to his people; they shall receive a fearful recompense. (2.) Blessed and happy are they who, in the prospect of this day, can comfortably say, *Even so, Amen!*

4. The great Judge describes his own transcendent honour. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord,* the sum and substance of the scriptures, possessing all perfections, and accomplishing all my pleasure; *which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty,* the self-existent and incomprehensible Jehovah, able to save or destroy to the uttermost.

9. I John, who also am [z] your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for [a] the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. 10. I was [a] in the Spirit on [b] the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11. Saying, [c] I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto [d] the seven churches which are in Asia: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. 12. And [e] I turned to see the voice that spake with me: and, being turned, I saw [f] seven golden candlesticks; 13. And [g] in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto [h] the Son of man, clothed with [i] a garment down to the foot, and [k] girt about the paps with a golden girdle. 14. [l] His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* [m] as a flame of fire; 15. And [n] his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and [o] his voice as the sound of many waters. 16. [p] And he had in his right hand seven stars: [q] and out of

z Phil. 1. 7. & 4. 14. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 1. 8. & 2. 12. Heb. 10. 34. ch. 2. 2, 9, 19. & 6. 9. & 12. 10, 11. ver. 2.
a Acts 10. 10. Ezek. 3. 12, 14, 24. 2 Cor. 12. 1—3. ch. 4. 2. & 17. 3. & 21. 10.
b Mark 16. 9. John 20. 19, 26. Acts 20. 7. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Is. 30. 21. ch. 4. 1.
c See ver. 4, 8, 17, 18.
d Ver. 4. ch. ii, iii. Acts xix, xx. & 16. 14. Col. 2. 1.
e Exod. 3. 3. Ps. 111. 2.
f Ver. 20. Zech. 4. 2. Exod. 25. 37. Mat. 5. 14.
g Mat. 18. 20. & 28. 20. ch. 2. 1. Zech. 1. 8. Ezek. 46. 10. Col. 1. 27.
h Dan. 10. 5, 6. & 7. 13. Ezek. 1. 26. ch. 14. 14. & 15. 6.
i Exod. 28. 4, 40. & 39. 1, 27. ch. 19. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 21.
k Is. 11. 5. Dan. 10. 5. ch. 15. 6.
l Dan. 7. 9. Mic. 5. 2. Ps. 90. 2. Prov. 8. 23—31. Song 5. 11. Is. 9. 6.
m Dan. 10. 6. ch. 2. 18, 23. & 19. 12. Song 5. 12.
n Ch. 10. 1. Dan. 10. 6. Ezek. 1. 7. & 40. 3. Song 5. 15. ch. 2. 18.
o Ezek. 43. 2. & 1. 24. ch. 14. 2. & 19. 6. Dan. 10. 6. Heb. 12. 26. John 5. 25, 28.
p Hag. 2. 23. ch. 2. 1. Eph. 4. 1. Mat. 5. 14. 2 Cor. 8. 23. & 5. 20. 15, 21. Is. 49. 2. Eph. 6. 17. Heb. 4. 11, 12. Deut. 32. 42, 43. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9.
q Ch. 2. 12, 16. & 19.

his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: [r] and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength. 17. And, when I saw him, [s] I fell at his feet as dead. And he [t] laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18. [u] I *am* he that liveth, and [x] was dead; and, behold, [y] I am alive for evermore, Amen; [z] and have the keys of hell and of death. 19. [a] Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; 20. The mystery of the seven [b] stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the [c] seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the [d] angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

r Song 5. 15. ch. 10. 1. Ps. 4. 6. Acts 26. 13. Exod. 15. 10.
s Dan. 8. 17, 18. & 10. 10. Ezek. 1. 28. Josh. 5. 14. Mat. 17. 6. Acts 9. 4, 6.
t Song 2. 6. & 8. 3. Is. 41. 10. see ver. 8, 11. Is. 41. 4. & 44. 6. & 48. 12.
u John 1. 4. & 5. 21, 26. 1 John 5. 20. Job 19. 25. Rom. 6. 9.
x Mat. 20. 28. Rom. 5. 8, 10. & 6. 10. & 8. 3, 33, 34. 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16.
y Ps. 21. 4. Rom. 6. 9. Heb. 7. 25. John 14. 19. Col. 3. 3, 4. with ch. 4. 9, 10. & 5. 14. & 10. 6. & 15. 7.
z Ch. 3. 7. Is. 22. 21, 22. Ps. 68. 18, 20. Mat. 28. 18. John 17. 2. Rom. 14. 9. ch. 20. 1. Deut. 32. 39.
a Dan. 2. 29. Is. 30. 8. Hab. 2. 2. ch. 4. 1. Acts 26. 16. ver. 12.
b Ver. 16. ch. 2. 1. Mal. 2. 7. Mat. 5. 14. 2 Cor. 8. 23.
c Zech. 4. 2. Mat. 5. 14—16. Phil. 2. 15, 16. ver. 12, 13, 16.
d Ch. 2. 1, 8, 12, 18. & 3. 1, 7, 14. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Mal. 2. 7.

Verses 9—20. We have here the glorious vision which appeared to the divine penman of this book.

1. He calls himself *John, your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ;* for all his servants follow him with their cross to glory, and must expect and be content patiently to suffer for his great name's sake. He was now in banishment in the isle of Patmos, for his fidelity to his blessed Master; and, though removed far from earthly comforters, still he found that presence of God which made his lonely abode a paradise of delights. He was *in the Spirit on the Lord's day;* whilst on that holy day, observed by the Christian church in memory of the Saviour's resurrection, he was employed in sacred meditation and prayer, he felt the descending power of the Holy One, and was filled with prophetic inspiration. *Note,* They who on the Lord's day employ in spiritual exercises their time and thoughts, retiring from the world and all its cares and avocations, will find a blessed intercourse with heaven, and experience that communion with God which is a foretaste of eternal blessedness.

2. He declares what he heard and saw. A great voice, as of a trumpet behind him; awakened his attention, and he heard distinctly the voice of Jesus, saying, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;* and commanding him to write what in vision he was now about to see and hear, and send it to the seven churches of Asia, whose names are specified. Turning to see from whence the voice proceeded, a glorious personage meets his astonished sight, whose majesty he describes. *I saw seven golden candlesticks,* seven branches springing from the same stem, like that which stood in the tabernacle of old, the emblems of that light of truth and fire of love which Jesus sends into the midst of his church and people, and which they in their conversation hold forth to the world. *And in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one* stood, as the priest when he came to trim the lamps, *like unto the Son of man clothed with a garment down to the foot,* the figure of his complete and spotless righteousness: *and girt about the paps with a golden girdle,* far surpassing the costly girdle of the ephod, and intimating how ready and able he is to discharge his sacerdotal office on their behalf: *his head and his hairs were white like wool,* as the Ancient of days, *as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire,* piercing and penetrating into the inmost secrets of men's souls, and darting lightning against his foes; *and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace,* mighty to support the concerns of his church and people, and to tread down their enemies; *and his voice as the sound of many waters,* spreading to the distant corners of the earth his blessed gospel word, and terrible in his providences and judgments as the roaring waves. *And he had in his right hand seven stars,* the faithful bishops of his church, whom he upholds and preserves, and who shine bright in the lustre of his grace; *and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword,* even the sword of his law and gospel, pricking sinners to the heart, and hewing down all opposition: *and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength,* reviving as the light and warmth of his invigorating beams. *And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead,* overcome with the brightness of his glory. *And he laid his right hand upon me,* to revive my intimidated mind by his mighty grace, *saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last,* in kindness and love unchangeable. *I am he that liveth,* essentially possessed of life in and of myself; *and was dead,* in that human nature which I assumed; *and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen!* so it is infallibly certain and true; *and I have the keys of hell and of death,* to save or to destroy according to my sovereign pleasure; to unlock the gates of the grave to my people, and shut up in the prison of eternal darkness the wicked. *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter* until the end of time. *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels,* or messengers, *of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks, which thou sawest, are the seven churches.* May we by faith behold the same Jesus, and feel the enlivening influence of his presence with our souls!

CHAP. II.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

The apostle John, according to the command which he received, proceeds to write the epistles to the angels or ministers of the seven churches; of Ephesus, from ver. 1—8. 2. *Of Smyrna, from* ver. 8—12. 3. *Of Pergamos, from* ver. 12—18. 4. *Of Thyatira, from* ver. 18, to the end.

1. UNTO the [a] angel of the church of [b] Ephesus write; These things saith [c] he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, [d] who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2. [e] I know thy [f] works, and thy labour, and thy [g] patience, and [h] how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; 3. [f] And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 4. Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because [k] thou hast left thy first love. 5. [l] Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and [m] will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 6. But this thou hast, that [n] thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.

a See ch. 1. 20. Acts 20. 17, 28.
b Acts xix. Eph. 1. 17.
c Ch. 1. 16, 20. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 4. 13, 19.
d Ch. 1. 11, 13, 20. Lev. 26. 12. ch. 21. 3. Ezek. 46. 10.
e Ver. 9, 13, 19. ch. 3 1, 8, 15. & 10. 1, 6. & 11. 4. Heb. 13. 17. & 4. 13. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Mat. 7. 23.
f 1 Thes. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 5. 17. 1 Cor. 15. 10, 58.
g Rom. 15. 1, 4. Heb. 6. 10, 12.
h 1 John 4. 1. Gal. 1. 8. 2 Cor. 11. 13. Eph. 4. 14. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2.
k Hos. 4. 16. with Jer. 2. 2. Gal. 1. 7. & 3. 3. Phil. 2. 21. 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 2. 18.
l 2 Thes. 3. 13 Gal. 6. 9. Heb. 12. 5. 2 Cor. 6. 4—10.
m Ch. 3. 3, 19. Jer. 3. 14, 22. Hos. 14. 1, 8.
n Ver. 15. Rom. 12. 9. Ps. 97. 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Rom. 1. 26—3.

Verses 1—7. The first epistle is directed to the angel of the church of Ephesus. We have,

1. The preface, informing us who dictated what the apostle wrote, even that glorious Personage *that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand*, and *who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*. *Note*, The Lord Jesus is he who makes his ministers bright stars: he gives them purity of doctrine and holiness of life, and enables them to shine to his own glory. May we each be upheld in his almighty arms, and be fed with oil from the living Source, shining brighter and stronger till we come to the eternal temple above!

2. The contents,

(1.) The epistle contains matter of great commendation. *I know* and approve *thy works* as a minister of zeal, and the works of the church in general as exemplary; *and thy patience* under persecutions; *and how thou canst not bear them who are evil*, abhorring their principles and practices, and removing them from communion with you: *and thou hast tried them who say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars*, detecting their impostures and demonstrating the falsehood of their pretended commission from Christ; *and hast borne* many conflicts, *and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured* with fidelity *and hast not fainted*. *Note*, They who are put in trust with the ministry may expect many trials. They have need of peculiar faith and patience, that they may persevere in their labours, and faint not.

(2.) Here is a needful rebuke and admonition. *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love*, and grown colder of late in affection to me and my ways. And such a backsliding in heart the Lord Jesus observes, and cannot but be highly displeased with. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent*. *Note*, (1.) They who are fallen should remember how much they have lost, and with grief and shame consider their ways. (2.) They who truly repent will return to their first works, and then they will return again to a sense of divine grace and love. (3.) The churches that neglect Christ's admonitions may expect to be visited with his judgments.

(3.) A word of encouragement is added. *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate*; their idolatrous, vicious, and impure principles and practices. *Note*, True Christians will maintain a holy hatred to all the ways of sin.

3. The conclusion. Where we have, (1.) A solemn call to attention. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*. *Note*, The scriptures are of general use for all ages; and what was written of old was written for our instruction, as much as for those to whom it was more immediately addressed. (2.) A gracious promise. *To him that overcometh*, and perseveres unto the end, manfully fighting under my banners against sin, Satan, and the world, *will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God*; admitting him to all the blessings and happiness of the celestial paradise, infinitely surpassing that from which Adam, for his transgression was ejected. *Note*, In Christ Jesus, and by his grace, we shall be advanced to higher glories than ever man in innocence enjoyed.

o Ver. 11, 17, 29. ch. 3. 6, 13, 22. & 13. 9. see Mat. 11. 15.
p 2 Tim. 4. 7. 1 John 4. 5. Rom. 8. 37. 2 Cor. 10. 3. 4. & 6. 4—10. Eph. 6. 10—20. 1 Tim. 6. 11—14, 20. Gal. 6. 9.
q Ch. 22. 2, 14. John 15. 1. & 14. 6. & 11. 25. & 1. 4. & 5. 26. & 6. 32—57. 1 John 5. 11, 12. Gen 3. 22. & 2. 9.

7. ° He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; p To him that overcometh will I give to eat of q the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. 8. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith r the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9. s I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but t thou art rich;) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which u say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan. 10. x Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. 11. y He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt z of the second death.

r See ch. 1. 8, 11, 17, 18.
s See ver. 2, 13, 19. ch. 3. 1, 8, 15. Is. 54. 11, 12. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12. John 16. 33. 1 Cor. 4. 10—13. Heb. 10. 32—34.
t Jam. 2. 5. Heb. 10. 34. 2 Cor. 6. 10. Mat. 19. 21. & 6. 20. Luke 12. 21. 1 Tim. 6. 6, 18. 1 Pet. 1. 4.
u Rom. 2. 17—29. & 9. 6, 32. & 10. 2, 3. Phil. 3. 3. ch. 3. 9. Gal. 6. 12, 13. John 8. 44.
x Is. 41. 10, 14. & 43. 1, 2. Mat. 10. 22, 28. & 24. 9, 13. 1 Cor. 9. 25. 2 Tim. 2. 5. & 4. 7, 8. Jam. 1. 2, 12. ch. 3. 11, 12. & 22. 5.
y See ver. 7, 17, 26. ch. 3. 5, 12, 21. & 21. 7. & 13. 9.
z Ch. 20. 6, 14. & 21. 8.

Verses 8—11. The form of the epistle is similar. We have,

1. The preface to the church of Smyrna. *These things saith the first and the last*, the Creator and Judge of all, the Author and Finisher of his people's salvation; *who was dead and is alive*, delivered for our offences, to make the one great atonement, is raised again for our justification, and lives for ever to secure our eternal blessedness.

2. The contents. (1.) Their commendation. *I know thy works and tribulation*, how zealously thou hast laboured, and how much thou hast suffered; *and thy poverty, (but thou art rich)* for whatever we lose for Christ and the gospel's sake, it shall procure us much more substantial treasures in a better world. *And I know the blasphemy of them who say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan*, who, whilst they pretend a peculiar covenant-title to God's favour, and zealously urge the Mosaical ritual as essential to salvation, were in fact Satan's emissaries, and the bitter enemies of the spiritual Israel. (2.) Warning is given them of approaching trials. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer*, so as to be terrified from the path of duty: *behold, the devil*, by cruel persecutors, his instruments, *shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried*, and your faith and constancy proved in the furnace of affliction, *and ye shall have tribulation ten days*, either so many years, or for a considerable though indefinite space of time. *Note*, God's people need not fear the malice of their most envenomed persecutors. If he be for them, no matter who may be against them. (3.) An encouraging promise is added. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life*; and then, though it be won by martyrdom, our gain will be unspeakably great.

3. The conclusion. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*; what encouragements there are to fidelity, and how watchful God is over his chosen. *He that overcometh* in the holy warfare; and is fully victorious over his spiritual foes, *shall not be hurt of the second death*, hath nothing to fear, hath every thing to hope for in eternity.

12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath a the sharp sword with two edges; 13. b I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat *is*: and c thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, d even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you,

a Josh. 5. 13. Num. 22. 23. ver. 16. ch. 1. 16. & 19. 15, 21. Deut. 32. 42, 43.
b See ver. 2. Heb. 4. 13. ver. 9.
c 2 Tim. 1. 13. Heb. 3. 14. & 4. 14. & 10. 23.
d Gen. 6. 9. Luke 22. 28. & 12. 8. 1 Sam. 2. 30.

where [e] Satan dwelleth. 14. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold [f] the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15. So hast thou also them that hold [g] the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. 16. [h] Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and [i] will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. 17. [k] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of [l] the hidden manna, and will give him [m] a white stone, and in the stone [n] a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*.

e Deut. 32. 16, 17. Lev. 17. 7. ch. 11. 7, 8. & 17. 6. ver. 9.
f Num. 25. 1. 3. & 31. 16. Ezek. 44. 7. Acts 15. 1, 20, 29. 2 Cor. vi, vii, x. 2 Pet. 2. 15. Jude 11. Phil. 3. 18, 19.
g See ver. 6. Jer. 44. 4.
h Ver. 5. ch. 3. 2, 3, 19. Jer. 3. 13, 14, 22. & 31. 18—20.
i Ch. 1. 16. & 11. 5. & 19. 15, 21. Is. 11. 4. & 49. 2. Eph. 6. 17. 2 Thes. 2. 8. Heb. 4. 11, 12.
k See ver. 7. ch. 21. 7. & 13. 9.
l Is. 62. 8, 9. & 65. 13. John 4. 32. & 6. 33, 49, 58.
m Exod. 28. 8. Eph. 1. 6, 7. Is. 1. 1. & 43. 25. & 44. 22. Eph. 1. 6, 7.
n Is. 56. 5. & 62. 2, 4, 12. ch. 3. 12. 1 John 3. 2.

Verses 12—17. Here is, as before,

1. The preface, to the angel of the church of Pergamos. *These things saith he who hath the sharp sword with two edges;* the sword of his word and his providence, to defend the faithful, and to cut off all enemies and apostates.

2. The contents. (1.) Notice is taken of their perilous situation. *I know thy works*, and behold with satisfaction whatever is excellent among you; *and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is*, environed with enemies; *and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith* amidst the fire of hottest persecution, *even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth*, and manifests his bloody rage against my loyal subjects. *Note*, Steady fidelity in perilous days is doubly commendable. (2.) A reproof is given them for what was amiss. *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.* Some such seducing teachers were among them who inculcated the lawfulness of eating idol-sacrifices, and of fornication. *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate;* and countenance their impure and abominable practices. *Note*, God hates all impurity: and they who make light of fornication will feel the heavy wrath of an offended God, which it provokes. (3.) They are warned instantly to repent. *Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly* in judgment, *and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth:* and no sword is so fatal to the body as the denunciations of his wrath are to the guilty soul. *Note*, By speedy repentance alone we can prevent the threatened judgments. And not only must we cleanse our heart from the love of sin, but separate ourselves from all communion with scandalous offenders, lest we become by connivance partakers of their guilt and ruin.

3. The conclusion. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh*, faithful in the arduous conflict, *will I give to eat of the hidden manna*, feeding him with the abundant grace and consolations of my Spirit and my gospel: *and will give him a white stone*, absolving him from all his iniquities; *and in the stone a new name written*, the name of a child of God, and heir of glory, securing to him an eternity of inconceivable blessedness, *which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

18. [o] And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith [p] the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass; 19. [q] I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; [r] and the last *to be* more than the first. 20. [s] Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21. And I gave her space [t] to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. 22. [u] Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. 23. And [x] I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that [y] I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: [z] and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. 24. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known [a] the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden; 25. [b] But that which ye have *already* hold fast till I come. 26. [c] And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, [d] to him will I give power over the nations: 27. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father. 28. And I will give him [e] the morning star. 29. [f] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

o Ch. 1. 11. & 2. 1, 8, 12.
p See ch. 1. 5, 14, 15.
q See ver. 2, 9, 13. Rom. 13. 10. Gal. 5. 6. Jam. 2. 26. 2 Cor. 9. 1.
r Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. Mat. 13. 23. Ps. 92. 13. 2 Pet. 3. 18.
s Ver. 4, 14, 15. ch. 17, 1, 2. 2 Kin. 16. 31. Acts 15. 20, 29. 1 Cor. v, viii, x. Exod. 34. 15.
t Rom. 2. 4, 5. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Amos 4. 6—11. Ezek. xvi, xx, xxiii. ch. 9. 20, 21.
u Ch. 17. 16. & 18. 4. Ezek. 16. 35—43. & 20. 30—36. & 23. 10, 32. Luke 13. 1—9.
x 2 Sam. 12. 14. 2 Kin. 9. 22. & 10. 6. Ezek. 9. 6.
y Ps. 7. 9. Jer. 11. 20. & 17. 10. & 20. 12. 1 Sam. 16. 7. 1 Chr. 28. 9. & 29. 17. Acts 1. 24. Rom. 8. 27.
z Ch. 13. 10. & 20. 12. & 22. 12. Rom. 2. 6. & 14. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Gal. 6. 5. 2 Thes. 1. 6—10.
a 2 Cor. 2. 11. ch. 17. 5.
b Is. 8. 20. 2 Tim. 1. 13. Acts 15. 19, 20, 28, 29. Phil. 3. 16. ch. 3. 3, 11. 2 John 8.
c See ver. 7, 11, 17. ch. 3. 5, 12, 21. John 6. 29. 1 John 3. 23. Tit. 2. 11—14. Mat. 10. 22. & 24. 13. Gal. 6
d Mat. 19. 28. Luke 22. 28, 29. 1 Cor. 6. 3. Ps. 2. 8, 9. & 49. 14. Dan. 7. 22, 27. & 2. 44, 45. Ps. 149. 6—9. ch. 12. 5. & 19. 15. Mat. 28. 18. Ps. cx.
e Ch. 22. 16. Num. 24. 17. Is. 49. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Luke 1. 68.
f See ver. 7. Mat. 11. 15. & 13. 9, 43. Heb. 12. 25, 26.

Verses 18—29. The fourth epistle is directed to the angel of the church of Thyatira.

1. The preface describes the Son of God, who dictates to the sacred penman. *These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire*, infinite in wisdom and knowledge, discerning the secrets of all hearts; *and his feet are like fine brass*, almighty to support his people amidst every danger, and to tread his enemies and theirs into the dust.

2. The contents. 1. They are highly commended. *I know thy works*, and am pleased with them; *and* thy *charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy good works; and the last to be more than the first;* that in all divine graces and good conversation thou art increasing with the increase of God, growing more exemplary and eminent. *Note*, It is well for us when he who knoweth our hearts bears witness that our last works are more than the first. 2. They are reproved for what was blameable among them. *Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a*

prophetess, (probably some woman of eminence among them who pretended to inspiration, and had her abettors and followers) *to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols*, perverting their souls, and leading them to corporal and spiritual idolatries and impurities. *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not;* therefore *behold* swift vengeance will overtake her and her adherents: *I will cast her into a bed* of languishing and misery, *and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation*, the partakers of her sins shall partake of her plagues, *except they repent of their deeds*, and prevent the threatened judgments: *and I will kill her children with death*, as surely as the sons of Ahab perished by the sword of Jehu: *and all the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts*, and can discover every hidden principle and secret of the soul, distinguishing the hypocrite from the faithful; *and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. Note*, (1.) They who abuse the patience of God, and harden themselves in sin, instead of repenting of their iniquities, will bring aggravated guilt and ruin upon their souls. (2.) God's omniscience cannot be deceived, nor his justice eluded; the unfaithful professor will be detected and sentenced at his impartial tribunal. 3. He encourages the faithful among them. *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, As many as have not this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan*, abhorring all such impure principles and practices, which impostors, influenced by deep Satanical subtlety, seek to inculcate, *I will put upon you none other burden*, nor add any farther injunctions or restraints than those revealed in my word. *But that which ye have already*, the doctrines and precepts of the gospel which you have embraced, *hold fast till I come* to take you to my eternal rest, and deliver you from all your temptations for ever. *Note*, (1.) The Lord knows how to separate between the precious and the vile, and will secure his own people amidst all the arts of deceivers. (2.) They who would meet Christ with comfort at his coming, must hold fast his truth in principle and practice, and never be moved away from the hope of the gospel.

The conclusion. *And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end*, patiently and faithfully persevering in the profession and practice of the gospel, *to him will I give power over the nations*, when he shall sit with me on my throne at the great day; (*and he shall rule them with a rod of iron*, breaking in pieces all the wicked of the earth, *as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers*) *even as I received*, in my office-capacity, a kingdom *of my Father:* he shall share my glory, and reign with me for ever; *and I will give him the morning-star*, so that he shall shine bright in eternal glory as the stars for ever and ever. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.* Lord, open thou mine ears, and make me earnestly take heed to the things that are spoken!

CHAP. III.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

Here we have three more of the epistles of Christ to the churches:
1. *To Sardis*, ver. 1—7. 2 *To Philadelphia*, ver. 7—14.
3. *To Laodicea*, ver. 14—22.

1. AND [a] unto the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that [b] hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars: [c] I know thy works, that thou hast [d] a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2. [e] Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for [f] I have not found thy works perfect before God. 3. [h] Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. [i] If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 4. Thou hast [k] a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me [l] in white: for they are worthy. 5. [m] He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the [n] book of life, but [o] I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6. [p] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

a Ch. 1. 11, 20. & 2. 1, 8, 12, 18. ver. 7, 14. Mal. 2. 7. Mat. 24. 31. 2 Cor. 5. 20.
b Ch. 1. 4. John 1. 14, 16. & 3. 34. Is. 11. 2, 3. & 61. 1. ch. 4. 5. & 5. 6. & 1. 16, 20. & 2. 1.
c Ver. 8, 15. ch. 2. 2, 9, 13, 20. Heb. 4. 13.
d Ezek. 33. 31. Mat. 13. 20—22. Heb. 6. 4, 5. Is. 58. 2. 2 Tim. 3. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 6. Tit. 1. 16. Eph. 2. 1, 5. Rev. 16. Mat. 24. 43. & 25. 13. Luke 12. 39, 40. & 21. 36.
e Ch. 16. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 2, 6. Mat. 24. 42, 43. Luke 12. 39, 40. Mark 13. 35—37.
f Heb. 12. 12, 13 2 Pet. 1. 4—10. Eph. 5. 14. Rom. 13. 11—14.
g Ver. 1. Ps. 78. 35—37. Heb. 5. 12. 1 Cor. 2. 1, 3.
h Rom. 6. 17. & 16. 17. Phil. 3. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 13. 1 Tim. 6. 20. ch. 2. 5, 16, 25. & 3. 11.
i 2 Pet. 3. 10. ch. 16. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 2, 6. Mat. 24. 42, 43. Luke 12. 39, 40. Mark 13. 35—37.
k Mat. 7. 13. & 20. 16. Acts 1. 15. Gen. 6. 5, 12. Jude 23.
l Ch. 4. 4. & 6. 11. & 7. 9, 13. & 14. 4. & 19. 8. Mat. 13. 43. Ps. 45. 13, 14. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Zech. 3. 4, 7. Rom. 8. 17. Eccl. 9. 8. Jude 24.
m Ch. 1. 7, 11, 17, 36. ver. 12, 21.
n Phil. 4. 3. Exod. 32. 32. ch. 20. 12. & 13. 8 & 17. 8. & 21. 27. Is. 4. 3. Ps. 87. 6. & 69. 28. Ezek. 13. 9.
o Mat. 10. 32. Luke 12. 8.
p Ch. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29. ver. 22. Mat. 11. 15. ch. 13. 1.

Verses 1—6. To the angel of the church of Sardis is this epistle directed.

1. It comes from him *that hath the seven spirits of God*, who, as the divine Mediator, hath all variety and fulness of the gifts and graces of the Spirit to bestow; *and the seven stars*, guiding and directing his ministering servants, and giving them all their light and influence.

2. The contents are melancholy. 1. *I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead;* amidst all thy specious appearances of religion, I know that thy professions in general are hypocritical, and many who have a name among the members of the church are really dead in trespasses and sins, and others too cold and lukewarm. *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die*, before all vital godliness be utterly departed: *for I have not found thy works perfect before God;* they are but as the carcass, when the spirit is fled: thy duties lifeless; thy services insincere. *Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. Note*, (1.) A form of godliness will avail nothing, if the power of it be lost. (2.) They who feel their souls under decays, need jealously watch, and cry to God for quickening influences to revive his work in their hearts. (3.) The way to recover from our backslidings is to consider how we departed; what God's word hath said of the sin and danger of such a conduct; to repent of our unfaithfulness; and still to cleave to those promises that preserve the soul from despair, and encourage us to return to God. 2. He sharply threatens them: *If therefore thou shalt not watch*, but guest on careless and secure, *I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Note*, Christ's appearing at death or judgment will be very terrible and surprising to the backslider in heart; when too late he will be startled from the slumbers of security. 3. He encourages the few faithful among them: *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis*, cold and careless as the generality of professors are, *who have not defiled their garments;* who have kept themselves unspotted from the world, and maintained a becoming purity of doctrine and manners amidst abounding ungodliness; *and they shall walk with me in white* as sacred priests, and triumphant conquerors, decked with glory, honour, and immortality; *for they are worthy*, and meet for my inheritance among the saints in light.

3. The conclusion. *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment;* shining in splendid robes of righteousness and victory: *and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before*

his angels, in the great day of my appearing to judge the world. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.* *Note,* They who fight manfully under Christ's banner, will be acknowledged by him with the most distinguished favour and honour, when he shall come to reward their fidelity.

7. [q] And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith [r] he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath [s] the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth: and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8. [t] I know thy works: behold I have set before thee [u] an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou [x] hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9. Behold, I will make [y] them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie: behold, [z] I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10. [a] Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11. [b] Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12. [c] Him that overcometh will I make [d] a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and [e] I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name. 13. [f] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

q See ver. 1. ch. 2. 1. & 1. 20.
r Luke 13. 5. Heb. 7. 26. Acts 3. 14. Is. 6. 3. John 14. 6. 1 John 5. 20. ver. 14. ch. 1. 5.
s Is. 22. 22. ch. 1. 5, 18. & 5. 5. & 6. 1—12. & 8. 1. & 22. 16. Luke 1. 32. Mat. 16. 19. & 18. 18. & 28. 18. John 17. 2. Job 12. 14.
t Ch. 2. 2, 9, 13, 19. ver. 1, 15.
u Acts 14. 27. 1 Cor. 16. 9. 2 Cor. 2. 12. Col. 4. 3. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Eph. 2. 13—22. Is. 56. 5. & 55. 11. John 10. 16, 28. 1 Pet. 1. 5.
x Phil. 2. 13. & 4. 13. ch. 2. 2, 9, 13. 2 Tim. 2. 13. with Mark 8. 38. & 14. 71.
y Ch. 2. 9. John 8. 44.
z Prov. 16. 7. Is. 49. 23. & 60. 14.
a Ver. 8. Rom. 15. 4. 2 Pet. 2. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 13. ch. 2. 10. Ps. xci, cxxi.
b Ch. 22. 7, 12, 20. Jam. 5. 8. Phil. 4. 5. 2 Pet. 3. 10—14. ch. 1. 3. & 2. 5, 16, 25. ver. 3, 4. ch. 16. 15.
c See ch. 2. 7, 11, 26. ver. 5, 21.
d 1 Kin. 7. 15, 21. Gal. 2. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 16. John 10. 28, 29. ch. 21. 4. & 22. 3—6.
e Is. 4. 3. & 62. 12. Ps. 87. 6. ch. 2. 17. & 14. 1. & 21. 2, 10, 12. & 22. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Is. 62. 4. & 60. 19, 20. with Heb 12. 22. Gal. 4. 26.
f See ch. 2. 7.

Verses 7—13. The sixth epistle is directed to the angel of the church of Philadelphia. We have,

1. The preface. *These things saith he that is holy, he that is true,* who by nature is essential truth and holiness, the substance of all the prophecies and promises, the true Messiah; *he that hath the key of David,* on whose shoulder the government rests; *he that openeth* the gates of the grave and the kingdom of heaven to his people, *and no man shutteth;* no creature can exclude those from his eternal glory whom he hath chosen for himself; *and shutteth* up the wicked in the dreadful prison of eternal torment, *and no man openeth,* or can open the gates of the impassable gulf, to release the damned from thence.

2. The contents. [1.] *I know thy works,* and regard them with delight and approbation: *behold, I have set before thee an open door,* that my word should run, and have free access, and be glorified; *and no man can shut it,* or obstruct the progress of the gospel: *for thou hast a little strength,* and a measure, though it be small, of true grace and spiritual attainments; *and hast kept my word,* with fidelity and steadfastness, *and hast not denied my name,* nor revolted from the profession of the faith amidst the wiles of deceivers, and the persecutions of avowed enemies. *Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, (which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie;) behold,* with thankfulness and delight, *I will make them,* who, under pretence of zeal for Judaism, corrupt the doctrines of Christianity, and whose practice is vicious as their principles are erroneous, *to come and worship before thy feet;* abased to the dust, and brought with humble confession of their faults to take shame to themselves; *and to know that I have loved thee,* with distinguishing favour and regard. *Note,* Sooner or later the bitterest persecutors of God's people shall be made to know how dear they are to him, and be covered with everlasting confusion in the view of their malice against them. [2.] A gracious promise is given to the faithful. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience,* and maintained the profession of the unadulterated gospel, amidst the malignant opposition of envenomed foes: *I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation,* that thou shalt not apostatize from the truth under those fiery persecutions, *which shall,* under the bloody heathen emperors of Rome, *come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,* and show who are true and false professors. *Note,* (1.) They who steadily cleave to Christ, shall be kept in the most dangerous days. (2.) We must prepare for temptation; it will come, and if we are unprepared, we shall be in imminent danger. [3.] He adds a glorious encouragement. *Behold, I come quickly:* the time therefore of suffering cannot but be momentary: *hold that fast which thou hast,* with holy resolution cleaving to the word of truth, *that no man take thy crown;* nor by fraud or violence seduce or intimidate thee from the faith of the gospel, and rob thee of the reward of fidelity. *Note,* A sense of the speedy coming of Jesus for our help, is the great support under every affliction.

3. The conclusion. *He that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out;* admitted into the eternal presence of God in glory, and there shall be ever with the Lord, enjoying that beatific vision. *And I will write upon him the name of my God,* as one of the redeemed from the earth; *and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God;* as a citizen, entitled to all the blessings and privileges of that celestial city: *and I will write upon him my new name,* acknowledging him for a Christian indeed, and bringing him to share in all the glories of my kingdom. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;* and well worthy it is of our deepest and most serious attention.

14. [g] And unto the angel of the church of * the Laodiceans write; These things saith [h] the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, [i] the beginning of the creation of God; 15. [k] I know thy works, that [l] thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16. [m] So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17. Because thou sayest, [n] I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art [o] wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18. I counsel thee to [p] buy of me [q] gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and [r] white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy na-

g See ch. 1. 11. & 8. 1.
* Or *Laodicea.*
h 2 Cor. 1. 20. ch. 1. 5. & 19. 11. & 22. 6. & 3. 7. Is. 55. 4. & 65. 16. Prov. 8. 6—9. John 14. 6. & 8. 14. & 18. 37. 1 John 5. 20.
i Col. 1. 15—18. Prov. 8. 22—31. John 1. 1—3. & 5. 21, 25. Jer. 31. 22. ch. 1. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 20—23, 45. Eph. 2. 10. & 3. 9.
k Ch. 2. 2, 9, 13, 19. ver. 1.
l 1 Kin. 18. 21. 2 Kin. 17. 33. Zeph. 1. 5. Hos. 7. 8.
m Luke 12. 48. 2 Pet. 2. 21, 22. Zech. 11. 8. Lev. 18. 28. Amos 6. 8. Ps. 81. 12. Ezek. 20. 39. Mat. 24. 51.
n Prov. 13. 7. Jer. 2. 23, 25, 31. Hos. 12. 8. Luke 18. 11. 1 Cor. 4. 8.
o Eph. 2. 1—3. Tit. 3. 3. Is. 1. 3—6. & 59. 4—15. Rom. 3. 9—20.
p Mat. 13. 44, 46. & 25. 9.
q 2 Cor. 9. 15. John 3. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 30. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Mat. 20. 28. Prov. 8. 11, 18, 19, 21. John 1. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 2—4. Col. 2. 10.
r Ver. 4, 5. ch. 19. 8. & 7. 13, 14. Is. 61. 10. & 45. 24. & 46. 12, 13. Rom. 13. 14. & 10. 4. & 5. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Col. 3. 10—12. Eph. 4. 24. Tit. 2. 11, 12.

kedness do not appear; and [s] anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. 19. [t] As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: [u] be zealous therefore, and repent. 20. [x] Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: [y] if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 21. [z] To him that overcometh [a] will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. 22. [b] He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

s Prov. 2. 1—7. & 4. 5, 7. & 1. 23. Eph. 1. 17, 18. & 3. 18, 19. Col. 1. 9. & 2. 2.
t Deut. 8. 5. Job 5. 14. Prov. 3. 12. Heb. 12. 5, 6. Jam. 1. 12. John 16. 8.
u Is. 1. 18, 19. & 26. 9. Hos. 14. 1. Jer. 3. 13, 14, 23. ch. 2. 5. ver. 3.
x Song 5. 2. Ps. 24. 7, 9. & 81. 10. Prov. 23. 26. Eph. 5. 14.
y Luke 12. 37. John 14. 21, 23. Song 5. 1. 1 John 1. 3. Is. 25. 6. Eph. 3. 19.
z Ch. 21. 7. & 2. 7, 12, 17, 26. ver. 5. 12 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.
a Rom. 5. 21. & 6. 23. Mat. 19. 28. Luke 22. 30. Rom. 8. 17. 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. 2 Tim. 2. 12. ch. 2. 26, 27. & 1. 6. & 5. 10. with John 17. 4, 5, 21, 22, 24. Heb. 1. 3. & 8. 1. b Mat. 11. 15. & 13. 9, 43. ch. 10. 9. & 2. 7, 11, 17, 29.

Verses 14—22. The last epistle is directed to the angel of the church of Laodicea. We have,

1. The preface. *These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness,* whose testimony is infallible, and neither can nor will deceive his people, or fail of the accomplishment of his prophecies; *the beginning of the creation of God;* the author of life and being to every creature; the head of vital influence to his people, having in all things the pre-eminence, and possessing universal dominion in heaven and earth.

2. The contents. [1.] A melancholy account is given of their state. *I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot,* but lifeless and lukewarm: *I would thou wert cold or hot;* either be sincerely zealous or make no profession, rather than disgrace it by an unsuitable conduct. [2.] A threatening is added. *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth,* as loathsome and nauseous. [3.] The cause of their declension is remarked. *Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;* filled with spiritual gifts, abounding in worldly wealth; and thus they flattered themselves with high imaginations of their own excellence: *and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;* insensible to thy spiritual wants and poverty; ignorant of all true wisdom; destitute of real grace and righteousness, and exposed to the storms of divine wrath. *Note,* (1.) Nothing is more fatal to the soul, than a vain conceit of our own excellencies. (2.) Many flatter themselves as confident of heaven, whose ways lead down to death and hell. [4.] He gives them the kindest advice. *I counsel thee to buy of me,* that is, to come to me out of my fulness to receive freely the supply of every want, *gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich;* the gold of my Spirit, wisdom, and grace, and all the spiritual treasures which I bestow on my redeemed; *and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed;* even that spotless and everlasting righteousness which I have wrought out, *and* will put upon thee, *that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;* but that all thy guilt and deformity may be for ever hid from the eyes of divine purity and justice; *and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see* the things that make for thy everlasting peace, and all the mysteries of gospel grace, no longer blinded by ignorance, prejudice, and worldly lusts. *Note,* They who would be spiritually rich, and clothed, and wise unto salvation, must come to Christ out of his fulness to buy; and, blessed be his name, the purchase is to be made without money and without price, for he freely gives to the miserable and the destitute. [5.] A gracious encouragement is yet given them to repent. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten,* the reproofs of my word, and the corrections of my providence, are the rod of love: *be zealous therefore;* cast off this lukewarm spirit; let the fire of zeal and love kindle in your hearts; *and repent* of past unfaithfulness. *Behold,* such is my patience and condescensions, *I* yet *stand* waiting to be gracious, *at the door* of your hearts: *if any man hear my voice,* attend to my call and warnings, *and open the door,* in faith and penitence to receive me with eager welcome into his soul, *I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me,* honouring him with my presence, and love, and blessed communion. *Note,* (1.) The Lord's chastisements are signs, not of his wrath, but of his love. (2.) Christ, by his providences, word, and Spirit, knocks at the door of our hearts; and they who welcome him in, shall find him not only as a guest that tarrieth for a night, but whose communion shall make us blessed for eternity.

3. The conclusion. *To him that overcometh* the corruptions of his nature, and the temptations of the world, *will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne;* to such infinite and transcendent glory and dignity shall he be exalted in the great day of my appearing, and come to reign with me triumphant over every foe for ever and ever. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;* for these things are written for our learning to the latest ages: and blessed are they who attend to the warnings, reproofs, exhortations, encouragements, and instructions here revealed, and feel their mighty influence.

CHAP. IV.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In this chapter the prophetical scene begins; and as the epistolary part opened with a vision of Christ, chap. i. *so this part is introduced with a glorious appearance of the great God, whose throne is in heaven, compassed about with the heavenly host. John,* 1. *Records the heavenly sight he saw, from* ver. 1—8. *And then,* 2. *The heavenly songs he heard, from* ver. 8. to the end.

1. AFTER [a] this I looked, and behold, [b] a door *was* opened in heaven; and the [c] first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. 2. And immediately [d] I was in the Spirit: and, behold, [e] a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne. 3. [f] And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* [g] a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. 4. And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw [h] four and twenty elders [i] sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. 5. And [k] out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices: and *there were* [l] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. 6. And before the throne *there was* [m] a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* [n] four beasts full

a Ch. i—iii.
b Ezek. 1. 1. Mat. 3. 16. Acts 7. 56. & 10. 10. with ch. 9. 1. Is. 65. 17. & 66. 22. Dan. 8. 10. Luke 10. 18. ch. 12. 7.
c Ch. 1. 10, 19. & 22. 6. & 11. 12.
d Ch. 1. 10. & 17. 3. & 21. 10. Ezek. 3. 12, 14, 22.
e Is. 6. 1. Ezek. 1. 26. & 10. 1. Exod. 24. 9. Dan. 7. 9. with Jer. 17. 12. Ezek. 43. 5, 7.
f Exod. 15. 11. Job 37. 22. Ps. 89. 7, 8. Is. 6. 3.
g Ch. 10. 1. Ezek. 1. 28. Is. 54. 9, 10. Gen. 9. 12, 13, 16.
h Num. 1. 5—16. & 34. 17—29. 1 Chr. xxiv, xxv. ch. 7. 4—9 Gal. 4. 5, 28, 31.
i Ch. 3. 21. & 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 3. 4, 5, & 6. 11. & 7. 9, 14. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Exod. 28. 40. 2 Tim. 4. 8
k Exod. 20. 18. Ps. 68. 35. Jer. 25. 30. Joel 3. 16. Amos 1. 2. ch. 8. 2. 5. & 10. 3. & 11. 19. & 14. 2. & 16. 18. & 19. 6. Exod. 19. 16. Ps. 18. 13, 14.
l Ch. 1. 4. & 3. 1. & 5. 6. Mat. 3. 11. Acts 2. 3. 1 Cor. 12. 4, &c. Exod. 37. 23. Zech. 4. 2. John 6. 63. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Zech. 13. 1. iii. Tit. 1. Heb. 13.
m Exod. 38. 8. 1 Kin. 7. 23. ch. 15. 2. & 7. 14. Heb. 10. 19. 1 n Ezek. 1. 5—25. & 10. 8—28. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Tim.

of eyes before and behind. 7. And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.

Verses 1—7. Prepared by what he had seen for further discoveries, a door is opened to him in heaven, and the voice of Jesus, which he had heard before, loud and solemn as the trumpet which was heard of old from Sinai's top, calls him to come up thither, that he might be informed of the great events of providence relative to the church. Instantly a sacred rapture seized his spirit, and a glorious vision presents itself to his view.

1. He saw a throne of majesty and judgment, compassed with a rainbow beautiful as the emerald, the emblem of that everlasting covenant which God hath established with his people, on whom no deluge of wrath shall ever descend. (See Gen. ix. 13, &c.)

2. Upon the throne sat the eternal Jehovah, the Ancient of Days, the Creator, Governor, and Judge of all; shining like the jasper and sardine stone, with brightness infinitely surpassing those precious stones which glittered in the high-priest's breast-plate, inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and every divine perfection.

3. Around the throne were four and twenty elders seated, clothed with white raiment, and on their heads they had crowns of gold; the representatives of the whole body of the faithful, now perfected in holiness, admitted to their eternal rest, brought into God's immediate presence, enjoying that beatific vision, and crowned with glory, honour, and immortality.

4. Out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices, signifying the mighty and powerful energy of the gospel-word, which spread like lightning through the world, or those tremendous judgments which he executes on the earth.

5. There were seven lamps burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God, the emblem of the variety and perfection of the gifts and graces which the Holy Ghost bestows.

6. Before the throne was a sea of glass, like unto crystal, in allusion, as is supposed, to the molten sea, where the priests washed, (Exod. xxx. 18, 19.) the figure of Christ's blood, which cleanseth from all sin.

7. In the midst of the throne, and round about it were four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind; the first like a lion, the second like an ox, the third with the face of a man, and the fourth like a flying eagle; the same as Ezek. i. 5. and seem to represent the ministers of grace, who are themselves alive to God by his Spirit; the happy instruments of quickening others; standing between God and the people, to speak in his name; full of light and spiritual understanding; bold in the cause of truth as lions; indefatigable in labour as the ox; possessed of all prudence and compassion as men; soaring high as the eagle in the knowledge of divine mysteries, and winging their flight heavenward, with unremitting zeal and ardour.

8. And the four beasts had each of them [o] six wings about *him;* and *they were* [p] full of eyes within: and † they [q] rest not day and night, saying, [r] Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. 9. And [s] when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who [t] liveth for ever and ever, 10. The four and twenty elders [u] fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11. [x] Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: [y] for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

o Is. 6. 2. Ezek. 1. 6. 2 Tim. 4. 2.
p Ver. 6. Tit. 1. 9. 1 Tim. 4. 16. Mat. 13. 52. Eph. 3. 4.
† Or. *they have no rest.*
q Is. 62. 1, 6, 7. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Acts 20. 18, 24, 31. Gal. 4. 19. Mat. 23. 37.
r Is. 6. 3. Exod. 15. 11. ch. 1. 4, 8. & 11. 17. & 16. 5. & 19. 1—6. Deut. 32. 3, 4.
s 1 Tim. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 11, & 5. 3.
t Jer. 10. 10. ch. 1. 4, 18. & 5. 14. & 10. 6. & 15. 7.
u Ch. 5. 14. Ps. xcv—c, cxxxv, cxxxvi. ver. 4, 9.
x Ch. 5. 9, 12. & 15. 3, 4. Ps. xxix, xcvii, c, cxxxvi, ciii—cv, cvii. Neh. 9. 5.
y Gen. i. Exod. 20. 11. Prov. 16. 4. Rom. 11. 36.

Verses 8—11. The four living creatures, like the seraphim, (Isa. vi. 2.) had six wings, and they were full of eyes within, deep-read in the knowledge of their own hearts, and attending to the notices of God's Spirit in their souls; and with ceaseless adorations they worship the eternal, unchangeable, holy, and triune Jehovah.

When these representatives of the gospel ministers thus led the song of heaven, the elders, who represented the church of the redeemed, joined in their adorations, casting their crowns before the throne, and humbly prostrate, ascribed eternal glory, honour, and power, to the ever-living Jehovah, the Creator and Ruler of all, by whose sovereign pleasure every creature exists, and is designed to show forth his praise. *Note,* (1.) All things are of God, and for God: his own glory is the end of all his works, and should be the design of ours. (2.) God's saints on earth are called upon to join the services of heaven, and to unite in the same sacred ascriptions of praise to him that liveth for ever and ever. (3.) The highest are the humblest beings: they who approach nearest to the throne, are most deeply sensible, that to sovereign grace alone they owe their unutterable bliss, and therefore cast down their golden crowns before their Lord, and say, Thou, and thou alone, art worthy to receive the glory.

CHAP. V.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In the foregoing chapter the prophetical sense was opened in the sight and hearing of the apostle. He saw God on the throne of glory and government, surrounded with his holy ones, and receiving their adorations. Now the counsels and decrees of God are set before the apostle, as in a book, which God held in his right hand; and this book is represented, 1. *As sealed in the hand of God, from* ver. 1—6. 2. *As taken into the hand of Christ the Redeemer, to be unsealed and opened, from* ver. 6. *to the end.*

1. AND I saw in the [a] right hand of him that sat on the throne [b] a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. 2. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, [c] Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? 3. And [d] no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. 4. And [e] I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. 5. [f] And one of the elders saith unto me, [g] Weep not: behold, [h] the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, [i] hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

a Ch. 4. 3. & 3. 21. Ps. 110. 1. & 118. 15, 16. Acts 4. 28. Is. 46. 10.
b Ezek. 2. 9, 10. ch. 10. 4, 8, 9. John 19. 22. Is. 8 16. & 29. 11. Dan. 12. 4, 9. & 8. 26. Mat. 11. 27. Deut. 32. 34.
c Is. 29. 11. & 41. 22, 23, 26. Jer. 49. 19.
d Is. 40. 13, 14. & 41. 28. John 1. 18. Rom. 11. 34. ver. 13.
e With ch. 4. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 28. Jer. 9. 1.
f Ch. 4. 4, 10. ver. 14.
g John 20. 13. Mat. 28. 5. Is. 52. 1. & 60. 1. Phil. 4. 4. Ps. 149. 2.
h Gen. 49. 9, 10. ch. 22. 16. Rom. 8. 29. Ps. 89. 27. Is. 11. 10. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Zech. 3. 8, 9. Rom. 15. 12. & 9. 5. & 1. 3.
i Heb. 2. 10. & 7. 25. John 5. 20. & 3. 32. & 1. 18. ch. 1. 1. & 6. 1. Luke 24. 27, 44.

Verses 1—5. We have here,

1. The prophetic volume, which was in the hand of him that sat on the throne, containing the events which in succeeding ages should befall his church. It *was written within and on the backside*, like Ezekiel's roll. Or, *on the backside*, may be joined with the following clause, as sealed there with seven seals; not probably all on the outside, but as there were seven parchment rolls, one under the other, when the first seal was opened, and the volume unrolled, then the second seal and volume appeared. Known to God from the beginning are all his works, but they are inscrutable by us, till in his word he is pleased to reveal his designs, or by his providence to accomplish his eternal purposes.

2. The proclamation issued forth by a strong angel: *Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* but no creature was found in heaven, earth, or hell, capable of penetrating into the divine decrees, or of foretelling the events of futurity. This is God's prerogative alone.

3. The grief of the apostle at finding no creature who dared assay the arduous task. He wept bitterly, that he could not gain a knowledge of the things contained in the book, apprehending them to be of signal importance.

4. One of the elders kindly observed his tears, and cheered his afflicted heart, saying, *Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah*, the mighty Lord and Saviour, *the root of David*, not only after the flesh his offspring, but, as God, the source of all honour and blessedness to his people, *hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. Note*, God's people are often needlessly afflicting themselves with fears: were their eyes more steadily fixed upon their great Redeemer, their tears never need to flow.

6. And I beheld, and, lo, [k] in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood [l] a Lamb as it had been slain, having [m] seven horns and [n] seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. 7. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. 8. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, [o] having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of * odours, which are the prayers of saints. 9. And they sung a [p] new song, saying, [q] Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for [r] thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10. [s] And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. 11. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of [t] many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12. Saying with a loud voice, [u] Worthy is the Lamb that was slain [x] to receive power, and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13. [y] And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. 14. [z] And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

k Ch. 3. 21. & 7. 17. & 4. 6. & 1. 20. & 2. 1. Mat. 28. 20.

l Is. 53. 7, 10. John 1. 29, 36. Acts 8. 32. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 9. 14. ver. 9, 12. ch. 7. 14. & 12. 11. & 13. 8. Mat. 20. 28. Lev. i—v, xvi. Num. xv, xxviii, xxix.

m Mat. 28. 18. John 17. 2. Phil. 2. 9—11. Dan. 7. 14. Ps. 132. 17. Heb. 3. 4, 6. 1 Sam. 2. 10. Luke 1. 69.

n Zech. 3. 9. & 4. 10. Ch. 4. 5. & 1. 4. John 3. 34. Col. 2. 3, 9. 2 Chr. 16. 9. Ps. 34. 15.

o Ch. 4. 4—11. & 14. 2. & 8. 3, 4. Ps. 141. 2.

* Or *incense.*

p Ch. 14. 3. Ps. 96. 1. & 40. 3. Is. 42. 10. & 44. 23.

q Ch. 4. 11. Heb. 2. 10. Phil. 2. 6—11. Ps. 110. 7.

r Mat. 20. 28. & 26. 28. Rom. 3. 25. & 5. 15—21. 1 Cor. 6. 20. & 7. 23. Eph. 1. 7.

s Acts 20. 28. Heb. 9. 12, 14. & 10. 10, 14. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Col. 1. 14. ch. 14. 4, 6. 1 John 1. 7. & 2. 2. ch. 7. 9, 14.

t Exod. 19. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. ch. 1. 6. & 20. 6. & 22. 5. Gen. 32. 28. Eph. 2. 18. 1 John 5. 4. Rom. 8. 37. Luke 19. 17, 19. Dan. 7. 10. Deut. 33. 2. 2 Kin. 6. 16, 17. Ps. 34. 7. & 68. 17. & 103. 20. & 148. 2. Heb. 12. 22. ch. 7. 11. & 4. 4, 6.

u Ver. 9. Zech. 13. 7. Is. 9. 6.

x Ch. 4. 11. & 7. 12. & 19. 1. John 17. 2. Mat. 28. 18. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Heb. 1. 2. & 2. 8, 9. Phil. 2. 10. Ps. 145. 10. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Jude 25.

y Ps. 96. 11, 12. & xcviii, c, cxvii, cxlv, cxlviii. 1 Chr. 29. 11. Rom. 9. 5. & 11. 36. & 16. 27. Gal. 1. 3. Eph. 3. 21. Phil. 4. 20. Luke 2. 14. 1 Tim. 6. 16. 2 Tim. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 21. 1 Pet. 4. 11. ch. 7. 10, 12. 2 Pet. 3. 18. Jude 25.

z Ch. 4. 9, 10. & 7. 10, 12. & 19. 1, 4, 6, 14. Heb. 13. 8.

Verses 6—14. Behold, the wonderful personage appears, alone found worthy to unloose the seals, and unfold this sacred volume.

1. He is described, *as a Lamb* that *had been slain*, and by his own blood having taken away the sins of the world, stood as our great *high priest*, just before the throne, within the circle of the elders and the living creatures, as the advocate of his redeemed, and ever pleading the oblation he once offered in his own body on the tree. He had *seven horns*, denoting the perfection of his power and dominion as the universal *King* over his church, to protect his people, and push his enemies till he hath consumed them: and his *seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth*, represent the treasures of wisdom, grace, and knowledge, which as the great *prophet* he possesses and dispenses to all his ministers and members, according to their various wants. *He came*, as fully qualified in the virtue of his all-sufficient merit, *and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne*, who readily gave it to him, acknowledging thereby, that he was worthy to unloose the seals, and reveal the mysterious contents.

2. Instantly all heaven resounds with praise; the church triumphant in heaven begin the song, angels repeat the sound, and every creature joins the sacred choir, and echoes loud allelujahs.

[1.] The four beasts and four and twenty elders fall down before the Lamb with humble adoration, their hearts, like their golden lyres, tuned to their Redeemer's praise, and vials full of the most grateful incense, even the prayers of the saints, breathed before him their sweet perfume. United in sacred chorus, high they raised their voices, and uttered this most glorious song, saying, *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof:* qualified fully for the discharge of thy mediatorial office; *for thou wast slain* for our transgressions, *and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;* that we thy chosen might be delivered from the bondage of sin, Satan, and death, and restored to favour and communion with the Most High: *and hast made us unto our God*, now reconciled in a covenant of everlasting love, *kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth*, exalted to the highest dignity and honour, and raised superior to all our spiritual enemies. Who can without some glow of the same sacred rapture read their song, or not long to join with them before the throne!

[2.] The angels, who, in shining ranks innumerable encompassed the throne, the living creatures, and the elders, joined their adorations, and cried, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

[3.] The whole creation echoes back the sound. All in

heaven, earth, or sea, whether angels, the spirits of the just departed, the living here below, creatures animate or inanimate; all, all utter forth their united praises, *saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!* The same divine glory is ascribed to each of the sacred Persons, as being one in essence, and alike the objects of every creature's worship and adoration.

[4.] The four living creatures close with their solemn *Amen*, and the four and twenty elders, the representatives of the church, with humble prostration fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever. Oh, when shall I join this heavenly choir, and with them in heart and lip unite in these eternal praises of God and of the Lamb!

CHAP. VI.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

Hitherto the waters of the sanctuary have been as those in Ezekiel's vision, only to the ancles, or to the knees, or to the loins, *at least; but here they begin to be a river that cannot be passed over. The visions which John saw, the epistles to the churches, the songs of praise, in the two foregoing chapters, had some things dark and hard to be understood; and yet they were rather milk for babes, than meat for strong men; but now we are to launch into the deep, and our business is not so much to fathom it, as to let down our net to take a draught.*

In this chapter six of the seven seals are opened, and the visions attending them are related; the first seal in ver. 1, 2. *the second seal in* ver. 3, 4. *the third seal in* ver. 5, 6. *the fourth seal in* ver. 7, 8. *the fifth seal in* ver. 9—11. *the sixth seal in* ver. 12, 13. &c.

a Ch. 5. 5, 9. & 1. 1.
b Ch. 4. 5. & 11. 19. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Mark 3. 17. 2 Cor. 10. 4. Heb. 4. 12. Acts 2. 37, 41. & 4. 4. & 5. 14.
c Ch. 4. 6. Acts 4. 13. Eph. 6. 19, 20. Acts 20. 24. & 21. 13.
d Ch. 19. 11. Zech. 1. 8, 10. & 6. 2, 3. Rom. 1. 16.
e Ps. 45. 3—5. & 110. 2, 3. Heb. 2. 9. Zech. 6. 11. ch. 14. 14. Rom. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 2. 14. & 10. 4, 5. Acts i—xix. 1 Cor. 15. 25.

1. AND I saw when the Lamb [a]opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were [b]the noise of thunder, [c]one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. 2. And I saw, and behold [d]a white horse; [c]and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Verses 1, 2. The six first seals are supposed to contain the events relative to the church under the heathen emperors, till in the reign of Constantine Paganism was utterly subverted, about the year 323.

On the Lamb's opening the first seal, one of the living creatures, with a voice loud as the thunder, summoned the apostle's attention, and bid him come and see the vision. When lo! *a white horse* appeared, and one sat thereon, carrying a bow, and a crown on his head; *and he went forth conquering and to conquer.* This represents the ministration of the gospel, which brings joy, and peace, and triumph to the soul, of which the white horse is the emblem. The bow of Jesus, like that of Jonathan, returns not empty; the arrows of his gospel, through the power of the Spirit, becomes effectual to subdue the sinners' souls: his crown denotes his victories and dignity; he must prevail: and, in spite of all opposition, his gospel shall go on conquering and to conquer; till in the hearts of his redeemed every corruption is subdued; till throughout the world his truth is diffused; and to the latest ages he will continue his conquests, till the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ. Hasten, O Lord, that happy day.

f Ch. 5. 5, 9.
g Ch. 4. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 6. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 4. 9—13.

3. [f]And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the [g]second beast say, Come and see. 4. And there went out [h]another horse *that was* red: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

h Zech. 1. 8. & 6. 2. ch. 12. 3, 4. Mat. 10. 17, 18, 34, 35. & 24. 9. John 16. 2, 33. 2 Tim. 3. 11, 12.

Verses 3, 4. The second seal being opened, he hath a summons repeated from the second beast to come and see. And behold a red horse, and one armed with a sword sat thereon, to whom power was given to take peace from the earth. And this seems to prefigure the bloody wars, which, during the reigns of Trajan and Adrian, consumed innumerable multitudes of Jews and Romans, the common persecutors of Christianity, till about the year 138. *Note,* (1.) Persecutors of God's people shall have blood given them to drink. (2.) The Lord can set his enemies at variance among themselves, and makes often one wicked nation to be the scourge of his vengeance upon another.

5. And when [i]he had opened the third seal, I heard the [k]third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a [l]black horse; and he that sat on him had [m]a pair of balances in his hand. 6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, † A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and [n]*see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

i Ch. 5. 5, 9.
k Ch. 4. 6, 7. Mat. 10. 16, 17. Eph. 5. 15—17. 1 Cor. 14. 20.
l Zech. 6. 2, 6. Gen. 14. 1, 2. Lam. 4. 7, 8. Amos 8. 7, 8. 1 Sam. 3. 1. 1 Cor. 11. 19. 2 Pet. 2. 7.
m Or *yoke*, Gal. 5. 1. Acts 15. 10. Ps. 58. 2.
† The *chœnix* contained near a pint and a half English.
n Ch. 9. 4. Mat. 25. 4. Is. 55. 1.

Verses 5, 6. The third seal opens, and another summons bids him come and see; when, lo, a black horse, the emblem of famine, appeared, and one with a pair of balances sat on him; when one of the beasts cried, *A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.* The famine would fall chiefly on the poor, who, for the price of a whole day's labour, could but just procure bread for their subsistence, which happened under the reigns of the two Antonines, between the years 139 and 179. *Note,* When one judgment is not effectual to lead sinners to repentance, a second follows at its heels.

7. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of [o]the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8. And I looked, and behold a [p]pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given ‡ unto them over the fourth part of the earth, [q]to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

o Ch. 4. 6, 7. & 12. 14.
p Or *green*, Mark 6. 39. with Zech. 6. 3. ch. 20. 6, 14.
‡ Or *to him.*
q *All manner of calamities, temporal and spiritual.* Jer. 15. 2. & 16. 4, 16. Ezek. 5. 15—17. & 14. 21. Lev. 26. 22, 26. Lam. 5. 10. Ezek. 4. 16.

Verses 7, 8. The fourth seal being opened, the fourth beast bids him come and see: when behold a pale horse; Death sat thereon, and the grave attended him, to devour the corpses of the fallen; or hell, to receive their souls. By war, by famine, by pestilence, and the beasts of the earth, permission is given them to slay even a fourth part of the earth: and history informs us of the dreadful desolations which wasted the Roman empire, from the reign of Maximinus to Dioclesian, in righteous vengeance for their bloody persecutions of Christianity. *Note,* (1.) Death marches as a conqueror through the earth; and,

when attended with hell at his feet, is indeed a king of terrors. (2.) God's quiver is never exhausted, and when he contends, he must prevail.

9. And when [r] he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the [s] altar the souls of them [t] that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10. And [u] they cried with a loud voice, saying, [x] How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11. And [y] white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that [z] should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

r Ch. 5. 5, 9.
s Heb. 9. 12, 14. & 13. 10. ch. 8. 3. & 9. 13. & 14. 18. with Lev. 4. 7.
t Ch. 1. 9. & 12. 11, 17. & 19. 10. & 20. 4. John 16. 2.
u Gen. 4. 10. Heb. 12. 24.
x Ps. 9. 12. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 3. ch. 16. 5, 6. & 19. 2. & 11. 18. Luke 18. 8, 9. Deut. 32. 36—43. ver. 12—17. Zech. 1. 12. Job 24. 12.
y See ch. 3. 5. & 7. 9, 14. & 14. 13. Jude 24. Eph. 5. 27.
z Mat. 10. 17, 18, 34, 35. John 16. 2. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

Verses 9—11. On opening the fifth seal a new scene is disclosed. The souls of the martyrs appear at the foot of the altar of incense, who had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they united in their fervent supplications, *saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not* display these perfections, and *judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* In answer to their prayer, and in token of their acceptance, *white robes*, the emblems of righteousness and honour, *were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season*, patiently expecting their final triumphs over all their foes, *until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled;* and then a period should be put to the bloody persecutions of the Pagan emperors, by the accession of Constantine, about the year 323. *Note*, (1.) The blood of martyrs, and the sufferings of the persecuted, cry for vengeance to a holy God, and it will surely come upon the heads of their enemies. (2.) The time for the exercise of faith and patience is *a little season;* but the glory which shall follow will be eternal.

12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, [a] there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; 13. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her ‖ untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. 14. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together: [b] and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15. [c] And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 16. [d] And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17. [e] For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

a Is. 13. 9, 10, 13. & 34. 4. & 29. 6, 7. & 24. 23. Jer. 4. 23, 24. Ezek. 32. 7, 8. Joel 2. 2, 10, 30, 31. & 3. 15. Hag. 2. 6, 7, 21, 23. Mat. 24. 29. ch. 11. 13. & 16. 18. Acts 2. 20.
‖ Or *green figs.*
b Jer. 51. 25. & 3. 25. & 4. 24. Is. 2. 14. 17. ch. 16. 20. Hos. 4. 13.
c Ps. 76. 12. & 149. 8. & 110. 5, 6. Is. 2. 12, 19.
d Is. 30. 31. Hos. 10. 8. Jer. 8. 3. Luke 23. 30. Job 3. 21. ch. 9. 6.
e Ver. 10. Gen. 3. 15. & 49. 9, 10. Deut. 32. 36—43. Ps. 2. 9. & 21. 8—12. & 110. 5, 6. Mat. 24. 44. & 26. 64. Is. 13. 6—11. Zech. 1. 14. ch. 16. 14.

Verses 12—17. On opening the sixth seal, a dreadful earthquake seemed to threaten universal destruction. The luminaries of heaven grew dark as sackcloth; the stars dropped, extinguished from their spheres, as when the storm shakes down the untimely figs; the heaven itself departed as a scroll; every island and mountain fled affrighted: and universal consternation seized all ranks and degrees, from the king upon the throne to the meanest slave, who sought for shelter in dens and caves, and in their horror wished to be for ever covered under the rocks and mountains, from the face of him who sat upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for now by woeful experience they felt his terrible vengeance, which they could neither flee from nor resist.

This vision seems to represent the utter and irrecoverable overthrow of heathenism, when that wonderful revolution was brought about in the empire, and under Constantine idolatry was abolished, the idols of Paganism destroyed, and all those who had before been the inveterate enemies of the Christian name, covered with confusion.

And what is here represented in vision will be most emphatically verified in the great day of perdition of ungodly men. When trembling before the intolerable wrath of the offended Judge, in vain the mountains and rocks will be invoked to fall on the sinner's guilty head; naked and defenceless he must be exposed to all the furious blasts of vengeance, and sink down into everlasting burnings, under black unfathomable despair! Lord, gather not my soul with sinners!

CHAP. VII.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

After the opening of the six seals, which foretold great calamities in the world; and before the sound of the seven trumpets, which gave notice of great corruptions arising in the church; a short respite is given to the church, from the years 323 *to* 337. *We have,* 1. *An account of the restraint laid upon the winds,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The sealing of the servants of God,* ver. 4—9. 3. *The songs of angels and saints on this occasion,* ver. 9—13. 4. *A description of the honour and happiness of those that had faithfully served Christ and suffered for him,* ver. 13, &c.

1. AND after [a] these things I saw [b] four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding [c] the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. 2. And I saw [d] another angel ascending from the east, [e] having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, [f] to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3. Saying, [g] Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have [h] sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

a Ch. iv—vi.
b Ps. 34. 7. Heb. 2. 14.
c Eph. 4. 14. Dan. 7. 2. & 8. 8. Is. 27. 8. Jer. 49. 36, 37. & 51. 2. & 4. 11, 12.
d Christ. Acts 7. 30, 32. ch. 1. 13. & 10. 1. & 8. 3. Mal. 4. 2. Ezek. 43. 2, 3. & 46. 9, 10.
e John 6. 27. & 3. 33. & 7. 37—39. Eph. 1. 13. & 4. 30. 1 Tim. 2. 19 John 10. 14.
f Ver. 1, 3. ch. 8. 7—12.
g Ch. 6. 6. & 9. 4. Is. 27. 8. & 65. 8. Ps. 76. 10. Mat. 24. 22.
h Ezek. 9. 4. ch. 14. 1—4. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Eph. 1. 13. & 4. 30. 2 Cor. 1. 22. Song 1. 11. Gal. 5. 22, 23. Exod. 12. 13, 23.

Verses 1—3. The winds and storms of persecution are now for a while hushed in peace, and the church enjoys undisturbed tranquillity; whilst ministering angels, at the command of the great and uncreated Angel of the covenant, who bore the impress of the living God, and bestows his Spirit upon his people,

whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption, restrain for a while the desolating judgments which had before destroyed the earth.

4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: [i] *and there were* sealed an hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. 5. [k] Of the tribe of Judah *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad *were* sealed twelve thousand. 6. Of the tribe of Aser *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses *were* sealed twelve thousand. 7. Of the tribe of Simeon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Isachar *were* sealed twelve thousand. 8. Of the tribe of Zabulon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin *were* sealed twelve thousand.

i Ch. 14. 1. Gen. 15. 5. Ezek. 13. 9. Is. 4. 2, 3. Ps. 87. 6. Acts 2. 41. & 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 6. 7. Rom. 11. 5, 7, 16. Ezek. xlvii, xlviii. Gen. 32. 28.

k Dan and Ephraim are not mentioned, because they had been ringleaders in idolatry. Judg. xvii, xviii. 1 Kin. 12. 28—33. Hos. 4. 17.

Verses 4—8. The saints, who are here sealed out of the twelve tribes, are the emblems of the elect of God out of all nations in all ages. The tribes of Dan and Ephraim, as ringleaders in idolatry, are omitted, a brand of just reproach being set upon them for such apostasy from God. *Note*, God's people are sealed ones; he knoweth those that are his.

9. After this I beheld, and, lo, [l] a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, [m] clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, [n] Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11. [o] And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12. Saying, [p] Amen: blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

l Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 18. & 49. 10. Ps. 2. 8. & 22. 27—31. & xlv, xlvii, lxvi, lxvii, lxxii, lxxxvii, c. & 110. 2. 3. Is. 2. 2, 3. & 43. 6. & 49. 12—26. & 52. 15. & 53. 12. & lx, lxii. & 25. 6. Jer. 3. 17. Zech. 8. 22. & 2. 11. Rom. 15. 9—12. ch. 5. 9. & 11. 15.

m Ch. 6. 11. & 5. 10. & 1. 5, 6. & 3. 4, 5, 18. ver. 14. ch. 14. 4. & 15. 2. Ps. 92. 13, 14. 2 Pet. 3. 18.

n Ps. 3. 8. & 115. 1. Is. 43. 11. Jer. 3. 23. Hos. 13. 4, 9, 11. Acts 4. 12. ch. 5. 9, 10. John 1. 29, 36. Eph. 1. 3—11.

o Ch. 5. 11, 12. Ps. 34. 7. & 103. 20. & 148. 2.

p Ch. 5. 12, 13. & 19. 1. 1 Chr. 29. 10—13. Mat. 6. 13. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

Verses 9—12. We have here a glorious scene of the happy state of the church, either during the Millennium, as some suppose, or when the redeemed shall be finally entered into their eternal rest.

1. They are a great multitude which no man could number; though few comparatively in any one age or nation, yet, when collected in the great congregation, they will be innumerable.

2. They stand before the throne and before the Lamb, with holy boldness and sure acceptance, *clothed with white robes*, the emblems of honour, joy, and purity, *and palms in their hands*, in token of their glorious victories obtained over all their foes; for all God's saints shall assuredly be finally triumphant over their foes.

3. They lifted up their voices in loud hallelujahs, crying, *Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb*; all glory, praise, and adoration be ascribed to him, for that complete salvation which he hath wrought out for us, and freely bestowed upon us.

4. The angelic hosts, with the elders and living creatures which stood before the throne, immediately joined in their adorations, and falling *on their faces worshipped God, saying, Amen! Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen!* The inhabitants of heaven have all one mind and employment, ceaseless in the praises of their common Lord. May we now delight to join their songs, and prepare hereby for the happy service of eternity!

13. And [q] one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14. And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they [r] which came out of great tribulation, and [s] have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15. Therefore are they [t] before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. 16. [u] They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 17. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, [x] shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: [y] and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

q Ch. 5. 5. & 4. 4, 10.

r Ch. 15. 2. & 13. 7. & 6. 9—11. Acts 14. 22.

s Is. 1. 18. Zech. 3. 3—5. Heb. 9. 14. & 10. 9. Rom. 5. 9. Eph. 5. 25—27. 1 John 1. 7. ch. 1. 5, 6.

t Ps. 134. 1, 2. ch. 21. 3. & 22. 3—5. Is. 4. 5, 6. 2 Cor. 6. 16.

u Is. 49. 9, 10. Ps. 121. 6. Mat. 13. 6, 21. Song 1. 6. Is. 4. 6. & 32. 2. & 25. 4.

x Ps. 23. 1. & 36. 8. Is. 25. 6, 8. John 10. 10, 11. & 4. 14. & 7. 38. Is. 12. 3. & 49. 9, 10.

y Is. 25. 8. & 30. 19. & 35. 10. & 51. 11. & 60. 20. ch. 21. 4.

Verses 13—17. Whilst John, with holy rapture, beheld the heavenly vision, one of the elders questions him, whether he understood what he saw, and knew who these were and whence they came? With humble acknowledgment of his ignorance, and desire of information, he replied, *Sir, thou knowest.* The elder thereupon kindly undertook to inform him.

1. *These*, saith he, *are they who came out of great tribulation*, through various afflictions, and the fire of persecution, *and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God*, not on account of their own deserts or sufferings, but as having overcome through the blood of Jesus, applied to their hearts by faith for their complete justification before God. *Note*, Our title to eternal blessedness depends not upon what we do or suffer for Christ, but upon what he hath done and suffered for us, when he perfected his people by one oblation once offered.

2. He informs him of the distinguished dignity and glory to which these once suffering saints were admitted. They *are before the throne of God*, admitted to the immediate presence of the Eternal Majesty, *and serve him day and night in his* celestial *temple*, without ceasing: *and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them* for ever, as the author and source of their eternal felicity. *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more*, knowing no more these painful cravings, *neither shall the*

sun light on them, nor any heat, no fire of persecution, nor furnace of affliction or temptation shall there be ever apprehended: *For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne,* possessed of all dominion and power, *shall feed them* with his rich provision, *and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters,* to refresh and comfort their souls, which from his presence shall drink in pleasures as out of a river: *and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;* no sin, no sorrow shall be there, nor one salt tear ever again trickle down their faces, but unutterable and uninterrupted consolations shall be their eternal happy portion. Bring me, dear Lord, to share this blessedness among thy saints in light.

CHAP. VIII. ANNO DOMINI, 96.

We have already seen what occurred upon opening six of the seals, we come now to the opening of the seventh, which introduced the sounding of the seven trumpets, and a direful scene now opens: most expositors agree, the seven seals represent the intervals between the apostles' time and the reign of Constantine, but the seven trumpets are designed to represent the rise of antichrist, some time after the empire became Christian. In this chapter we have the preface, or prelude, to the sounding of the trumpets, ver. 1—7. 2. *The sounding of four of the trumpets,* ver. 7, &c.

1. AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was [a] silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. 2. And I saw the [b] seven [c] angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven [d] trumpets. 3. And [e] another angel came and [f] stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him [g] much incense, that he should * offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. 4. [h] And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. 5. And the angel took the censer, [i] and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: [k] and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. 6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

a Job 4. 16. with ch. 7. 10. or Is. 54. 13, 14. Ps. 119. 165.
b Ch. 1. 4, 11. & ii. iii. & 5. 1. & vi. ver. 1. ch. 15. 1, 7, 8. & xvi.
c Ch. 7. 1, 2. & 15. 7, 8. & viii. xi. xvi. Mat. 18. 10. Luke 1. 19.
d Num. 10. 9, 10. 2 Chr. 29. 25—28. Jer. 6. 1. & 4. 19. Amos 3. 6, 7.
e Christ, Ch. 7. 2. & 10. 1. Acts 7. 30, 32.
f Exod. 30. 7. 1 Kin. 7. 50. 2 Chr. ch. 5. 8. & 6. 9. & 9. 13. & 14. 18. Heb. 13. 10. & 9. 24. & 7. 25. Rom. 8. 34.
g Mat. 20. 28. Eph. 5. 2. & 1. 6, 7. & 5. 25—27.
* Or *add it to the prayers.*
h Exod. 30. 7. Ps. 141. 2. Luke 1. 10. Acts 10. 4, 31. Is. 58. 9. & 65. 24.
i Ezek. 10. 2. Luke 12. 49. Mat. 10. 34. Jer. 23. 29. & 51. 11. Is. 66. 6, 14—16. Deut. 32. 41—43. Ezek. 10. 6, 7.
k Ch. 4. 5. & 11. 19. & 16. 18. Is. 30. 30. & xxiv, xxxiv. Ps. 18. 13. Jer. 25. 30. 2 Sam. 22. 7—9.

Verses 1—6. The former seals related to the events which should happen to the Roman empire whilst Pagan; the last seal includes the dreadful judgments of God upon the degenerate Christian empire, after the short state of prosperity enjoyed under Constantine, represented here by the silence observed in heaven for *half an hour,* when a new scene opens to view.

1. Seven angels present themselves before God, the instruments of his providence, and seven trumpets are given them to proclaim the judgments in so many successive periods about to be executed on the earth.

2. Another angel, the Lord of the angelic host, and the uncreated angel of the covenant appears, and as the great high priest of his people, offers upon the golden altar much incense, making the prayers of his saints acceptable before the throne of God, through his own sacrifice and intercession. *Note,* (1.) God's saints are known by their continual life of prayer; they who never pray have no part or lot in Christ's salvation. (2.) Not for their own sakes do our prayers come up with acceptance before the throne, but for his, who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

3. Having secured a gracious answer to his people's prayers, this great angel gives the signal for his judgments to break forth upon his enemies; filling his censer with fire from the altar, he cast it into the earth, the Roman empire, and terrible thunderings, lightnings, and voices followed, and a great earthquake, emblems of the dreadful vengeance ready to be executed, and immediately the angels prepared to sound their trumpets.

7. The first angel sounded, and there followed [l] hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: [m] and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. 8. And the second angel sounded, [n] and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; 9. And [o] the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. 10. And the third angel sounded, and there [p] fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp; and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters: 11. And the name of the star is called [q] Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. 12. And the fourth angel sounded, [r] and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. 13. And I beheld, and heard [s] an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, [t] Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

l Exod. 9. 24, 25. Is. 30. 30. & 28. 2. & 29. 6. & 32. 19. Ezek. 38. 22, 23. ch. 16. 21. Ps. 11. 5, 6. & 18. 13.
m Is. 2. 12, 13. & 40. 7. ch. 16. 2. ver. 9, 10, 12. with ch. 9. 4. Zech. 13. 8, 9.
n Jer. 51. 28. Dan. 7 3. ch. 16. 3. Exod. 7. 17—20.
o Zech. 13. 8. Is. 2. 16. ch. 18. 19. & 16. 3. ver. 7, 10, 12.
p Is. 14. 12—25. Jude 13. ch. 1. 20. & 9. 1. & 6. 13. & 12. 4. Is. 10. 4, 8. Hos. 13. 15, 16. Exod. 7. 20.
q Deut. 29. 18. Amos 6. 12. & 5. 7. & 8. 10. Heb. 12. 15. Jer. 9. 15. & 23. 15. Exod. 15. 23. Ruth 1. 20.
r Is. 13. 10. Ezek. 32. 7. Amos 8. 9. Exod. 10. 21, 23. ch. 16. 8, 9. or Mal. 4. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 19. ch. 1. 20. with 2 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5. 2 Thes. 2. 9—11.
s Ps. 103. 20. Heb. 1. 14. with ch. 1. 20. & 14. 6. & 19. 17. Amos 3. 6, 7.
t Amos 9. 1, 12. & 11. 14.

Verses 7—13.

1. The first trumpet sounds, and hail, fire, and blood mingled therewith, like one of the plagues of Egypt, followed, by which a third part of the trees, and every green thing was consumed, denoting the civil wars between the sons of Constantine, which ended, after prodigious slaughter, with the destruction of his family, between the years 337—379; and the Goths also then began to break in and ravage the empire.

2. The second trumpet sounds the alarm, and a burning mountain hurled into the sea, converts the third part of it into blood, and slays the third part of all the creatures that lived therein, or sailed upon it. And this is supposed to refer to the

irruptions of the Goths and Vandals into the empire, when under Alaric they penetrated into Italy, and sacked Rome itself, between the years 379 and 412.

3. The third trumpet is blown, and a falling star, called Wormwood, embittered the third part of the waters, and a great mortality ensued; and this denotes the fearful desolations wrought by the Goths and Vandals between the years 412 and 493; under Genseric, they ravaged Italy and plundered Rome about the year 445, and afterwards, under Odoacer, they took Rome, dethroned Augustulus, and their general assumed the title of king.

4. The fourth trumpet sounds, and a total eclipse of all the luminaries of heaven over the third part of the earth followed; signifying the dreadful darkness and ignorance that, under the barbarous nations, which ravaged the empire, generally prevailed. The seat of empire was also under Odoacer translated from Rome to Ravenna, and though no alteration was then made in the government, yet when Justinian afterwards recovered Italy from the Goths, and erected the exarchate of Ravenna, Rome was only a petty dukedom, her senate and councils were abolished, and it became subject to the exarch of Ravenna. Whilst, with attentive expectation, John waited for the sounding of the other trumpets, a mighty angel, flying through the midst of heaven, cried aloud, *Wo, wo, wo to the inhabiters of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound. Note,* (1.) God warns before he strikes. (2.) Lesser judgments, when slighted, will assuredly be followed with others more tremendous.

CHAP. IX.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In this chapter we have an account of the sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets, the appearances which attended them, and the events that were to follow the fifth trumpet, ver. 1—13. *the sixth,* ver. 13, &c.

1. AND [a] the fifth angel sounded, and I saw [b] a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and [c] to him was given the key of the [d] bottomless pit. 2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and [e] there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. 3. And there came out of the smoke [f] locusts upon the earth: [g] and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4. And it was commanded them that they [h] should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; [i] but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. 5. [k] And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man. 6. [l] And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. 7. [m] And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their [n] faces *were* as the faces of men. 8. And they had [o] hair as the hair of women, and their [p] teeth were as *the teeth* of lions. 9. [q] And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the [r] sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. 10. And they had [s] tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months. 11. And they had [t] a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue *is* * Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name * Apollyon. 12. [u] One woe is past; *and,* behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

a Ch. 8. 2, 7, 8, 10, 11.
b Ch. 8. 10. Is. 14. 12. with ch. 1. 20. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 8. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5.
c Ch. 13. 2. with 1. 18. Mat. 16. 19.
d Luke 8. 31. ch. 17. 8. & 20. 1, 10. ver. 2, 11.
e Gen. 19. 28. Exod. 10. 21, 23. ch. 8. 12. & 16. 8—10. 2 Thes. 2. 9—11. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. Mat. 24. 24. Is. 14. 31. Ps. 18. 8.
f Exod. 10. 15. Joel 1. 4. & 2. 2—11. 2 Tim. 4. 3. & 3. 1—6.
g Ver. 10, 11. ch. 13. 1, 2, 7, 12—16. & 17. 2. Dan. 7. 8, 11, 20, 21. & 11. 36—39.
h Ch. 7. 3. & 6. 6. Mat. 24. 24. 1 Pet. 3. 13. Ps. 72. 16. & 110. 3. Is. 3, 10. Ezek. 9. 4. Exod. 12. 23.
i Exod. 12. 23, 29. Ezek. 9. 6. with ch. 7. 3, 4. & 14. 1. Eph. 4. 30.
k Dan. 11. 40. or 7. 8, 20, 21. & 11. 36. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5. ch. 13. 2, 7, 16, 17. & xvii.
l Is. 2. 19. ch. 6. 16. Job 3. 21. & 7. 15. Jer. 8. 3. Hos. 10. 8. Luke 23. 30.
m Joel 2. 4. & 1. 4, 6. Jer. 5. 8. Nah. 3. 12, 17.
n Eph. 4. 14. 1 Sam. 4. 9. Dan. 7. 8.
o Is. 3. 24.
p Joel 1. 6. & 2. 5, 6. Mic. 3. 5.
q Ch. 17. 13. & 13. 2.
r Joel 2. 5. ch. 13. 5. Dan. 8. 7, 8. 11.
s Is. 9. 5. Eph. 4. 14. 2 Thes. 2. 9—11.
t Dan. 11. 36—39. & 7. 8, 11, 20, 21, 24, 25. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 8. ch. xiii, xvii. & 11. 7.
* That is, *destruction, and a destroyer of both Jews and Gentiles.*
u Ch. 8. 13. & 11. 14.

Verses 1—12. The fifth trumpet is supposed to refer to the rise of the impostor Mahomet, who is the star here spoken off, infecting the earth like a pestilential meteor with his abominable falsehoods, permission being given him to open the bottomless pit, and a cloud of errors, black as the darkness of hell itself, immediately burst out, and covered the east; innumerable multitudes of Saracens; thick as locusts, under his banners, rushed forth: they chiefly consisted of cavalry, made dreadful incursions into the empire, with turbans like crowns on their heads; wore long hair like women; strong as lions; defended with armour, weapon proof; and rushed with irresistible fury on their foes. Satan, the angel of the bottomless pit, the great destroyer of men, was at their head: and such was the misery which they every where spread through the apostate church, that death appeared preferable to life; but to the elect of God, the sealed in the earth, the power of these destroyers reached not; they were not to be deceived by the wiles of imposture, nor terrified from their profession by any danger of threatenings. The space contained within this seal extends from 568 to 675. *Note,* (1.) The heaviest judgments upon the world are those, when God lets loose the great deceiver; and because men turn away from the truth, he gives them up to strong delusions, to believe a lie. (2.) Heresy and error, like the scorpion's sting, infuse baleful poison into the soul. (3.) Satan, and all his emissaries, are under a divine restraint; God saith unto them, hitherto shall ye come, and no farther. (4.) Whatever prevalence of delusion there may be, God's people shall every one of them be preserved in the most trying times.

One wo is now past, two more are yet to come.

13. [x] And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a [y] voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose [z] the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 15. [a] And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared * for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay [b] the third part of men. 16. And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard

x Ch. 8. 2, 7—9, 12. ver. 1.
y Ch. 8. 3, 5. & 14. 14, 18. Mat. 28. 18. Eph. 1. 20, 22. Prov. 8. 15, 16. Exod. 30. 1, 6.
z Dan. 11. 40—43. with ch. 16. 12.
a Dan. 11. 40—43. ch. 16. 12. 1 Sam. 23. 26.
* Or *at.*
b Ch. 8. 7, 9, 11, 12. These things represent the prodigious and terrible armies of the Turks, and perhaps also of the Saracens.

the number of them. 17. And thus I
† See the preceding note. saw the horses in the vision, and them
that sat on them, having breastplates of
c Ver. 10. Is. 9. 15. Eph. 4. 14. Mat. 21. 24. fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and
the heads of the horses *were* as the heads
of lions; and out of their mouths issued
d Ch. 2. 11. & 6. 6. & 7. 2. fire, and smoke, and brimstone. 18. By
these three was the third † part of men
killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and
e Jer. 5. 3. Is. 1. 5, 6. Deut. 31. 29. 2 Chr. 28. 22, Hos. 4. 17. by the brimstone which issued out of
their mouths. 19. For their power is in
their mouth, and in their [c] tails: for their
f Lev. 17. 7. Deut. 31. 17. & 32. 17, 21. 2 Kin. 22. 17. Ps. 106. 37. Jer. 25. 6, 7. & 10. 5, 14. Ps. 115. 4—8. & 135. 15—18. Dan. 5. 23. & 11. 36—39. ch. 13. 4, 8, 15. & 14. 9. & 17. 2, 5. & 18. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 20. tails *were* like unto serpents, and had
heads, and with them they [d] do hurt.
20. And the rest of the men which were
not killed by these plagues [e] yet repented
not of [f] the works of their hands, that
they should not worship devils, and idols
of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone,
and of wood; which neither can see, nor
g Dan. 7. 21, 25. ch. 13. 7, 13—17. & 17. 2, 5. & 18. 3. hear, nor walk: 21. Neither repented
they of [g] their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of
their thefts.

Verses 13—21. On the sounding of the sixth angel, the voice of Christ is heard *from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God*, the emblem of the prevalence of his intercession for all his people in the four parts of the earth; his command to the sixth angel is, that he should *loose the four angels that were bound in the great river Euphrates*, and let them have power *for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, to slay the third part of men*. This may be referred to the intestine quarrels among the successors of Mahomet, which for about fifty years prevented them from spreading their conquests in the empire; but afterwards from 675 to 750, they carried their arms far and wide through Egypt, Africa, and Spain: their forces were innumerable and invincible, chiefly consisting of cavalry, and breathing forth threatening and slaughter through the earth; and, like scorpions, they infused their poisonous tenets wherever their arms prevailed. Yet all these heavy judgments reclaimed not those who bore the Christian name, but dishonoured it by the vilest abominations; nor did they repent of their idolatries, the worship of demons and images, unable to hear or answer their more stupid votaries, but continued in the practice of murder, sorcery, fornication, and theft, and all those miscalled pious frauds which priestcraft invented to beguile the superstitious: therefore more deadly woes are yet in store for them. *Note*, (1.) God sends his judgments that sinners may turn from the evil of their ways. (2.) They who under God's visitations harden their hearts, must inevitably perish at the last.

CHAP. X.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

This chapter is an introduction to the latter part of the prophecies of this book. Here we have, 1. *A remarkable description of a very glorious angel with an open book in his hand,* ver. 1—3. 2. *An account of seven thunders which the apostle heard, as echoing to this voice of the angel, and communicating some discoveries, which the apostle was not yet allowed to write.* 3. *The solemn oath taken by him who had the book in his hand,* ver. 5—7. 4. *The charge given to the apostle, and observed by him,* ver. 8—11.

1. AND I saw [a] another mighty angel
a Christ. Ch. i. & 8. 3. & 9. 13. Dan. 10. 5, 6. & 12. 7. come down from heaven, [b] clothed with
b Ch. 1. 7. & 4. 3, 5. & 1. 15, 16. & 14. 14. Gen. 9. 6, 13, 17. Ps. 104. 3, 26—28. Dan. 10. 5, 6. Ps. 97. 2. Mat. 17. 2. a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his
head, and his face *was* as it were the sun,
and his feet as pillars of fire: 2. And he
had in his hand [c] a little book open: and
c Ch. 5. 1, 5. & vi. & 8. 1. or Rom. 1. 16. & 16. 27. Col. 1. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4, 6. he [d] set his right foot upon the sea, and
his left *foot* on the earth, 3. And [e] cried
d Mat. 28. 18. Prov. 8. 15, 16. Eph. 1. 20—22. Ps. 97. 1. Is. 59. 19. ch. 13. 1, 11. Ps. 2. 8. with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth:
and when he had cried, [f] seven thunders
e Joel 3. 16. Amos 3. 8. Is. 31. 4. & 5. 30. uttered their voices. 4. And when the
seven thunders had uttered their voices,
f Ch. 8. 6. & 15. 1, 7. & xvi. I [g] was about to write: and I heard a
g Ch. 1. 4, 11. & ii, iii. Dan. 8. 26. & 12. 4. Deut. 29. 29. voice from heaven, saying unto me, [h] Seal
h Heb. 13. 8. Mat. 28. 18. ver. 2. up those things which the seven thunders
uttered, and write them not. 5. And
i Dan. 12. 7. Gen. 14. 22. Heb. 6. 13. Exod. 6. 6. the angel, which I saw [i] stand upon the
sea and upon the earth, [k] lifted up his
k Jer. 10. 10. ch. 1. 18. & 4. 9, 10. & xiv. & 15. 7. hand to heaven, 6. And sware by him
l Ch. 4. 11. Acts 4. 24. Gen. i, ii. Exod. 20. 11. Jer. 22. 17, 27. ch. 14. 7. that [k] liveth for ever and ever, who [l] created heaven, and the things that therein
m Ezek. 7. 2—12. & 12. 28. Is. 13. 22. Dan. 12. 7. ch. 16. 17. are, and the earth, and the things that
therein are, and the sea, and the things
which are therein, that [m] there should be
n Ch. 11. 15—18. Dan. 12. 7. & 7. 14, 27. with Is. xlix, lx, lxii, lxv, lxvi. Jer. xxxi, xxxiii. Ezek. xxxiv—xlviii. Hos. ii, iii. Zech. xiv, &c. ch. xiv—xxii. time no longer: 7. But in [n] the days of
the voice of the seventh angel, when he
shall begin to sound, the mystery of God
should be finished, as he hath declared
to his servants the prophets.

Verses 1—7. Another vision intervenes between the sixth and seventh trumpet, as before between the sixth and seventh seal.

1. A glorious angel, even the same divine personage whose voice was heard before, giving the angels their commission, (chap. vii. 2.) comes down from heaven clothed with a cloud, and around his head the rainbow glowed, the token of his mindfulness of the everlasting covenant, his countenance like the sun, cheering the hearts of his people, and his feet as pillars of fire, firm to support the interests of his church, and terrible to tread down her enemies. In his hand he held a little book, the last volume of the roll which he had opened, and was about to reveal the contents of it; and, setting one foot on the earth, the other on the sea, to intimate his universal dominion, loud as the lion roars he uttered his voice, and instantly seven mighty thunders, the emblems of the judgments about to follow, echoed back the sound. Being about to minute down the articulate denunciations uttered by these thunders, John is restrained by a voice from heaven, saying, *Seal up those things, and write them not.*

2. The angel that stood on the earth and sea then lifted up his hand to heaven, and, with a solemn oath sware by the great Creator of all things, *that there should be time no longer;* but that when the time and times and half a time (Dan. xii. 7.) are expired, the 1260 years of the reign of Antichrist, then an end should be put to the Antichristian tyranny for ever, and that, within the period of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God should be finished, his designs of grace accomplished, and his great salvation spread from pole to pole; as of old had been shown to his prophets, Dan. vii. 25—28. xiii. 6, 7. Zech. xiv. 8.

8. And [o] the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go, *and* [p] take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. 9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, [q] Take *it*, and eat it up: and [r] it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. 10. [s] And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. 11. And he said unto me, Thou must [t] prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

o Ver. 4. Is. 30. 21. not ch. 4. 1. & 1. 10—13.
p Ezek. 3. 17. Mat. 17. 5. ch. 1. 1.
q Ezek. 2. 8. & 3. 1—3. Jer. 15. 16. Col. 3. 16. John 15. 6. 1 Tim. 4. 13, 15.
r Hab. 3. 1, 6. Ps. 119. 103. & 19. 10. Jer. 15. 16. Job 23. 12.
s Ps. 119. 59, 60. Exod. 23. 21. Ezek. 3. 3. & 2. 10.
t 1 Chr. 25. 2. 1 Cor. 14. 4. ch. 14. 6. with 11. 9. & 13. 7.

Verses 8—11. The same voice which he had heard from heaven,

1. Commands him to go and take the volume out of the angel's hand who stood on the earth and sea, who gave it to him, and bid him eat it up; digesting the awful contents therein revealed, telling him, that though sweet in his mouth, it would make his belly bitter; desirable as it was to know the events of futurity, the awful desolations about to come upon the earth, and the sufferings of the church, could not but inwardly grieve and afflict him.

2. The apostle obeyed, and found the word true which had been spoken; sweet as the book was in his mouth, as honey, his belly was made bitter as gall, and the burdens he foresaw deeply affected him; but he must not conceal the secrets communicated to him; he is commanded to prophesy concerning the events which must successively come to pass before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings. *Note*, Preachers must first themselves digest and be deeply affected with the truths which they deliver to others.

CHAP. XI.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In this chapter we have an account, 1. *Of the measuring reed given to the apostle to take the dimensions of the temple,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Of the two witnesses of God,* ver. 3—14. 3. *Of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and what followed upon it,* ver. 14, &c.

1. AND there was given me a [a] reed like unto a rod: and the [b] angel stood, saying, Rise, and [c] measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. 2. But [d] the court which is without the temple * leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot [e] forty *and* two months. 3. And [f] I will give *power* unto my [g] two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. 4. These are the [h] two olive trees, and the [i] two candlesticks [k] standing before the God of the earth. 5. [l] And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. 6. [m] These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and [n] have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will. 7. And when they shall have [o] finished their testimony, [p] the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. 8. And their [q] dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of [r] the great city, which spiritually is called [s] Sodom and Egypt, where also [t] our Lord was crucified. 9. [u] And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and [x] shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. 10. [y] And they that dwell upon the earth shall [z] rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts to one another; because [a] these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. 11. [b] And after three days and an half [c] the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and [d] great fear fell upon them which saw them. 12. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, [e] Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies [f] beheld them. 13. And the same hour was there a [g] great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and in the earthquake were slain [h] of men seven thousand: and the remnant [i] were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

a Ezek. 40. 3. & 42. 16. Zech. 2. 1, 2. ch. 21. 15, 16. Is. 8. 20. & 34. 16. Acts 17. 11. John 5. 39. Ps. 110. 2. & 45. 6. Gal. 6. 16.
b Ch. 10. 1, 5. Mat. 17. 5.
c Ezek. xl—xliii, xlvii, xlviii. ch. 21. 15—17. 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Eph. 2. 21, 22. 1 Pet. 2. 5.
d Ezek. 40. 17, 19, 20. & 42. 20. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Phil. 3. 18, 19. Dan. 7. 8, 11, 20, 24, 25. & 11. 36—39. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6. & 4. 3, 4. 2 Thes. 2. 3—12. ch. xiii—xviii.
h Zech. 4. 2, 3, 6, 11, 14. Jer. 11. 6. Ps. 52. 8. & 92. 14. Rom. 11. 17.
i Mat. 5. 14. Luke 11. 33. ch. 1. 20. Eph. 5. 8, 9. Mark 16. 15.
k 1 Kin. 17. 1. Ps. 134. 1. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Tim. 4. 2.
l Is. 11. 4. Jer. 5. 12, 14. & 23. 29. Hos. 6. 5. Zech. 1. 6. 2 Kin. 1. 10, 12. Jer. 1. 10. Is. 44. 26. ch. 13. 10. 2 Kin. 1. 10, 12. Num. 16. 29—35.
m 1 Kin. 17. 1. Jam. 5. 17. Mat. 16. 19, 20. John 20. 23.
n Exod. vii—xii, xiv. Jer. 1. 10. Is. 45. 11.
o Ver. 3. Luke 24. 48. & 13. 32. 2 Tim. 4. 7. Acts 20. 21, 24.
p Ch. 13. 1, 2, 7, 11. & 17. 8, 14. & 18. 24. & 16. 6. Dan. 7. 21. 2 Thes. 2. 9.
q Ezek. 37. 11. Acts 26. 11. John 16. 2.
r Ch. 14. 8, 15, 17, 18. & 18. 2, 10. ver. 13.
s Gen. 13. 13. & 18. 20. & 19. 5. Ezek. 16. 50. Exod. 1. 13, 14. & 12. 12. Jer. 12. 13. ch. 16. 19. & 18. 18, 21.
t Acts 9. 4. Luke 13. 33, 34. ch. 16. 6. & 18. 24. Heb. 6. 6. & 10. 29. & 13. 12.
u Ch. 5. 9. Obad. 12, 13.
x Ps. 79. 3. Eccl. 6. 3. Jer. 7. 23. ch. 19. 17.
y Ver. 6. Ps. 17. 14. Phil. 3. 19. ver. 7. ch. 12. 12. & 13. 8.
z Judg. 16. 25. Esth. 9. 22.
a 1 Kin. 18. 17. & 21. 20. Acts 6. 5, 11. & 17. 6.
b Ver. 9. Hos. 6. 2. Gen. 22. 14.
c Gen. 2. 7. Ezek. 37. 5, 9, 10, 14.
d Acts 5. 5, 12. Ps. 64. 9. Luke 9. 7. Josh. 2. 9.
e Song 2. 10, 11. Ps. 24. 3. & 15. 1. & 65. 4. & 37. 6. Is. 40. 31. & 60. 8. ch. 12. 5.
f Ch. 19. 2. Ps. 112. 10. 2 Kin. 2. 1, 5, 9—11.
g Ch. 6. 12. & 16. 18, 19.

* Gr. *cast out.* † 1260 *years.* ‡ Or *I will give unto my two witnesses that they may prophesy.* 1 Cor. 12. 28. Eph. 4. 11. h Gr. *names of men.* Gen. 6. 4. ch. 3. 4. 1 Ch. 16. 9. Exod. 12. 38. Ps. 64. 9. Josh. 2. 9. Luke 5. 25. & 7. 16.

Verses 1—13. A general description is here given of the state both of the true and the antichristian church, during 1260 years, from the time that the temporal power of the Pope arose, about 756.

1. John is commanded to measure the temple of God, and the altar, and the worshippers: for, in the worst of times, and in the darkest days, God would still maintain his church, and some should be preserved from the general apostasy, a remnant according to the election of grace. The outer court he may not measure, that is left to the Gentiles; those indeed who profess to bear the Christian name, but by the idolatry, superstitions, and frauds which they encourage and maintain, are returned in reality to the worship of Paganism, Popery being heathenism

revived: and during 42 months, or 1260 years, these Gentile Papists shall tread the holy city under foot, and exercise their tyrannical government over the professors of the Christian name.

2. During the prevalency of the Antichristian tyranny, God will not leave the world without warning, nor the corrupters of his worship without witness; a succession of faithful ministers shall arise, a few indeed, here spoken of but as two, and clothed in sackcloth, deeply affected with the miseries of the church, and the persecutions of the faithful remnant. *These are the two olive trees*, &c. like Zerubbabel and Joshua, (Zech. iv. 6—14.) whom God will supply with the continual influences of his grace, and endue with light and zeal to remonstrate against the corruptions of the Antichristian church. And if any attempt to hurt them, the word of the Lord, which proceedeth out of their mouths as fire, denounces spiritual and eternal death upon them. These have power, like Elijah, to shut up heaven, and to bring the heaviest plagues, like those of Egypt, upon their enemies; even the spiritual plagues of a famine of the word, obduracy of heart, and all the dreadful judgments that, in answer to their prayers, God will inflict on their persecutors, and which they denounce upon them, not from a spirit of revenge, but for the vindication of God's injured honour.

3. The witnesses shall be slain, *while they are performing their testimony*, though God will always raise up others, and avenge their blood on their persecutors; and their dead bodies shall be forbid burial, and be insulted in the streets of that great city, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt; where also our Lord was crucified, Rome papal being notorious for filthiness as Sodom, like Egypt, the cruel oppressor of God's people, and red with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, which is as it were afresh to crucify him.

Some suppose that this slaying the witnesses by the Antichristian beast and his adherents, is yet to come, and that the *three days and a half*, ver. 9. refer not to the time and times and half a time, or 1260 years, the whole period of popery, but to some more dreadful persecution, and general prevalence of the power of Antichrist, which towards the close of this period will be permitted, and for a short space the inhabitants of the papal countries will congratulate each other, as if they had now finally triumphed over those who troubled their consciences with remonstrances against their impieties, idolatries, and all their abominations.

4. *After three days and a half*, at the close of the period of 1260 years, the witnesses are miraculously raised to life, to the terror of their enemies; not the same persons, but others endued with their spirit, boldness, and zeal: and God, in testimony of his approbation, caught them up to heaven in the sight of their enemies, not literally, but figuratively, he exalted them to a state of eminent dignity and safety, above all the malice of their foes: and thereupon a great earthquake shook down a great part of the city of the beast, and seven thousand men were slain; a vast number of his dependents and abettors, men of note and influence fell, and his jurisdiction was in part demolished; whilst the remnant, affrighted by these prodigies, renounced their idolatries and superstitions, and, converted to the faith of Jesus, glorified God. *Note*, (1.) The enemies of God's witnessing servants shall one day, with confusion, behold their exaltation, and know that God hath sent them. (2.) When God's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants thereof should learn righteousness; and they who fly to God for refuge, and give him glory, shall be saved from fear of evil.

14. The [k] second woe is past; *and*, behold, [l] the third woe cometh quickly.
15. And the [m] seventh angel sounded; and there were [n] great voices in heaven, saying, [o] The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of the Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever. 16. [p] And the four and twenty elders, who sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, 17. Saying, [q] We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because [r] thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. 18. [s] And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which † destroy the earth. 19. [t] And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was [u] seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and [x] there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

k Ch. 8. 13. & 9. 12.
l Ch. 15. 1. & xvi. & 14. 8.
m Ch. 8. 2, 6—12. & 9. 1, 13.
n Is. 27. 13. & 44. 23. ch. 18. 20. & 16. 17. & 19. 2, 6. & 12. 10. Eph. 3. 21. Luke 15. 5, 6, 9, 10, 23, 24, 32.
o Dan. 7. 14, 22, 27. & 2. 44. Ps. 72. 8. ch. 7. 9, 10. & 10. 7. & 15. 4. & 19. 6. Is. xlix, lv, lx, lxii, &c. & 66. 8. Rom. 11. 12, 15, 25. ch. 20. 4. Is 9. 7. & 24. 23.
p Ch. 4. 4, 10. & 5. 8, 14. & 19. 4.
q Ch. 1. 4, 6. & 4. 8—11. & 7. 10, 12. & 5. 9, 12, 13. & 14. 3. & 12. 10. & 15. 3, 4. & 19. 1—7.
r Is. 52. 10. Ps. 98. 1—3. & 110. 2. & 89. 25, 27. & 72. 8, 16—19. Is. 63. 1—6.
s Ch. 16. 2. & 20. 4, 12. & 6. 10, 11. Deut. 32. 36—43. Ps. 99. 1. Dan. 7. 26. 2 Thes. 2. 8. ch. xvi, xviii, Ezek. xxxviii, xxxix.
† Or *corrupt.*
t Ch. 15. 5, 8. ver. 15. ch. 20. 4. Rom. 11. 12, 15, 25. Ezek. xl—xlviii. Zech. xiv. Is. lx.
u Num. 4. 5. Heb. 9. 4. 1 Cor. 2. 2. Phil. 3. 8. 2 Cor. 3. 14. Eph. 3. 8, 9. Col. 1. 27. Zech. 12. 10. 2 Thes. 2. 8.
x Ch. 4. 5. & 8. & 10. 3. & 16. 18, 21. & xvi, xviii, xix. Dan. 12. 1.

Verses 14—19. The seventh trumpet sounds, and lo, the third and last wo is denounced, when the Mahometan and Papal powers, the eastern and western Antichrist, are to be utterly destroyed. On which,

1. Loud acclamations of joy fill all the courts of heaven; the wished-for time is come when Jesus shall erect his throne, and all nations shall bow before the sceptre of his grace, and become a willing people in the day of his power, owning him as their rightful King, who shall reign over his redeemed for ever and ever. And for this the four and twenty elders pour forth their thanks to the Lord, and in humble adoration prostrate themselves before his throne, ascribing praise to the eternal and almighty Jesus, that he hath now signally made bare his arm, avenging the deaths of his martyred servants, and in return for the indignation shown by the Antichristian persecutors, pouring forth his vials of wrath upon them; whilst his faithful ministers and people now receive their glorious reward; they see their foes become their footsool, and enjoy peace, comfort, mutual communion, and the free liberty of all gospel ordinances in their highest purity. And every gracious soul, looking forward to this happy season, cannot but pray that God would hasten it in his good time.

2. *The temple of God was opened in heaven;* the exercise of the true evangelical worship was now restored, *and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament,* intimating the peculiar manifestations of God's presence to all his people, the boldness that they will have to approach the holiest of all, and the sweet communion which they shall enjoy with their Lord, seeing him, as it were face to face.

3. *And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail,* as if the dissolution of all things was at hand; intimating the entire demolition of all the church's enemies. *Note,* Though the struggle be long and sharp, the gospel shall be finally triumphant, and the truth at last prevail over all opposition.

CHAP. XII.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In this chapter we have, 1. *An account of the contest between the church and Antichrist; the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent,* ver. 1—6. 2. *War in heaven,* ver. 7—14. 3. *As it was carried on in the wilderness,* ver. 14, *&c.*

1. AND there appeared a great [a] wonder in heaven; [b] a woman [c] clothed with the sun, and [d] the moon under her feet, and upon her head [e] a crown of twelve stars: 2. [f] And she being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. 3. And there appeared another † wonder in heaven; and behold [g] a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. 4. And his [h] tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: [i] and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 5. And [k] she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and [l] her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne. 6. And [m] the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days.

a Or *sign.* Gen. 22. 14. Luke 21. 25.
b Gal. 4. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 25. Song i—viii.
c Rom. 13. 14. Is. 30. 19. Ps. 84. 11. Mal. 4. 2. Mat. 5. 16. & 22. 11.
d Gal. 6. 14. & 4. 9, 10. & 5. 1—4. or Song 7. 1. Tit. 2. 11, 12.
e Ch. 1. 20. & 21. 14. Eph. 2. 20. Prov. 4. 4—9.
f Gal. 4. 19. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Mat. 28. 19. Is. 54. 1. & 60. 22. & 66. 8. Acts ii—xx. ch. 6. 2.
† Or *sign.*
g Ch. 13. 12. & 20. 2. & 17. 3, 9, 10, 12. & 6. 4, 10, 11. & 16. 5, 6. & 18. 24. Dan. 2. 40. & 7. 7, 19. & 11. 30—36.
h Ch. 9. 10. Dan. 8. 10. with ch. 2. 20. 1 John 2. 19. ch. 17. 18.
i 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44. Exod. 1. 16.
k Mat. 2. 1. Acts 2. 41, 47. & 4. 4. & 5. 14. & 6. 7. & ii—xix. 1 Cor. 12. 22. Ps. 2. 9. ch. 2. 26, 27. & 19. 15. Is. 9. 6, 7.
l Mark 16. 19. Ps. 91. 1. & cxlix. Dan. 7. 22, 27.
m Ch. 11. 2, 3. John 16. 33. ver. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 12. with Ps. 87. 5, 6. Mat. 16. 18. Jer. 3. 15.

Verses 1—6. The same period as before is here described of 1260 years, during which,

1. A great wonder appears in heaven; the Church of Christ presented under the figure of a woman clothed with the sun, with Christ and his righteousness, having the moon under her feet, regarding all sublunary things with holy contempt; upon her head was a crown of twelve stars, the doctrines of the gospel dispensed by the apostles; and being with child, she cried out, travailing, and ready to be delivered.

2. A great red dragon appears, representing Satan, as acting by his wicked emissaries of Rome papal, with seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads, signifying the dignity and supremacy, in spirituals, and temporals, which the bishop of Rome usurped, and his tyrannical dominion over the bodies and souls of men, drawing into superstition and idolatry multitudes, both ministers and people, who seemed before as stars in the heaven, and bringing them down to the earthly and sensual religion of the church of Rome, and with unwearied opposition and implacable enmity striving to destroy every faithful Christian, and to suppress the progress of the true religion of Jesus in the earth, ready to devour the child, of which the woman travailed, as soon as it was born.

3. God disappointed the malice of the dragon; a man-child was born, the emblem of all the spiritual seed of the woman who in succession should arise, and, in defiance of the malice of the antichristian foe, be preserved, and finally prevail over all their enemies, taken under God's immediate protection, and secure as if caught up to the throne of God: whilst the mother, the church, though in obscurity during this dark period of 1260 years, hath a place provided for her, as in the valleys of Piedmont, and other retreats, where the true religion of Jesus was preserved amidst the abounding corruptions of the church of Rome, till the Reformation took place. *Note,* God will ever have a church in the darkest day, and will in the desert feed his people, as he did Israel of old, with living manna.

7. [n] And there was war in heaven: [o] Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8. And [p] prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9. And [q] the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: [r] he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10. And I heard [s] a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for [t] the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11. And [u] they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. 12. Therefore [x] rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. [y] Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but [z] a short time.

n Mat. 16. 24. Eph. 6. 12.
o Dan. 10. 13, 21. & 12. 1. Jude 9. Is. 55. 4. Heb. 2. 10. ver. 3, 9. ch. 1. 20. Mat. 16. 24. & 10. 17, 18. John 16. 2, 3.
p Ver. 11. ch. 6. 10—17. Ps. 37. 10. & 110. 2—6. Dan. 11. 35. Luke 10. 18.
q Ver. 3. ch. 20. 2, 3. Gen. 3. 1, 4. 2 Cor. 11. 3. Job 1. 6. & 2. 1. 1 Pet. 5. 8.
r Luke 10. 18. John 12. 31. ch. 6. 10—17. Ps. 110. 5, 6.
s Ch. 11. 15. & 14. 1—4. & 16. 20, 24. & 19. 1—7. Obad. 21. Ps. lxxii, xcvi—c, cx, cxlix. Is. liii. liv, lx—lxiii.
t Job 1. 9. & 2. 5. Zech. 3. 1. Mat. 10. 18. John 16. 2.
u 2 Cor. 10. 3—5. Rom. 8. 33, 34, 36, 37. Eph. 6. 16. Luke 14. 26. Acts 20. 24. Heb. 11. 35—38.
x Ps. 96. 11. Is. 49. 13. ch. 18. 20. & 14. 1—4. & 15. 2—4.
y Ch. 8. 13. & 11. 10. & 10. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Mat. 12. 43.
z 2 Pet. 3. 8. Heb. 10. 37. Luke 18. 8. ch. 22. 12, 20.

Verses 7—12. Another representation of this period is here made.

1. *There was war in heaven,* in the church; *Michael and his angels,* the Lord Jesus and his ministers, with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, *fought against the dragon and his angels,* his Popish emissaries, and all the legions of ecclesiastics in that idolatrous church. The issue of the combat was, that in spite of all the dragon's efforts he could not prevail to extinguish the truth; he was foiled in the glorious Reformation, when many states threw off the antichristian yoke, and, like a falling star, from their towering height of power and dominion, Satan, that old serpent, and his instruments of the church of Rome, were cast down; and at the end of this period the conquest will be completed.

2. Hereupon a triumphant song is sung by the church of the redeemed, who glorify God for this exertion of his power and strength in the salvation of his people from the accuser of the brethren, who by means of the antichristian persecutors, with pretended crimes, sought occasion to harass and oppress them, and day and night accused them before God. But they *overcame by the blood of the Lamb,* which removed all condemnation, *and by the word of their testimony,* the sword of the Spirit, which confounded their enemies; and so faithfully adhered they to Christ and his pure gospel, that for his sake they readily laid down their lives, and submitted to death armed with its greatest terrors. *Note.* (1.) All our victories are gained through the blood of the Lamb. (2.) They who know in whom they have believed, will rather part with their lives than deny the faith.

3. The saints and angels of God are called upon to rejoice in this victory, ver. 12. whilst a wo is denounced on the inhabitants of the earth and sea, on the earthly-minded, and carnal professors of Christianity; for though the kingdom of the beast be on the decline, and hath but a short time to endure, yet therein Satan will exert his utmost efforts to deceive and destroy the souls of men, and many of them will fall a prey unto his teeth.

13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, [a] he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-*child*. 14. [b] And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place; where she is nourished [c] for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. 15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth [d] water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. 16. And [e] the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. 17. And the [f] dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to [g] make war with the remnant of her seed, [h] which keep the commandments of God, and [i] have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

a John 16. 33. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Gen. 3. 15. Ps. 37. 14. ver. 4, 5.
b Exod. 19. 4. Deut. 32. 11, 12. Is. 40. 31. & 63. 9. & 60. 8. ver. 6. Ps. 91. 1—16.
c Dan. 7. 25. & 12. 7, 11, ch. 11. 2, 3. ver. 6. ch. 13. 5. *i. e.* 1260 years.
d Ps. 42. 7. & 14. 4, 5. & 18. 4. Eph. 4. 14. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11. Is. 8. 7. & 28. 2. & 59. 19.
e Ver. 9, 12. ch. 1. 7. Ps. 17. 14. with Gen. 4. 11. Num. 16. 30.
f 1 Pet. 5. 8. John 8. 44. 1 Sam. 18. 8.
g Ch. 13. 2, 5—7, 16, 17. & 16. 6. & 17. 6. & 18. 20. & 19. 2. & 9. 5—11. & 11. 7. Dan. 7. 21, 24, 25. & 11. 30—36.
h Deut. 32. Mat. 28. 20. 1 John 5. 21. ch. 14. 12.
i Ch. 6. 9. & 19. 10. 1 Cor. 2. 1, 2. 1 John 5. 10. Is. 8. 16, 20.

Verses 13—17. By the Reformation the power of Satan and the church of Rome being greatly broken, like one cast down from heaven to earth, he mustered up all his wiles and fury, and in the Jesuits raised up a new set of instruments to persecute, with unrelenting cruelty, the mother of the man-child, the true church, as reformed from the errors of Popery. But God supplied her with eagle's wings, and bore her safe to a resting place during her wilderness state, ver. 14. until the period of the reign of antichrist, and the 1260 years come to an end. In vain the serpent cast out a flood of errors, heresies, and persecutions, and endeavoured by fraud and force to stop the progress of the Reformation, and swallow up the church; *the earth* helped her, the secular powers; many princes and states who were themselves under the influence of temporal motives, opposed the antichristian tyranny and persecutions: and the dragon, enraged to be thus foiled, retired to rally all his forces, and renewed with all his fury his attacks upon the woman and the remnant of her seed, which survived his former persecutions, whose distinguishing character is given, *they keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*, maintaining his pure and unadulterated gospel, in opposition to all the human impositions and traditions of the Papal chair. *Note*, Whilst we hold the testimony of Jesus, and keep his commandments, we must be finally more than conquerors.

CHAP. XIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

We have in this chapter a farther discovery and description of the church's enemies, not other enemies than are mentioned before, but described after another manner, that the methods of their enmity may more fully appear; they are represented as two beasts; the first you have an account of, ver. 1—10. *the second* ver. 11—18.

1. AND I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a [a] beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the [b] name of blasphemy. 2. And the beast which I saw [c] was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the [d] dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. 3. And I saw [e] one of his heads as it were * wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and [f] all the world wondered after the beast. 4. And they [g] worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 5. [h] And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies: and power was given unto him † to continue forty *and* two months. 6. And [k] he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his [l] tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7. [m] And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8. [n] And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in [o] the book of life of the [p] Lamb slain [q] from the foundation of the world. 9. [r] If any man have an ear, let him hear. 10. [s] He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. [t] Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

a Dan. 7. 1, 3, 7, 8, 20, 23, 24. ch. 12. 3. & 17. 7—12. & 11. 7. 2 Thes. 2. 3—12. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6. & 4. 3, 4.
b Or *names*. Ch. 17. 5. ver. 5, 6. Is. 65. 7. Ezek. 20. 27, 28.
c Dan. 7. 4—6, 21, 24, 25. ch. 17. 6. ver. 7. ch. 18. 24. & 16. 6. & 12. 17.
d Ch. 12. 3, 9. 2 Thes. 2. 4, 7. ch. 16. 10. & 7. 18.
e Ch. 12. 3. ver. 1. ch. 17. 7, 10, 11.
* Gr. *slain*.
f Ver. 8. ch. 17. 2, 8, 13, 17. 2 Thes. 2. 3—12. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6. & 4. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 3. 1—3. Luke 2. 1.
g Ch. 9. 20. & 18. 18. ver. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 20. 2 Thes. 2. 4. Dan. 11. 36—39. ch. 18. 18. & 11. 2. Ps. 89. 8.
h Dan. 7. 8, 20, 25. & 11. 36—39.
† Or *to make war*.
i Dan. 7. 25. & 12. 7. ch. 11. 2, 3. & 12. 6, 14.
k Dan. 7. 25. & 11. 36—39. 2 Thes. 2. 4. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. 2 Tim. 4. 1—6. & 4. 3, 4.
l John 1. 14. Heb. 8. 2. ch. 21. 3. Mat. 16. 18.
m Dan. 7. 21, 25. ch. 11. 7. & 17. 6. & 18. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 10.
n Ver. 3.
o Ch. 3. 5. & 17. 8. Phil. 4. 3. ch. 20. 12. & 21. 27. Is. 4. 3. Dan. 12. 1.
p John 1. 29, 36. ch. 5. 6—13. & 7. 17.
q Eph. 1. 4. or 1 Pet. 1. 19, 20.
r See ch. 2. 7, 11, 24, &c.
s Is. 33. 1. Mat. 7. 2. Exod. 21. 23—25. Gen. 9. 5, 6. Ezek. 39. 10. Mat. 26. 52. ch. 11. 13. & 14. 7—20. & xvi—xix. 2 Thes. 1. 8. 2 Tim. 3. 8, 9. Dan. 7. 11, 22, 26. & 11. 45.
t Ch. 14. 12. Heb. 10. 36, 37. & 6. 12. Hab. 2. 3. Ps. 27. 13.

Verses 1—10. Another vision relative to the same events as the foregoing here appears.

1. A beast rises out of the sea, with seven heads, ten horns, and crowns upon his horns, and names of blasphemy thereon, like a leopard, with the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion, denoting the fierceness, cruelty, and strength of the antichristian, idolatrous, and blasphemous state which should arise out of the commotions which has shaken the empire. To this beast, that is, to the Pope and his adherents, the devil would delegate his power and authority, enabling the man of sin to work his lying miracles, and establish his seat and capital at Rome, where, during the reign of Paganism, Satan especially dwelt.

2. A deadly wound was given to the beast; which some refer to the sacking of the city of Rome by the Goths, and the removal of the supreme authority from thence during the exarchate of Ravenna; and others, to the blow the church of Rome received at the Reformation; and this *wound was healed;* either Rome itself, under the Papal government, rose to unexpected

greatness, and was held in veneration by the wondering world; or this may refer to the recovery of the Papal interests since the Reformation, and which, it is supposed, will flourish more than ever before the final downfall of Popery.

3. The people, who wondered after the beast, worshipped the dragon, the idolatrous worship of the church of Rome being, in fact, the adoration of Satan himself; and they worshipped the beast, his delegate, ascribing divine honours and titles to the Pope, exalting him above all princes and potentates, and ascribing to him a kind of omnipotence upon earth: whilst he, by horrid blasphemies, assuming the very prerogatives of the most high God, pretended, by the plenitude of his power, to forgive sins, to alter God's revealed will, to have dominion over men's consciences, and to enact canons equally, or more obligatory than the laws of God himself; blaspheming his name, and his tabernacle the church, and them that dwell in heaven, the citizens of the new Jerusalem, the faithful whom he anathematizes, or the saints and angels whose names he uses in his idolatrous worship. During the period of 1260 years his dominion will endure, and by Divine Providence he will be permitted to make war with the saints who refuse to submit to his tyrannical yoke, and to overcome them, obliging all, whose names are not written in the book of life, to worship him and submit to his idolatrous decrees. *Note*, Amidst the most fatal delusions and prevalence of iniquity, God's chosen ones shall be secured.

4. For the comfort of God's people, a solemn note of attention is added, and they are called to hear. This antichristian power, that enslaves and destroys others, shall as surely be subdued and destroyed in its turn; and God's saints, now with patience enduring their persecutions, must with faith confidently expect that this will be the issue. *Note*, It requires much faith and patience, in suffering times, to hold fast the promises of God and wait their fulfilment.

11. And [u] I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had [x] two horns like a lamb, and he [y] spake as a dragon. 12. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, [z] and causeth the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13. [a] And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men; 14. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to [b] them that dwell on the earth, [c] that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15. [d] And he had power to give ‡ life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and [e] cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, ‖ to receive [f] a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18. [g] Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* six hundred threescore *and* six.

u Ch. 11. 7. & 17. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 3—9. ch. v, xv. ver. 2.

x Mat. 28. 18. John 1. 29, 36.

y Ch. 2. 3, 4. ver. 2. ch. 11. 7. & 17. 6.

z Ver. 14—17. 2 Thes. 2. 4.

a Ch. 12. 9. & 16. 14. & 19. 20. Mat. 24. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 9, 10. Deut. 13. 2. 1 Kin. 18. 38. 2 Kin. 1, 10, 12.

b Ver. 3, 8. ch. 7. 15.

c Dan. 7. 25. 2 Thes. 2. 4, 11, 12. Dan. 11. 36—39. ver. 3, 4.

d Dan. 7. 25. & 11. 36—39. 2 Thes. 2. 4. ch. 17. 2—5.

‡ Gr. *breath.*

e Dan. 7. 21, 22. ch. 11. 2, 7. & 17. 6. & 16. 5, 6, & 18. 20, 24. 2 Thes. 2. 4.

‖ Gr. *to give.*

f Ch. 24. 9, 11. & 19. 20. & 20. 4. & 15. 2. with 7. 3. & 14. 1. Exod. 13. 3, 9, 16. Prov. 6. 21.

g Ch. 15. 2. & 19, 9. with ch. 2. 17. Hos. 14. 9. Ps. 107. 43.

Verses 11—18. Another beast, or the same power under another form, appears like a lamb with two horns, the symbol of his dominion temporal and spiritual, who with all pretended meekness and humility, hath all the pride and rage of the old dragon, exercising all the power of the first beast, and causing all the earth to worship him, and own his universal, temporal as well as spiritual jurisdiction, with lying miracles supporting his idolatrous worship, deceiving the inhabitants of the earth, and leading them to erect the image of the first beast whose deadly wound was healed, and pay their adoration to the idol, blindly and implicitly submitting to the authority of the Pope, and the constitutions of Paganism revived in the church of Rome; giving life to the image of the beast, enforcing all the canons and laws of his idolatrous worship, by excommunications, fire, and sword; making it death to refuse obedience to the Papal power; setting a mark upon all the votaries of the beast, and excluding those who would not submit to make profession of this system of error and blasphemy, from all intercourse with the worshippers of the beast, as unworthy of every blessing of society. *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six*, concerning which number there have been many learned conjectures. I incline to concur with those who refer it to the time when Popery should rise to her strength about the year 756, which, if we add 666 to the time in which John wrote, will bring it nearly to that very period from whence the 1260 years of the antichristian tyranny are to be reckoned. But however dark and mysterious these prophetic hints may be, one thing we are sure of, that is plain and obvious, that God will always maintain his own church in the world, in defiance of opposition, and that all her foes shall finally become her footstool.

CHAP. XIV.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

After an account of the great trials and sufferings which the servants of God had endured, we have a more pleasant scene opening, the day begins now to dawn; and here we have represented, 1. *The Lord Jesus at the head of his faithful followers,* ver. 1—6. 2. *Three angels sent successively to proclaim the fall of Babylon, and the things antecedent and consequent to so great an event,* ver. 6—14. 3. *The vision of the harvest,* ver. 14, &c.

1. AND I looked, and, lo, [a] a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and [b] with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. 2. And [c] I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as [d] the voice of a great thunder: and I heard [e] the voice of harpers harping with their harps: 3. And [f] they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and [g] no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and*

a John 1. 29, 36. ch. 5. 6—13. & 7. 9, 10, 14, 17. Ps. 2. 6. Heb. 12. 22, 24.

b Ch. 7. 4—8. & 17. 14. & 19. 14. Luke 12. 8. Heb. 4. 14. & 10. 23. & 12. 23, 24.

c Ch. 1. 15. & 19. 1—7. & 11. 15. & 12. 10. with Mat. 7. 28. Mark 1. 22. John 7. 46.

d Acts 2. 37. & 24. 25.

e Ch. 5. 8. & 15. 2. 1 Chr. 25. 1—7. Ps. 68. 25.

f Ch. 5. 9. & 7. 10, 12. & 15. 3, 4. & 19. 1—7. & 4. 4—10. Ps. xcvi—c.

g Judg. 12. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Mat. 11. 25. & 13. 11.

four thousand, which were [h] redeemed from the earth. 4. [i] These are they which were not defined with women; for they are virgins. These are they which [k] follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These * were redeemed from among men, *being* the [l] first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. 5. And [m] in their mouth was found no guile: for they are [n] without fault before the throne of God.

h Ch. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Is. 35. 10. & 51. 1. & 41. 23.
i Rom. 12. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Mat. 25. 1. ch. 17. 1, 5, 14.
k Mat. 16. 24. ch. 7. 17. & 17. 14. & 3. 4. John 10. 4, 5. Ezek. 1. 12. & 46. 10.
* Gr. *were bought.*
l Jam. 1. 18. 1 Cor. 16. 15. Rom. 16. 5. & 8. 23.
m Ps. 32. 2. Zeph. 3. 13.
n Jer. 50. 20. Song 4. 7. 1 John 3. 9. Luke 1. 6. Tit. 2. 14. Col. 1. 22. Jude 24. Ezek. 1. 4, 14.

Verses 1—5. Dark and gloomy as the former scene appeared, the sun now rises to dispel the night of idolatry, ignorance, and error.

1. The Lamb of God is seen on mount Zion with all his redeemed, sealed in their foreheads, in opposition to those who had the mark of the beast, over whom they are made triumphant; innumerable multitudes, as the drops of the ocean, with voices united, raising a chorus loud as thunder, yet melodious as the trembling harps which mingled with their concert, sung that song of praise which none but the redeemed from the earth can learn.

2. The character of those happy souls is given. They are virgins, not defiled with the idolatries of the great whore; they *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*, faithful to his gospel doctrines, and observant of his ordinances; they are a peculiar people, even the first-fruits to God and to the Lamb, specially appropriated to his service, and without guile before the throne of God, as washed in the blood and clothed in the righteousness of their Redeemer; uncorrupt by error of doctrine and immorality of conduct, and at last perfected in holiness. Blessed and happy are they who shall be found to answer these characters of the redeemed from the earth!

6. And I saw [o] another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having [p] the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 7. Saying with [q] a loud voice, [r] Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: [s] and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. 8. And there followed another angel, saying, [t] Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because [u] she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. 9. [x] And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, [y] If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10. [z] The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11. [a] And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. 12. [b] Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

o Ch. 8. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Is. 62. 1, 6, 7.
p Mat. 10. 27. & 28. 19. Mark 16. 15. Luke 21. 33. 1 Pet. 1. 25. ch. 10. 11. & 13. 7, 8.
q Mat. 10. 27. Is. 58. 1. Hos. 8. 1. Acts 20. 21, 24, 27.
r Prov. 1. 7. Ps. 89. 7. & 96. 7. ch. 15. 3, 4. & 11. 15—18. & 19. 2. & xvi, xviii.
s Ps. 146. 5, 6. Acts 14. 15. Exod. 20. 11.
t Is. 21. 19. Jer. 51. 8. ch. 8. 2. & 11. 8. & 16. 19. & 17. 16. & 18. 10, 21. 2 Thes. 2. 8.
u Ch. 13. 7, 8, 14—17. & 17. 2, 13, 15. Jer. 3. 6. Ezek. 16. 15—34. & xxiii.
x 2 Pet. 3. 9. Jer. 44. 4.
y Ch. 13. 4, 8, 12, 15, 16.
z Job 21. 20. Ps. 75. 8. Is. 51. 17. Jer. 25. 15. ch. 16. 19. & 18. 6. & 19. 20. & 20. 10. Ps. 11. 6. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Mat. 25. 41. & 13. 49, 50. with Gen. 19. 24. Jude 7.
a Ch. 19. 3. & 18. 8, 10, 18. Is. 34. 10. & 33. 14. Mat. 25. 41, 46. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Mark 9. 43, 44.
b Ch. 1. 9. Hab. 2. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7. ch. 12. 17. Heb. 6. 12. & 10. 32—36.

Verses 6—12. Three angels, or messengers, are sent from heaven to proclaim the fall of Babylon.

1. One bearing the everlasting gospel through the midst of heaven, cries aloud to all people, nations, and languages to fear, worship, and glorify God the great Creator, in opposition to all idols, his judgments upon his enemies speedily approaching. And this may refer either to the preaching of Luther, Calvin, and the other reformers; or to a future period, when, before the final overthrow of Popery, a noble army of preachers of the true gospel, animated with holy zeal, shall be raised up to plead the cause of God and truth.

2. Another angel followed, crying, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen;* and the cause of her doom is assigned, because she intoxicated the nations with her fornications and idolatries, which provoked the fearful wrath of God against her. And this seems to be the language of triumph of the faithful, who shall live in that day when Rome, with all her abominations, shall be utterly destroyed.

3. A third angel followed, denouncing the most terrible woes on the Antichristian party, who shall henceforth persist in this idolatrous religion; even the eternal torments of hell, intolerable as endless, must be their portion, in the presence of the holy angels, who will applaud the righteous judgment of God and of the Lamb, who inflicts it upon them: *and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest, day nor night.* How fearful the scene! how loudly doth it preach to us, *Flee from idolatry!*

4. *Here is the patience of the saints;* the blessed issue and effect of it: *here* in glory *are they who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,* in opposition to all the corruptions of deceivers and persecutors; great and eternal will be their reward.

13. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, [c] Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord † from henceforth: [d] Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and [e] their works do follow them. 14. And I looked, and behold [f] a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat [g] like unto the Son of man, having on his head [h] a golden crown, and in his hand a [i] sharp sickle. 15. And [k] another angel came out of the temple, [l] crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, [m] Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ‡ ripe. 16. [n] And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. 17. And [o] another angel came out of the

c Ch. 19. 9. 1 Cor. 15. 18, 58. Phil. 3. 9. 1 Thes. 4. 14. Heb. 11. 13. with 2 Pet. 1. 11.
† Or *from henceforth saith the Spirit, yea.*
d Luke 16. 25. Is. 57. 1, 2. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 7. Heb. 4. 9. ch. 6. 10, 11. 1 Thes. 4. 17.
e Ps. 19. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.
f Is. 19. 1. Ps. 97. 2. ch. 1. 7. & 10. 1. & 20. 11. Exod. 24. 10.
g Ch. 1. 13. Ps. 80. 17. Zech. 13. 7. John 1. 14. Ezek. 1. 26. Dan. 7. 13. Mat. 16. 13.
h Ps. 21. 3. Heb. 2. 9. ch. 19. 12. & 11. 17. & 6. 2.
i Ver. 15—17. Joel 3. 13. Jer. 51. 33.
k Ch. 1. 20. & 16. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 20. or Ps. 103. 20. Heb. 1. 14.
l Is. 62. 1, 6, 7. & 45. 11. ch. 6. 10. 14. 8. ch. 15. 1, 2. Dan. 7. 22, 26, 27. ch. xvi. 2 Thes. 2. 8.
m Joel 3. 13. Mat. 13. 39. Jer. 51. 33. Is. 63. 4. & ‡ Or *dried.*
n 2 Sam. 22. 7. Neh. 9. 27. ver. 19.
o Ch. 15. 1, 7. & xvi, xviii.

temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18. [p] And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and [q] cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, [r] Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 19. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and [s] gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. 20. [t] And the wine-press was trodden [u] without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.

p Ver. 15. ch. 6, 9, 10. & 11. 5. & 16. 18.
q See ver. 15. Ps. 132. 8. & 122. 6—9. Is. 62. 1, 6, 7.
r See ver. 15, 19. Is. 45. 11.
s Deut. 32. 32, 33. Is. 63. 1—4. ch. 16. 16. & 19. 15—21. & 11. 13. with 6. 12—17.
t Lam. 1. 15. Is. 63. 3. ch. 17. 19. & 11. 13, 18.
u Ch. 11. 8. & 21. 27. & 22. 15. & 20. 9. Is. 66. 24.

Verses 13—20. For the farther encouragement of the church we have here,

1. A voice from heaven, declaring the blessedness of all who die in the faith and favour of Jesus, whether martyrs or others; their sufferings are all ended, they enter upon the beginnings of their eternal rest, and their works shall follow them, to bear witness to their fidelity. Lord Jesus, may this blessedness be mine!

2. A new vision succeeds under the figure of the harvest and vintage. The Lord Jesus appears seated on a cloud, with a golden crown, and sharp sickle in his hands; and an angel, the representative of the ministers of Jesus, cried to him in prayer out of the temple, that he would put in his sickle, and execute vengeance on the wicked, whose provocations made them ripe for judgment: in answer to their cry, the sickle is thrust into the earth. A second angel with another sharp sickle appears, and a third from out of the temple cries to him to put in his sickle, and gather the grapes of the earth into the wine-press of the wrath of God; and the blood came out of the wine-press up to the horses' bridles, for the space of one thousand and six hundred furlongs. These judgments, if considered as the same, may refer either to the great destruction which shall be made of the enemies of Christ's church, in the day when the Papal tyranny shall be destroyed, and the most dreadful slaughter be made of all the adherents of the beast: or it may refer to the final day of judgment, as others suppose, and perdition of ungodly men. But if the events alluded to are supposed to be different, then the first may be applied to the destruction of the kingdom of the beast and his subjects, and the last to the general judgment. Whichever it be, it is the comfort of the faithful, that however many or inveterate their enemies may be, they shall inevitably be rooted out at the last, and perish for ever.

CHAP. XV.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

This chapter contains an awful introduction or preparation for the pouring out of the vials; in which we have, 1. *A sight of those angels in heaven that were to have the execution of this great work, and with what acclamations of joy the heavenly host applauded the great design,* ver. 1—5. 2. *A sight of those angels coming out of heaven to receive those vials which they were to pour out, and the great commotions that this caused in the world,* ver. 5, &c.

a With ch. 12. 1. & 11. 14—18. 2 Thes. 2. 8.
b Ch. 1. 20. & 5. 6. & 8. 2, 6. & 10. 3. & xvi.
c Ch. 8. 2, 6. & 16. 1—17. & 21. 9. ver. 6.

1. AND I saw [a] another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, [b] seven [c] angels having the seven [d] last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. 2. And I saw as it were [e] a sea of glass mingled with fire: and [f] them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, [g] stand on the sea of glass, having [h] the harps of God. 3. [i] And they sing [k] the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, [l] Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty; [m] just and true *are* thy ways, thou [n] King of saints. 4. [o] Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou* only *art* holy: for [p] all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

d Ch. 11. 14. & 16. 17. & 14. 10. & xvi.
e Ch. 4. 5, 6. & 7. 14. Mat. 3. 11. Is. 4. 4.
f Ch. 13. 15, 17. & 7. 4—10. & 14. 1—5. & 11. 11, 12. Ezek. 37. 10.
g Rom. 5. 1—5. & 8. 1, 33. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9.
h Ch. 5. 8. & 14. 2.
i Ch. 5. 9, 10. & 7. 10, 12. & 14. 3. & 19. 1—7.
k Exod. 15. 1—18. ch. 5. 9—12.
l Ps. 111. 2. & 139. 14. & 86. 8.
m Ps. 145. 17. Deut. 32. 4. Ps. 111. 3—9. Mic. 7. 20. ch. 16. 5—7. Hos. 14. 9.
n Jer. 10. 7, 10. ch. 17. 14. & 19. 16.
o Jer. 10. 7. Exod. 15. 2, 7, 11, 15, 16. Hos. 3. 5. Is. 60. 5. Ps. 86. 8—10.
p Is. 66. 23. Ps. 72. 8. Zech 2. 11. & 14. 9—21.

Verses 1—4. The former chapters gave a general view of the judgments which were ready to fall on the Antichristian foe, and we have here preparation made for the execution of them.

1. Seven angels, the ministers of wrath, appear with the seven last plagues, ready to execute them on the enemies of the church.

2. The church triumphant in heaven is seen standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire, the emblem of their multitude, spotless purity, and tried integrity; and in the view of their deliverance from all their persecuting foes, and the judgments God was about to inflict upon them, they sung aloud his praises, as Israel of old, when, having passed through the Red sea, they beheld the carcasses of the Egyptians on the shore. They ascribe glory to God for his providential works, acknowledge the truth and justice of all his ways; and that he is most worthy to be feared and adored, who in his judgments manifests his love to his people, and his wrath against their enemies.

5. And after that I looked, and, behold, [q] the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: 6. And [r] the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, [s] clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. 7. And [t] one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden [u] vials, full of the wrath of God, who [x] liveth for ever and ever. 8. And the temple [y] was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and [z] no man was [a] able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

q Ch. 11. 19. Num. 1. 50. 2 Chr. 29. 3. Exod. 25. 21.
r Ver. 1, 7. ch. xvi. & 21. 9.
s Ch. 1. 13. Is. 13. 3. Eph. 6. 14. Luke 12. 35, 36. 1 Pet. 1. 13. Exod. 28. 6, 8. Ezek. 44. 17, 18.
t Ch. 4. 6—9. & 5. 6, 8, 10. & 6. 1, 2, 5, 7. & 18. 4—7. & 11. 5.
u Ver. 1. ch. xvi. Ps. 75. 8. 1 Sam. 15. 3. Jer. 25. 15. & 48. 10.
x Ch. 1. 18. & 4. 9, 10. & 5. 14. & 10. 6. 2 Thes. 1. 9.
y Is. 6. 4. Ps. 18. 8, 14. with 1 Kin. 8. 10. Exod. 40. 34, 35.
z Jer. 7. 27. & 15. 1. Lam. 3. 44. Rom. 11. 33. Ps. 36. 6.
a i. e. *not at all.* Gen. 8. 7. Ps. 112. 8. & 110. 1. Acts 3. 21.

Verses 5—8. A further vision presents itself to the enraptured apostle.

1. *The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened;* the holiest place of all, alluding to the temple on mount Zion, was laid open, and from thence came forth the seven

angels with the seven last plagues, clothed in fine linen, and girded with golden girdles, bringing the answer of the prayers which God's suffering saints had put up before the mercy-seat.

2. One of the beasts puts into their hands seven vials full of the wrath of the ever-living God which they are sent forth to pour on the earth. And hereupon the temple was filled with smoke, the emblem of these judgments, from the glory of God, *so that no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled,* nor were they by any means to be averted.

CHAP. XVI.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In this chapter we have an account of the pouring forth of these vials that were filled with the wrath of God, and they were poured out upon the whole Antichristian empire, and on every thing appertaining to it; 1. *upon the earth,* ver. 2. *then,* 2. *Upon the sea,* ver. 3. 3. *Upon the rivers and fountains of waters,* ver. 4. *Upon which the heavenly hosts proclaim and applaud the righteousness of the judgments of God.* 4. *The fourth vial was poured out on the sun,* ver. 8. *the fifth on the seat of the beast; the sixth on the river Euphrates; the seventh in the air, upon which the cities of the nations fell, and great Babylon came in remembrance before God.*

1. AND I heard [a] a great voice out of the temple saying to the [b] seven angels, [b] Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. 2. And the first went, and poured out his vial [d] upon the earth; [e] and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men [f] which had the mark of the beast, and *upon* them which worshipped his image. 3. [g] And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead *man:* and every living soul died in the sea. 4. [h] And a third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. 5. And I heard the [i] angel of the waters say, [k] Thou art righteous, O Lord, [l] which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. 6. [m] For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. 7. And I heard [n] another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.

a Ch. 8. 5, 13. & 15. 1. & 1. 10. & 9. 13. & 11. 12. & 13. 3, 4.
b Ch. 15. 1, 6, 7. & 21. 9.
c 1 Sam. 15. 3. Jer. 48. 10. Ezek. 9. 5, 6. ch. 14. 9—11.
d Ch. 8. 7. Ps. 17. 14.
e Exod. 9. 9—11. Is. 1. 5, 6.
f Ch. 13. 15—17. & 14. 9—11.
g Ch. 8. 8, 9. Exod. 7. 17, 19, 20. Ezek. 16. 38.
h Ch. 8. 10, 11. Exod. 7. 17, 19, 20. ver. 6.
i Ver. 4.
k Ch. 11. 17, 18. & 15. 3. & 19. 2. Ps. 97. 2, 8. & 58. 10, 11. 2 Thes. 1. 5—9.
l Ch. 1. 4, 8. & 4. 8. & 11. 17.
m Ch. 13. 7, 15 & 11. 7. & 18. 20, 24. & 17. 6. Mat. 23. 34. & 7. 2. Jer. 51. 35. Is. 49. 26. & 51. 22, 23.
n Ch. 6. 9. & 14. 10. & 19. 1, 2. & 15. 3. & 13. 10.

Verses 1—7. Whether these vials have already begun to be poured forth, or whether all of them are to be referred to some future day of vengeance on the Antichristian beast is a matter of dispute. I am most inclined to the latter opinion, and that the events can only show the meaning of the judgments; but I shall give the sentiments of those who suppose them already begun.

1. The first vial which brings a noisome and grievous sore upon the men who worshipped the beast, is supposed to refer to the great corruptions of worship and manners, and the wars which arose among the popish princes, after the death of Louis, surnamed the Pious, between the years 830 and 988.

2. The second vial was poured upon the sea, and it became congealed as the blood of a dead man, and every living creature died; alluding, as is suggested, to the wars which were set on foot for the recovery of the Holy Land from the Saracens, wherein such innumerable multitudes of Papists lost their lives, between 1040 and 1190.

3. The third vial is poured on the rivers and turns them into blood; and is referred to the civil wars of Italy between the Guelphs and Gibellines, the popes, and the emperors, carried on with vast effusion of blood, from the year 1200 to about 1370.

For these judgments, the angel who last poured out his vial upon the waters, ascribes glory to God, acknowledging the righteousness of his punishments, in giving those in return blood to drink, who had shed so profusely the blood of saints; to which another angel from under the altar said, *Amen;* concurring in the solemn ascription of praise to God for these his righteous judgments. *Note,* God will make every creature subservient to his glory: even the damnation of the wicked shall redound to the praise of his justice and holiness; and saints and angels shall adore him for his awful judgments, as well as for his mercies.

8. [o] And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. 9. And men were * scorched with great heat, [p] and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and [q] they repented not to give him glory. 10. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon [r] the seat of the beast: and his kingdom was [s] full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11. And blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, [t] and repented not of their deeds. 12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the [u] great river Euphrates; [x] and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. 13. And I saw three [y] unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the [z] mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14. [a] For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, [b] to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. 15. [c] Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. 16. And [d] he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

o Ch. 8. 12. & 17. 16. Lev. 26. 16. Is. 5. 30. & 34. 8—10. & 66. 15. ch. 9. 17, 18.
* Or *burned.*
p Ver. 11, 21. 2 Chr. 28. 22. Jer. 5. 3. 2 Kin. 6. 33. Is. 8. 21. & 1. 5.
q Ver. 11. ch. 9. 20, 21. & 11. 13. Josh. 7. 19. Jer. 13. 16. Amos 4. 6—12. Dan. 5. 22, 23.
r Ch. 13. 2. & 11. 8. & 17. 18. & 18. 19.
s Exod. 10. 21—23. ch. 9. 2. & 11. 10. & 18. 11—19. Is. 8. 21, 22. Mat. 8. 12. & 13. 42. & 22. 13.
t Ver. 9, 21. ch. 9. 20, 21. 2 Tim. 3. 13. 2 Kin. 6. 33. Dan. 5. 22, 23.
u Is. 8. 7. ch. 9. 14.
x Jer. 50. 38. & 51. 32. ch. 17. 15. Is. 44. 27. & 42. 15. & 11. 15. & 41. 2, 25.
y 1 John 4. 1, 2. ver. 14. with Exod. 8. 2—5.
z Ch. 12. 9. & 13. 1, 2, 11, 12. & 13. 20. & 20. 10.
a John 8. 44. ch. 2. 10. & 13. 13, 14. & 19. 20. Jam. 3. 15. 2 Thes. 2. 9. Luke 12. 39. Mat. 24. 24. 2 Pet. 2. 1.
b Ch. 17. 14. & 19. 19. & 20. 8, 9. & 14. 16, 19, 20. 1 Kin. 22. 22.
c Mat. 24. 43. ch. 3. 3, 4, 18. 2 Pet. 3. 10. 1 Thes. 5. 2, 3. Luke 12. 39. Mat. 22. 12, 13. 2 Cor. 5. 3.
d *God.* Joel 3. 2, 11—14. ch. 11. 13. & 17. 14. & 19. 17—21. with Judg. 4. 16. & 5. 19—21. Is. 37. 36. Ps. 110. 5, 6.

Verses 8—16. We have here,

1. The fourth vial poured out upon the sun; and this may refer to the terrible calamities which happened between 1378 and 1530, through the contentions about the Papal chair, several Popes at a time claiming it, and excommunicating each

other; and through their intrigues and ambition horrid ravages and furious wars raged. Yet, far from being affected with these providences, the adherents to Popery repented not, but blasphemed God the more, and set themselves more fiercely to persecute those whom he raised up, burning those faithful witnesses, Jerome and Huss, who testified against their abominations.

2. The fifth vial was poured on the seat of the beast, and darkness followed in his kingdom, and his subjects gnawed their tongues for pain: where, as in the foregoing vials, there is a manifest allusion to the plagues of Egypt. And this is interpreted of the stroke given to the Pope's dominion by the Reformation, between 1530 and 1650, which excited the blasphemies of the antichristian powers; and far from bringing them to repentance, though it cut them to the heart with vexation, excited their bitter imprecations upon the reformed as heretics and apostates, on whom they denounced the heaviest vengeance.

3. The sixth seal is poured upon the river Euphrates, and supposed to imply the destruction of the Ottoman empire, in order to open a way for the conversion of the eastern nations to Christianity, the river being dried up, to prepare a passage for the kings of the East to come into the church.

Hereupon the devil, perceiving his kingdom every where shaken, rallies all his forces, and by his emissaries, the ecclesiastics of Rome, represented by unclean spirits like frogs, sends forth to gather the kings of the antichristian party to his banners, and by lying wonders and false miracles engages them, in support of the Papal cause, to assemble for war against the saints in a place called Armageddon, which should be as fatal to the enemies of the church as Megiddo, where the army of Sisera fell before the sword of Barak.

A warning is added, ver. 15. addressed to the faithful in the view of this day. *Behold, I come as a thief,* suddenly and unexpectedly, when these enemies apprehend themselves most secure. *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. Note,* The uncertainty of the coming of our Lord should engage us to maintain constant watchfulness, that we may not be surprised, but ready with joy to welcome his arrival.

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial [e] into the air; and [f] there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, [g] It is done. 18. [h] And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great. 19. And [i] the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, [k] to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. 20. [l] And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21. [m] And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent; [n] and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

e Eph. 2. 2.
f Ver. 1. ch. 11. 19. & 14. 17. & 15. 5. & 21. 22.
g John 19. 30. ch. 0. 6, 7. & 21. 6.
h Ch. 4. 5. & 8. 5. & 11. 13, 19.
i Ch. 11. 8, 13. & 14. 8. & 17. 18. & 18. 2.
k Ps. 75. 8. ch. 14. 8—11, 19. 20. & xviii, & 19. 17, 21. 2 Thes. 2. 8. 2 Tim. 3. 9. Jer. 25. 15, 16. Is. 51. 23. & 49. 26.
l Ch. 6. 14. & 11. 13. Is. 2. 14—17.
m Exod. 9. 23—26. Josh. 10. 11. Is. 30. 26—30. Ezek. 38. 22. ch. 8. 7. & 11. 19.
n Ver. 9, 11. Is. 8. 21. ch. 11. 18. 2 Kin. 6. 33. Jer. 5. 3. Is. 1. 5. Mat. 3. 12.

Verses 17—21. The seventh and last vial is poured into the air, the place where Satan's illusions are practised. And now a voice from heaven exulting cries, *It is done;* the ruin of antichrist is completed. Tremendous voices, thunders, and lightnings followed; and such an earthquake as had never been before, denoting the entire dissolution of this persecuting state. Rome itself the seat of the Papal empire is shattered in pieces; and all the other cities of the antichristian empire sunk into ruins. The time is now come for mystical Babylon's overthrow, and God's fearful vengeance is poured out upon her. The whole body of her adherents, whether dwelling in islands or mountains, shall utterly be destroyed, as if swallowed up by an earthquake. And, as one means of completing their ruin, they who attempt to flee for their lives, shall, like the Amorites, (Josh. x. 11.) be consumed with hailstones, each vast as a talent, and die impenitent under all their judgments, still blaspheming the hand that lies so heavy upon them. *Note,* The sorest judgment is a hard and impenitent heart: where that abides, there all God's visitations tend but to exasperate and provoke deeper blasphemies.

CHAP. XVII.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

This chapter gives another representation of those things that had been revealed before, concerning the wickedness and ruin of antichrist. This antichrist had been before represented as a beast, and is now described as a great whore. And here, 1. *The apostle is invited to see this vile woman,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *He tells us what appearance she made,* ver. 3—6. 3. *The mystery of it is explained to him,* ver. 7—12. *And,* 4. *Her ruin foretold,* ver. 13, &c.

1. AND there came [a] one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials, and [b] talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee [c] the judgment of the [d] great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2. [e] With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3. [f] So he carried me away in the spirit into [g] the wilderness: and I saw [h] a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4. [i] And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and * decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, [k] having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5. And [l] upon her forehead *was* a name written, [m] MYSTERY, [n] BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF † HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6. And I saw the woman [o] drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, [p] I wondered with great admiration. 7. And the angel said unto me, [q] Wherefore

a Ch. 15. 1, 6, 7. & 16. 2—4, 8, 10, 12, 17. & 21. 9.
b Ch. 4. 1. & 21. 9, 10. ver. 3. ch. 6. 1, 2, 5, 7.
c Ch. 11. 13. & 14. 8—11, 14—20. & xvi, xviii, xix.
d Ezek. xxiii. Nah. 3. 4. ch. 11. 8. & xiii. 2 Thes. 2. 3—12. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. ver. 3—6, 15. Jer. 51. 13. ver. 15.
e Ver. 13, 17. ch. 18. 3, 9. & 13. 3, 4, 8, 12. & 14. 8. & 11. 2. Jer. 51. 7. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6. & 4. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. Dan. 11. 36—39.
f Ch. 1. 10. & 21. 10. & 4. 2. Ezek. 3. 12, 14. Acts 8. 39.
g Ch. 18. 2. Is. 13. 21. & 34. 14. with Is. 5. 1. Song 4. 12. & 5. 1. & 6. 2.
h Ch. 13. 1, 5, 7. ver. 6—18.
i Ver. 18. ch. 18. 3, 7, 12, 16. Dan. 11. 38. & 7. 8, 24.
k Jer. 51. 7. Mat. 23. 25. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 9. 2 Tim. 3. 2—5. ch. 11. 8. & 13. 5, 6, 12. & 14. 8. & 18. 6. Dan. 7. 25. & 11. 36—39.
l Is. 3. 9. ch. 7. 3. & 14. 1. & 13. 16.
m 2 Thes. 2. 7. 2 Tim. 3. 1—5.
n Ch. 11. 8. & 14. 8. & 18. 2. with Is. 14. 12—14. & 47. 6, 7, 12, 13. Jer. 50. 38. 2 Thes. 2. 9. Dan. 7. 25. & 11. 36—39. 2 Tim. 3. 1—6, 13. 1 Tim. 4. 1—3. ch. xiii. & 19. 2.

* Or *gilded.*
† Or *fornications.*
o Dan. 7. 21, 25. ch. 11. 7. & 14. 13. & 13. 7. & 16. 6. & 18. 20, 24.
p Ch. 13. 1, 11. Hab. 1. 13.
q With Is. 40. 27. Luke 24. 5. Mark 16. 6.

r Ver. 1, 8—18.

e Ch. 13. 1, 11. & 11. 7. & 9. 2, 3. Dan. 7. 8, 20.

t Dan. 7. 11, 26. & 11. 45. 2 Thes. 2. 3, 8. ch. 13. 10. & 14. 8—11, 15—20. & xvi, xviii. & 19. 15—21. & 20. 10.

u Ch. 13. 3, 4, 7, 8, 12.

x Ch. 13. 8. & 20. 12. & 21. 27. & 3. 5. Is. 4. 3. Dan. 12. 1. Phil. 4. 3. Luke 10. 20.

y Ch. 9. 1—11. & 13. 1, 11, 14. ver. 3.

z Ch. 13. 18. Eccl. 1. 17.

a Ver. 3, 7. ch. 13. 1. & 12. 3. Dan. 7. 17, 23.

b Ver. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 7.

c Dan. 2. 42. & 7. 7, 20, 24. ch. 12. 3. & 13. 1.

d Prov. 1. 14. Rom. 8. 7. ch. 13. 3, 4, 7.

didst thou marvel? [r] I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. 8. [s] The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and [t] go into perdition: and [u] they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not [x] written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold [y] the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9. And [z] here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. [a] The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 10. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11. [b] And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 12. And the [c] ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 13. [d] These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

Verses 1—13. An angel farther explains to the apostle what was meant by the vision before him; who this great whore was on whom God's judgments were to be executed; whilst proudly seated upon the waters, the emblem of her vast jurisdiction, and having made the kings and the inhabitants of the earth drunk with her idolatries and sorceries, she flattered herself she should sit as a queen, and see no sorrow.

Instantly in a vision John was carried into the wilderness, and there he beheld the antichristian whore seated upon a scarlet-coloured beast, the Papacy, scarlet being the colour in which the Pope and cardinals are dressed; or to denote the sanguinary edicts executed by her. This beast was full of names of blasphemy, the blasphemous titles and prerogatives of infallibility, supremacy, &c. being challenged by the Popes of Rome, which is seated on seven hills, signified by the seven heads, and usurped authority over many potent kingdoms. This woman appeared in all the attire of a harlot, intimating the vast pomp and profusion of rich clothes and ornaments used by the Romish church, to deck their priests, idols, and images. In her hand was a cup of philters, to intoxicate her paramours, and lead them to all her abominable wickednesses in doctrine, worship, and manners; and upon her forehead her name was written, *Mystery*, (2 Thes. ii. 7.) with deep design and craft carrying on her iniquitous designs; *Babylon the great*, like Babylon of old, for oppression, pride, and idolatry; *the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*; the parent and patroness of every wickedness; and she was drunk with the blood of martyrs. A character so horrid, infamous, and hideous, greatly excited John's astonishment.

Observing his amazement, the angel explains the vision. This beast *was* of old, when Rome was the seat of Pagan idolatry and persecution; *and is not*, Rome Pagan having been destroyed; *and* yet *is*, the same under the Papal government in tyranny and idolatry as formerly; it is the offspring of hell, and is doomed to return thither. The men of the Roman empire in general, God's elect excepted, shall wonder after this beast with superstitious veneration. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom*; let such a one who is intelligent mark these characters, and they will be led to what is prefigured by them. (1.) *The seven hills are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth*; Rome, the capital of her empire, being built on seven hills. (2.) *There are seven kings*, or successive forms of government; *five are fallen*, the kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes, no longer subsist. *One is*; the Pagan emperors that then reigned when the vision was given: *and one is not yet come*; the Christian emperors, which are to endure but a short space. *The beast is the eighth*, in order; or if the empire, as under the Pagan and Christian emperors, be considered as one form of government, the Papacy *is one of the seven kings*, and will be as surely destroyed as the former. (3.) Another mark of this beast is the ten horns, which are so many kings, which had not yet received their kingdoms, but were to arise about the same time when the Papal power should grow to its height; even when the empire was divided into about that number of kingdoms, and all their princes submitted to the Papal yoke, and consented to uphold the authority of the Roman pontiffs.

14. [e] These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: [f] for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and [g] they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful. 15. And he saith unto me, [h] The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16. And the [i] ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these [k] shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. 17. For [l] God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18. And the woman which thou sawest [m] is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

e Ch. 11. 7. & 13. 7. & 16. 14. & 19. 15—21. & 14. 8—20. Dan. 7. 21, 22, 25, 26. & 2. 44. Ps. 2. 8, 9. & 21. 8—12. & 110. 5, 6. ch. 6. 12—17.

f 1 Tim. 6. 15. ch. 19. 16. & 1. 5. Prov. 8. 15, 16. Deut. 10. 17. Dan. 4. 35.

g Ch. 14. 1, 4. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Heb. 3. 1. Rom. 8. 30. Jer. 50. 44, 45.

h Is. 8. 7. ch. 13. 3, 4, 7, 8. with 5. 9. & 7. 9. ver. 1.

i Ver. 2, 10, 13.

k Ch. 11. 13. Job 9. 12, 22. 2 Sam. 13. 15. Ps. 27. 2. Dan. 7. 5. ch. 23. 8, 9, 1. Lev. 21. 9. Is. 13. 17, 18. Jer. 50. 41. Ezek. 16. 23—44. ch. 16. 12.

l Ps. 105. 25. ch. 18. 6, 7. & 10. 7. or ver. 13. Rom. 1. 26. 2 Thes. 2. 10—12.

m Ch. 11. 8. & 14. 8. & 16. 19. & 18. 2. Luke 2. 1. ch. 13. 2. & 12. 3.

Verses 14—18. The rise of the Papal power had been shown: here we have its downfall.

1. These kings will make war with the Lamb, endeavouring, by fire and sword, to compel his people to submit with implicit obedience to the Papal see: but he shall strengthen them with constancy to resist, and even in martyrdom to conquer; *for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings*: mighty to support his suffering saints, who being chosen by his grace, and called by his word, are enabled to approve themselves faithful in defiance of all opposition.

2. The same kingdoms that have exerted their power to support the throne of the beast, shall, through God's overruling providence, be made the means of his destruction. Though God for a while suffers them to give their kingdoms to the beast, yet, when the time appointed is accomplished, their successors in these kingdoms shall be as much turned to hate and destroy the whore, whose dominion for a while shall extend over the nations and kings of the earth, as their predecessors were zeal-

ous to maintain the Papal usurpations; they shall treat her with every indignity, and destroy her by the most tormenting death. Whence we may observe, (1.) That there never will be another universal monarchy erected by any of the states of Christendom. (2.) That the very powers that have been the pillars of Popery, shall be the chief instruments in pulling down the Papal throne.

CHAP. XVIII.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

We have here, 1. *An angel proclaiming the fall of Babylon,* ver. 1, 2. 2. *Assigning the reasons of her fall,* ver. 3. *Giving warning to all that belonged to God, to come out of her,* ver. 4, 5. *and to assist in her destruction,* ver. 6—8. 4. *The great lamentation made for her by those that had been large sharers in her sinful pleasures and profits,* ver. 9—20. 5. *The great joy that there would be among others at the sight of her irrecoverable ruin,* ver. 20.

a Ch. xv—xvii.

b Ch. 14. 6, 8. & 1. 20.

c Ezek. 43. 2. Is. 60. 1—3. 2 Cor. 3. 8. 2 Thes. 2. 8.

d Is. 13. 19, 21. & 14. 23. & 21. 9. & 34. 9—14. Jer. 50. 39. & 51. 8, 37, 64. ch. 14. 8. & 16. 4. 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2. with Lev. 17. 7. & xi. Mark 5. 2.

e Ch. 14. 8. & 17. 2. Is. 47. 15. Jer. 51. 7.

f Ver. 11—19, 23. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 3.

* Or *power.*

1. AND after [a] these things I saw [b] another angel come down from heaven, having great power; [c] and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, [d] Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. 3. [e] For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, [f] and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the * abundance of her delicacies.

Verses 1—3. Descending from heaven with brightness like the sun, an angel; invested with great power, cries, *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen;* her long expected doom is come; and as she hath been filled with abominations, her deserted palaces and ruined habitations *shall become the den of dragons, the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird:* and the cause of her ruin is ascribed to her idolatries, adulteries, and the merchandise of souls, which enabled her and her ecclesiastics to riot in wealth and luxury.

g Gen. 19. 12. Is. 48. 20. & 52. 11. Jer. 51. 6, 50. & 50. 8. Zech. 2. 6, 7. 2 Cor. 6. 17. 2 Chr. 28. 9. Ezra 9. 6. Jer. 51. 9. ch. 16. 9. Gen. 19. 13.

h Ch. 13. 10. Ps. 137. 8. Jer. 50 15, 24. & 51. 24, 49. 2 Tim. 4. 14. ch. 14. 10. Jer. 16. 18. & 17. 18. Exod. 21. 23, 24. & 22. 4—9.

i 2 Thes. 2. 4, 8. Zeph. 2. 15. Is. 47. 5—8. Ezek. 28. 2—10. Is. 22. 12—14. & 5. 11—14.

k Ver. 10, 17, 19. Is. 47. 9—11. & 66. 15. ch. 13. 10. & 17. 16. Jer. 51. 6. 2 Thes. 2. 8.

4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, [g] Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: 5. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. 6. [h] Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. 7. [i] How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. 8. [k] Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: [l] for strong *is* the Lord God who judgeth her. 9. And [m] the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, [n] shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the [o] smoke of her burning, 10. [p] Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for [q] in one hour is thy judgment come. 11. [r] And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: 12. [s] The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all † thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, 13. [t] And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep; and horses, and chariots, and [u] slaves, and souls of men. 14. [x] And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. 15. [y] The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16. And saying, [z] Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! 17. For [a] in one hour so great riches is come to nought. [b] And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, 18. And cried when they [c] saw the smoke of her burning, saying [d] What *city is* like unto this great city! 19. [e] And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, [f] wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! [g] for in one hour is she made desolate. 20. [h] Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. 21. [i] And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it*

l Ch. 15. 7. & 14. 10. & 11. 17. Jer. 50. 31, 34.

m Ver. 3, 7. ch. 16. 14. & 17. 2, 17.

n Ezek. 26. 16, 17. & 27. 30—32. & 8. 14. Ps. 58. 10. Jer. 50. 40.

o Ver. 18. ch. 14. 11. & 19. 3. Gen. 19. 28.

p Num. 16. 34. Is. 21. 9. ch. 14. 8.

q Ver. 8, 17, 19. Is. 47. 9, 11. ch. 17. 1. Jer. 51. 8.

r Ezek. 27. 27—36. & 26. 15—21. ver. 3. ch. 17. 17. & 13. 17.

s Ezek. 27. 5—24. 1 Kin. 10. 11, 12. ch. 17. 4.

† Or *sweet.*

t Prov. 7. 17. Ps. 23. 5. Ezek. 27. 13—22. Ps. 4. 7. Is. 22. 13.

u Or *bodies.* Ezek. 27. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 3.

x Luke 16. 25. ch. 16. 20. & 12. 8.

y Ver. 3, 9—14, 19, 23.

z Ver. 10, 11. ch. 17. 4. Ezek. 27. 32.

a Ver. 8, 10. ch. 17. 4. Is. 47. 9, 11. Jer. 51. 8. Lam. 4. 6.

b Is. 23. 14. Ezek. 27. 29.

c Ver. 9. ch. 14. 11. & 19. 3. Gen. 19. 28. Is. 34. 9, 10.

d Ver. 10. Ezek. 27. 32. with ch. 13. 4. Is. 23. 8.

e Josh. 7. 6. 1 Sam. 4. 12. 2 Sam. 13. 19. Neh. 9. 1. Job 2. 12. Ezek. 27. 30, 31. ver. 10, 16.

f Ver. 3, 23.

g Ver. 8, 10, 17. Is. 47. 9, 11. Jer. 51. 8. Lam. 4. 6.

h Is. 44. 23. & 49. 13. Jer. 51. 48. ch. 19. 2. Ps. 96. 11—13. Luke 11. 47, 50.

i Exod. 15. 5. Neh. 9. 11. Jer. 51. 63, 64. ch. 12. 8. & 16. 20. 2 Thes. 2. 8.

into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. 22. [k] And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; 23. [l] And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee: and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: [m] for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. 24. [n] And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

k Is. 24. 8, 9. Jer. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10. Ezek. 26. 13. No joy, no business, no inhabitants, shall be in Rome.

l Is. 24. 8. Jer. 7. 34. & 16. 9. & 25. 10.

m Is. 23. 8. ver. 3, 9, 11. ch. 17. 13, 17, 25. & 13. 3, 4, 8, 14. 2 Tim. 3. 2—6. & 4. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 4. 1—4. 2 Kin. 9. 22. Nah. 3. 4.

n Ch. 17. 6. & 19. 2. & 13. 2, 7. & 11. 2, 7. Dan. 7. 21, 25. Mat. 23. 29—35.

Verses 4—24. We have here,

1. Warning given to the people of God to separate themselves from Babylon mystical, and because of her enormous provocations against God, to retaliate upon her righteous vengeance. She proudly vaunted her imperial state, and boasted of her security: but sudden destruction shall overtake her; and, hurled from the summit of grandeur, death, mourning, and famine shall seize her, and by the judgment of the Almighty Lord she shall be utterly burned with fire. *Note*, (1.) They who would be saved from the ruin of the wicked, must separate themselves from their society. (2.) God will give righteous judgment to the sinner, and repay him according to the multitude of his ungodlinesses.

2. A doleful lamentation is taken up for her fall by the kings and merchants of the earth, and sailors, the cardinals, priests, monks, Jesuits, and other ecclesiastics, who trafficked in dispensations, indulgences, &c. making merchandise of the souls of men. Standing afar off, and beholding the smoke of her burning, they will bewail her sudden and irrecoverable ruin, and therewith the loss of all her grandeur, wealth, and luxury, in which they had long indulged themselves: a sorrow of the world which worketh death, and but aggravates the miseries complained of.

3. The saints of God, with the apostles and prophets, are called to triumph over her, and to rejoice in her fall: for when the wicked fall there is a shouting; not from a spirit of private revenge, but from a delight to behold God glorified in his righteous judgments.

4. To give a sign of Babylon's irrecoverable ruin, a mighty angel hurls a millstone into the sea, intimating, that all joy should for ever cease, every kind of traffic be at an end, the necessaries of life fail, no light appear, no bridal song any more be heard, but solitude and silence reign in her desolate palaces; because by her sorceries and idolatries she had bewitched the earth, and at her hands was required the blood of all the martyrs which had been slain on the earth by her cruel edicts and persecutions. *Note*, The sinner who sinks down into the abyss of hell under the wrath of God, is lost for ever, and shall never rise up again.

CHAP. XIX.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A farther account of the triumphant song of angels and saints from the fall of Babylon,* ver. 1—4. 2. *The marriage between Christ and the church proclaimed and perfected,* ver. 5—10. 3. *Another warlike expedition of the glorious head and husband of the church, with the success of it,* ver. 10, &c.

1. AND [a] after these things [b] I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: 2. [c] For true and righteous *are* his judgments; [d] for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and [e] hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. 3. [f] And again they said, Alleluia. [g] And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. 4. [h] And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

a Ch. xviii. & 4. 1. & 7. 1. & 16. 1—11.

b Ch. 4. 11. & 5. 9—13. & 7. 10, 12. & 12. 10. & 11. 15—18. 1 Tim. 1. 17.

c Ch. 15. 3. & 16. 5, 7. Deut. 32. 4. & 33. 27.

d Deut. 32. 42, 43. ch. 17. 1, 2. & 18. 3, 9, 23.

e Ch. 16. 6. & 18. 20, 24. & 13. 10. Dan. 7. 11, 26.

f See ver. 1.

g Ch. 14. 11. & 18. 9, 18. Gen. 19. 28. Is. 34. 9, 10. & 13. 20. 2 Thes. 1. 9. Ps. 106. 8.

h Ch. 4. 4, 6, 9, 10. & 5. 6, 8, 14. 1 Chr. 16. 36. Neh. 8. 6.

Verses 1—4. A command being given in ver. 20. of the former chapter, to the saints of God to rejoice over Babylon fallen, we have here their song of praise on that occasion. They cried, *Alleluia*, ascribing salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, to the Lord their God; acknowledging his righteous judgments in the vengeance executed on the great whore, for her lewdness, idolatry, and cruelty; and they repeated loud Alleluias, whilst the *smoke of her torment arose up for ever and ever.* The four living creatures, and the elders, the representatives of the ministers and the church of the redeemed, hereupon joined in their adorations before the throne, and joyfully cried, *Amen! Alleluia! Note*, Even the torment of the damned will afford matter of praise to God's saints, and glory to himself.

5. [i] And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. 6. [k] And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 7. [l] Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; [m] for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8. And to her was granted [n] that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9. And he saith unto me, Write, [o] Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, [p] These are the true sayings of God. 10. [q] And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it* not: [r] I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God:

i Ps. 134. 1, 2. & 135. 1. & 115. 13. ch. 11. 18. & 20. 12.

k Ezek. 1. 24. & 43. 2. ch. 1. 1, 15. & 14. 2. & 11. 15, 17. & 12. 10. & 4. 8. Ps. 47. 1, 2, 5, 6. & 97. 1. & 96. 11—13. & 98. 7—9.

l Ps. xcv—c, cxvii, cxlv—cl. Is. xxv, xxvi. & 27. 1—4. & xxxv. & 44. 23. & 49. 13. & 54. 1. & 42. 10—12.

m Mat. 22. 1—14. & 25. 1—10. Luke 14. 16—23. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 31. ch. 21. 2, 9. Hos. 2. 19, 20. Ezek. 16. 8. Is. 62. 5. & 54. 5, 6.

n Ps. 45. 14, 15. & 132. 9. Is. 45. 24, 25. & 61. 10. ch. 3. 5, 18. Mat. 22. 12. Rom. 3. 22. & 5. 19. & 10. 4. & 13. 14. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Phil. 3. 9. Ezek. 16. 10. Eph. 5. 26.

o Luke 14. 15—24. Mat. 22. 4. ch. 14. 13. Ps. 89. 15.

p Ch. 21. 5. & 22. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

q Ch. 22. 8, 9. Acts 10. 25, 26. & 14. 15. 1 John 5. 21.

r Ch. 22. 9. & 1. 9. & 12. 17. 1 John 5. 10.

for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Verses 5—10. The song of triumph over Babylon being ended, a voice from the throne enjoins the host of the redeemed to unite in the praises of their common Lord, and instantly innumerable voices, loud as cataracts of water, or mighty thunders, poured forth their Halleluias: *For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth;* since the Antichristian powers are broken, his kingdom of grace is extended through the earth, and his dominion universal over a willing people. *The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready;* therefore, *let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him.* And this may refer to the conversion of the Jews, who will now be brought into the church, and be publicly in profession joined to the Lord as his people.

1. The dress of the Lamb's wife is described. She is arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; and that is interpreted to signify the *righteousness of saints,* both imputed and implanted, whereby the church becomes meet for the bosom of her Lord, beautiful in the comeliness he puts upon her.

2. They are declared blessed, who are invited, and come to the marriage-supper of the Lamb; partaking of all the privileges and ordinances of the gospel, thereby admitted to the happiest communion with Jesus, and joined to the Lord in one Spirit.

3. The angel closes with a solemn assurance of the truth of this revelation, which should not fail of its accomplishment; and, overcome with the brightness of his glory, John fell at his feet, and was ready to pay him divine honour, not considering what he did: but the angel rebuked him for his inconsiderate design. He owns himself unworthy of that honour, which was due to God alone; and glorious as he appeared, was but the apostle's fellow-servant, bearing testimony to the same Jesus, and now revealing what the Saviour dictated to him, who inspired the prophets, and sent him to deliver this message to John for the church's use and comfort. *Note,* The highest created being hath no more title to our worship than the lowest; it is the same idolatry to worship an angel as a worm.

11. And [s] I saw heaven opened, and behold [t] a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called [u] Faithful and True; and [x] in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12. His eyes *were* [y] as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* [z] many crowns; and [a] he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. 13. [b] And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called [c] The Word of God. 14. [d] And the armies which *were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15. [e] And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and [f] he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and [g] he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16. [h] And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. 17. And I saw an angel [i] standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to [k] all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh [l] of all *men,* *both* free and bond, both small and great. 19. [m] And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20. And [n] the beast was taken, and with him [o] the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. [p] These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21. [q] And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

s With ch. 4. 1. & 11. 19. & 15. 5.
t With ch. 6. 2. Zech. 1. 8.
u Ch. 1. 5. & 3. 14. John 14. 6.
x Ch. 15. 3, 7. & 16. 14. & 17. 14. Ps. 96. 10, 13.
y Ch. 1. 14. & 2. 18.
z Ps. 21. 3. & 72. 8. ver. 16.
a John 1. 18. Judg. 13. 18. Is. 9. 6. with ch. 2. 17.
b Is. 63. 2, 3. Ps. 58. 10.
c John 1. 1, 14. 1 John 1. 1. & 5. 7. Heb. 4. 12.
d 2 Thes. 1. 7, 10. Jude 15. ch. 14. 1. & 17. 14. & 4. 4. & 7. 4, 9, 14. Song 1. 9.
e Ver. 21. ch. 1. 16. & 2. 12, 16. Is. 11. 4. Num. 24. 17—19.
f Ch. 2. 27. & 12. 5. Ps. 2. 9.
g Is. 63. 2, 3, 6. ch. 14. 19, 20. & 16. 19. Nah. 1. 6.
h Ps. 72. 1—17. ch. 17. 14. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Prov. 8. 8, 15, 16. Mat. 28. 18. Eph. 1. 20—23. Phil. 2. 9—11. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Ps. 45. 3.
i Ch. 8. 13. & 14. 6.
k Ezek. 39. 17—20. Jer. 7. 33. & 12. 9. 1 Sam. 17. 44. Is. 25. 6. & 34. 1—8. ch. 16. 14. Zeph. 1. 7. with Tit. 2. 13. P. 24. 8, 10. & 110. 5, 6.
l Ch. 6. 15. & 13. 16.
m Ch. 16. 14, 16. & 18. 9. & 17. 13, 14. Dan. 7. 21, 25, 26. Joel 3. 2, 12.
n Ch. 13. 1—8. & 17. 3, 7—13, 17.
o Ch. 13. 11—17.
p Ch. 20. 10, 14. & 21. 8. & 14. 8—11. Dan. 7. 11, 25, 26. & 11. 45. with Gen. 19. 14. Num. 16. 33.
q Ch. 17. 14, 16. 2 Thes. 2. 8. Is. 66. 14—16, 24. ver. 15, 17, 18.

Verses 11—21. The Lord Jesus here appears in majesty to execute vengeance on the beast and his adherents, now assembled to make their last efforts.

1. A most magnificent description is given of the Captain of our salvation. He is seated on a white horse, the emblem of victory; he is called *Faithful and True,* performing all his promises to his people, and in righteousness executing vengeance on his enemies. His eyes, bright as the flame, pierce into the secrets of the soul; and his many crowns of gold denote his universal dominion; his name and nature, as Jehovah, none can comprehend. His bloody vesture bespeaks his conquest over his slaughtered foes; and one of the names, whereby he hath revealed himself, is the *Word of God.* Close behind him followed his faithful warriors, his saints arrayed in robes of righteousness and garments of salvation. From his mouth proceeds the sharp sword of his denunciations of vengeance, before which his foes must fall. As a potter's vessel before an iron rod, so shall they be broken to pieces; and as grapes laid in the wine-press, so shall he trample them in his fury. And on his vesture, where it hung down over his thigh, was this illustrious motto wrought, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS!

2. A call is given to all the fowls of the air to assemble on this dread occasion, and feast on the corpses of all the Antichristian host, both great and small, who are now about to perish together.

3. The army of the ungodly, Papist, Pagan, and Mahometan, assembles under the conduct of the beast; the battle is joined, the victory decisive; the beast and false prophet, which wrought the lying wonders, are taken; and the ringleaders in the Antichristian apostasy are cast together, body and soul, into the burning lake; and all their adherents fall by the sword of him that sat on the white horse, and the fowls are gorged with their carcasses. And now, all foes being subdued, the glorious millennium commences, when the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ.

CHAP. XX.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

This chapter is thought, by some, to be the darkest part of all this prophecy: it is very probable the things contained in it are not yet accomplished; and therefore it is the wiser way to content ourselves with general observations, than to be positive and particular in our explications of it. Here we have an account, 1. *Of the binding of Satan for a thousand years,* ver. 1—3. 2. *The reign of the saints with Christ for the same time,* ver. 4—6. 3. *Of the loosing of Satan, and the conflict of the church with Gog and Magog,* ver. 7—10. 4. *Of the day of judgment,* ver. 11, *&c.*

1. AND [a] I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2. And he laid hold [b] on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3. And [c] cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, [d] that he should deceive the nations no more, till [e] the thousand years should be fulfilled: [f] and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4. [g] And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* [h] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and [i] they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5. But [k] the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the [l] first resurrection. 6. [m] Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but [n] they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

a Ch. 11. 15, 17. & 1. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Mat. 8. 29. Ps. 76. 10, 13. Luke 8. 31. & 11. 21, 22.
b Ch. 12. 9. Mat. 16. 23. John 6. 70. ch. 2. 10. 2 Pet. 2. 4. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Job 2. 1.
c With Dan. 6. 17. Mat. 27. 66. & 8. 29.
d Ch. 16. 14, 16. ver. 8.
e Ps. 90. 4. & 105. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 8.
f Ver. 7—10.
g Dan. 7. 9, 18, 22, 27. & 12. 4. 1 Cor. 6. 2. Mat. 19. 28. Luke 22. 30.
h Ch. 6. 9. & 13. 4, 12, 15—17. & 15. 2.
i 1 Pet. 2. 9. ch. 11. 11, 15. Rom. 11. 15. Dan. 2. 44. & 7. 18, 22, 27. Ps. lxxii, cxlix. Is. xii, xxv, xxxv, xlix, lx—lxvi. Jer. xxxi, xxxiii. Ezek. xxxiv. xxxvi, xxxvii, xl—xlviii. Mic. iv, v. Hos. 1. 10, 11. & ii, iii. Amos 9. 11—15. Joel 3. 17—21. Obad. 20, 21. Zeph. iii. Zech. ii, x, xii, xiv. Rom. 11. 2—32. ch. 5. 10. & 1. 6. ver. 6. ch. xxi, xxii.
k see ver. 8, 9.
l Ch. 11. 11, 15. Rom. 11. 15. Ezek. 37. 2—14. Col. 3. 1. John 5. 25. & 11. 25. Eph. 2. 6. & 5. 14.
m Dan. 12. 12. Is. 4. 3. ch. 2. 11. & 21. 8. ver. 14. 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 6. 9—11.
n Is. 61. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 12. ch.

Verses 1—6. The *fourth period* now commences.

1. Satan, the great deceiver, is bound by the angel of the everlasting covenant, and cast into the bottomless pit, restrained from all exercise of his power, and permitted no more, during a thousand years, to trouble the peaceful and happy state of the church; when they are expired, for a little season he will again be loosed.

2. The reign of the saints with Christ begins, which some interpret, literally, of the resurrection of saints and martyrs, with whom Christ will personally dwell upon earth, during a thousand years before the general resurrection; but I rather concur with those who interpret this of the glorious state of the church during this period, when the faithful, who are one in spirit with all the former martyrs and confessors, who had faithfully opposed the Antichristian tyranny, and now behold judgment executed upon their foes, these and their successors shall reign in a state of great dignity, peace, prosperity, and joy, Satan being no longer able to interrupt their repose; whilst all their former enemies are so entirely subdued, as figuratively to be called dead; and during this period none will be found to interrupt or disturb the felicity of the saints. This happy state may metaphorically be well styled *the first resurrection*, and is a figure of that which shall follow at the end of time.

3. The happiness of these souls is great. *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years,* in body, soul, and spirit devoted to him, and experiencing the felicity of his service here, as the pledge of that eternal glory and blessedness which they expect hereafter.

7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. 8. And shall [o] go out to deceive the nations [p] which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea. 9. [q] And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed [r] the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and [s] fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10. [t] And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

o Job 1. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8. ver. 3, 10.
p With Ezek. xxxviii, xxxix. ch. 16. 14. & 11. 17. & 12. 17.
q With Is. 8. 8. Ezek. 38. 9. Hab. 1. 6.
r Mat. 16. 16. ch. 2. 3. Mic. 2. 13. Ezek. 48. 35. ch. xxi.
s With Is. 30. 33. & 37. 36. Ezek. 38. 22. & 39. 6, 9, 10. 2 Thes. 1. 8. Jude 1, 7.
t Gen. 19. 24, 25. Mat. 25. 41. Dan. 7. 11. ch. 14. 10, 11. & 19. 20. ver. 15.

Verses 7—10. *The fifth period* begins with the loosing of Satan, the thousand years being expired. His going forth once more to deceive; his prevalence over the nations, whom once more he will assemble, even Gog and Magog, the figures of those enemies of the church so named of old, and they shall surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city; but fire from heaven shall consume them, and the devil that deceived them will now be finally shut up in the eternal prison of hell, with the beast and the false prophet, to be tormented for ever and ever. To what event this refers: who are the nations meant by Gog and Magog; or what time this period occupies, is utterly mysterious. Of all these we must be content to be ignorant. The events themselves alone can unfold the prophecy.

11. [u] And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, [x] from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12. [y] And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, [z] which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, [a] according to their works. 13. [b] And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and * hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and [c] they were judged every man according to their works. 14.

u Mat. 25. 31. Acts 17. 30, 31. John 16. 11. Ps. 89. 14. & 97. 2.
x Dan. 2. 35. 2 Pet. 3. 7—11. ch. 6. 14. & 16. 20.
y John 5. 22. 1 Thes. 4. 15—17. Rom. 14. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Dan. 7. 10. Heb. 4. 13. Jer. 17. 10. & 32. 19. Mal. 3. 16.
z Dan. 12. 1. ch. 3. 5. & 13. 8. & 17. 8. Phil. 4. 3.
a Eccl. 12. 14. Jer. 17. 10. ch. 2. 23. & 22. 12. Rom. 2. 6. see ver. 13.
b 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. 1 Thes. 4. 15, 17. ch. 6. 8. John 5. 28, 29.
* Or *the grave.*
c Mat. 25. 31—46. & 16. 17. Jer. 32. 19. see ver. 12.

[d] And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15. [e] And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

d 1 Cor. 15. 26, 54, 55. with ch. 2. 11. & 21. 8. ver. 6.
e Ch. 21. 8. & 22. 15. & 19. 20. Mat. 25. 41, 46. & 3. 12. Mark 9. 43, 48.

Verses 11—15. *The sixth period* seems evidently to refer to the final judgment, which is here awfully described.

1. The Judge appears on his magnificent throne, and before him the elementary heavens vanish, and the earth flies away.

2. All, both small and great, appear at his tremendous bar; the sea and the grave give up their dead; the books are opened of God's omniscience, where every work and secret thought of men are recorded, and they are judged accordingly; whilst in the book of life of the Lamb their names are found written who shall never enter into condemnation. *Note*, Before this awful day arrives, we should judge ourselves that we may not then be judged of the Lord, and so continually live under the apprehension and influence of it, that we may then have nothing to fear.

3. The issue of the great assize is, that *death and hell*, the grave, for ever were abolished; and the wicked who existed in their separate state, now raised to life, even all who are not found written in the book of life, are cast into the lake of fire: *this is the second death*, inexpressibly more dreadful than the first, for here immortality itself will be a curse, and the torments be intolerable and eternal. Lord, gather not my soul with sinners in that day.

CHAP. XXI.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

Hitherto the prophecy of this book has presented to us a very remarkable mixture of light and shade, prosperity and adversity, mercy and judgment, in the conduct of Divine Providence towards the church in the world; now, at the close of all, the day breaks, and the shadows flee away; a new world now appears, the former being passed away. Some are willing to understand all that is said in these two last chapters, of the state of the church even here on earth, in the glory of the latter days; but others, more probably, take it as a representation of the perfect and triumphant state of the church in heaven: Let but the faithful saints and servants of God wait a while, and they shall not only see, but enjoy the perfect holiness and happiness of that world. In this chapter you have, 1. *An introduction to the vision of the new Jerusalem*, ver. 1—9. 2. *The vision itself*, ver. 10, &c.

1. AND [a] I saw [b] a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more [c] sea. 2. And I John saw [d] the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3. And [e] I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, [f] the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. 4. [g] And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5. And [h] he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for [i] these words are true and faithful. 6. And he said unto me, [k] It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. [l] I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7. [m] He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I [n] will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8. [o] But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

a Ch. 19. 20. & 20. 10.
b Is. 65. 17. & 66. 22. 2 Pet. 3. 13. Acts 3. 21. Rom. 8. 21. Ps. 102. 26—28. ch. 20. 11.
c Is. 57. 20. Jude 13.
d Is. 52. 1. & 54. 5. & 61. 10. & 62. 4, 5. Gal. 4. 26. ch. 3. 12. ver. 10. Heb. 12. 22. & 11. 10. & 13. 14. 2 Cor. 11. 2. ch. 19. 7, 8. ver. 9, 10, 18—20.
e Ch. 10. 4, 8. & 12. 10.
f Lev. 26. 11, 12. Ezek. 37. 27. & 43. 7. 2 Cor. 6. 16. ch. 7. 15.
g Ch. 7. 17. Is. 25. 8. & 60. 20. & 35. 10. & 51. 11. & 65. 18—25. 1 Cor. 15. 26, 54. ch. 20. 14. & 22. 3.
h Ch. 4. 2, 9. & 20. 11. John 1. 22.
i Ch. 19. 9. & 22. 6. 1 Tim. 1. 15. 2 Tim. 2. 11. Tit. 3. 8. Num. 23. 19.
k Ezek. 39. 8. ch. 16. 17. Ps. 33. 9. ch. 1. 8. & 22. 13. Is. 41. 4. & 44. 6.
l Is. 55. 1. & 12. 3. & 44. 3, 4. John 4. 10, 14. & 7. 37. ch. 22. 1, 17. Ps. 36. 8, 9. & 16. 11.
m Ch. 2. 7, 11, 17, 26. & 3. 5, 7, 21. Rom. 8. 17, 32. 1 Cor. 3. 22.
n Zech. 8. 8. & 13. 9. 2 Sam. 7. 14. Heb. 8. 10. 2 Cor. 6. 18. Ps. 50. 7.
o John 3. 36. & 12. 42. Mat. 10. 28. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 5. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10. ch. 22. 15. & 20. 14, 15. Is. 3. 11. Ps. 9. 17. Prov. 14. 32. Heb. 12. 14.

Verses 1—8. *The last* glorious *period* now commences of the heavenly felicity of God's saints, if that may be so called, which, though it hath a beginning, never will have an end.

The blessedness of the heavenly state is here described under the most august representations.

1. A new heaven and earth rises, where there is no sea, all storms, calamities, and troubles being at an end, and an eternal rest remaining for the people of God.

2. A glorious city appears in view, such as earth never beheld, the new Jerusalem, whose maker and builder is God, beautiful as a bride adorned to meet the bridegroom, the emblem of the church of the redeemed, who will then be perfect in holiness and happiness for ever.

3. The unutterable felicity of God's saints is described by a voice from heaven declaring, (1.) The residence of God in the midst of his people, admitting them into the nearest relation with his blessed self, taking them for his own, and offering himself as their eternal portion. (2.) He will for ever banish sin, sorrow, and death from the celestial mansions: the former imperfect state is passed away, and that of perfect happiness is come.

4. The certainty of this bliss and blessedness is confirmed by the word of him that sitteth on the throne. *Behold, I make all things new.* And again he said, *Write, for these words are true and faithful.* And he added, *It is done*, the work of redemption is completely finished. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end*, who will assuredly accomplish what I have begun. *I will give unto him that is athirst* for spiritual blessings in heavenly things, to drink *of the fountain of the water of life freely*, admitting him, of my sovereign grace and favour, to all the unutterable delights of never ending consolations in my immediate presence and glory. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son*, entitled to all the dignity and honour of that transcendently glorious relation.

5. The dreadful ruin of the wicked shall be as sure as the happiness of the saints; they are described as *fearful*, ashamed of the cross of Christ, and dreading the sufferings of his service; *unbelieving*, distrustful of his promises, and rejecting his word; *abominable*, the slaves of corrupt affections; *murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars*, these are doomed to suffer endless torment *in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* Wo to those on whom these sins are found; they assuredly are brands for the burning.

9. [p] And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, [q] Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 10. [r] And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me [s] that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11. [t] Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; 12. And had [u] a wall great and high, *and* [x] had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and [y] names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. 13. On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. 14. And the wall of the city had [z] twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15. And he that talked with me had [a] a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. 16. And the city lieth [b] four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. 17. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, [c] of the angel. 18. [d] And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. 19. [e] And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; 20. The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. 21. And the twelve gates *were* twelve [f] pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the [g] street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

p Ch. 17. 1. & 15. 1, 7. & 16. 1.
q Ver. 2. ch. 19. 7. Is. 54. 5 & 62. 4, 5. Eph. 5. 23—32. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Hos. 2. 19, 20.
r Ch. 1. 10. & 17. 3. Ezek. 3. 12, 14. & 40. 2. Is. 2. 2, 3. Mic. 4. 1, 2.
s Ver. 2. Gal. 4. 26. Heb. 12. 22. Is. 65. 18, 19. Ezek. xlviii.
t Is. 60. 1, 2, 19, 20. Ezek. 1. 26, 27. & 43. 35. Ps. 4. 6. & 27. 1. & 36. 9. ch. 22. 5. ver. 23.
u Is. 26. 1. & 60. 18. Ps. 125. 2. Zech. 2. 5.
x Ezek. 48. 31—35. Is. 54. 11, 12. Num. 24. 5. Ps. 34. 7. Heb. 2. 14. ch. 5. 11. & 7. 11.
y Gal. 6. 16. Heb. 3. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 9.
z Mat. 16. 18. Is. 14. 32. & 28. 16. Heb. 11. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 11. Eph. 2. 19, 20.
a Ezek. 40. 3. Zech. 2. 1. ch. 11. 1. Is. 8. 20. Mat. 28. 20. Acts 17. 11. John 5. 39. 2 Tim. 3. 15—17.
b Is. 33. 20. Eph. 3. 18. Ezek. 48. 16—35. Luke 14. 23. John 14. 2.
c Ver. 9. with ch. 13. 18.
d Is. 54. 11, 12. ch. 4. 2. ver. 11. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Is. 43. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 7. ver. 21. Eph. 3. 8. Prov. 8. 18, 19.
e Is. 54. 11, 12. Exod. 28. 17—21. 1 Pet. 2. 4, 5. see ver. 14.
f Mat. 13. 45. 46 John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. Eph. 2. 18.
g Ch. 22. 2.

Verses 9—21. One of those ministering spirits who had lately been employed in pouring out the vials of wrath, leads the enraptured John to a nearer view from a neighbouring mountain, of the glorious city, the emblem of the church, the Lamb's wife, which he saw descending from heaven.

The glory of God, the divine Shechinah, was visible in the midst of her, affording her the brightest light, Jesus the Sun of Righteousness shining upon her; a vast high wall, and angelic guards waiting at her gates, inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes, through which the sealed of the Lord entered into the city, denoted her invincible defence and security. The gates stood three on each side, looking to the four quarters of the heavens, open for the faithful who should come from all lands; the twelve foundations of the walls bore the names of the apostles on whom the church is built, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; the city, on being measured, appeared foursquare, to signify the perfection, stability, and uniformity of the church above; it was fifteen hundred miles on each side, intimating its vast extent; and the height of the walls proportionable to its length and breadth, even one hundred and forty-four cubits; the building was of jasper, and the city of pure gold like crystal, denoting its magnificence, durability, and glory; and the foundations garnished with every precious stone, brighter than those which glittered in the high priest's breastplate, (Exod. xxviii. 15—21.) and the gates were each of one massy pearl; and the street of the city was of burnished gold, polished like crystal. Every thing excellent and dazzling in the sight of mortals, is here heaped together with amazing profusion, and yet how faintly can all these images convey the delights, blessedness, and perfection of the heavenly state, where such good things are prepared as pass man's understanding!

22. [h] And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 23. [i] And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. 24. [k] And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and [l] the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. 25. [m] And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: [n] for there shall be no night there. 26. [o] And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. 27. [p] And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's [q] book of life.

h 1 Cor. 13. 12. & 15. 28. Is. 8. 14. Ps. 91. 1. John 4. 23: with Col. 2. 17. Heb. 10. 1.
i Is. 60. 19, 20. & 30. 26. & 24. 23. 1 John 1. 5, 7. ver. 11. ch. 22. 5. Zech. 14. 7. Ps. 73. 25, 26. 1 Cor. 15. 28.
k Is. 60. 3—5. & 66. 12, 19. & 2. 3. Ps. 36. 9. & 27. 1. John 12. 35.
l Is. 49. 22, 23. & 45. 14, 15. & 60. 3, 10, 16. & 66. 12. Ps. 72. 10, 11. ch. 11. 15.
m Is. 60. 11, 20. ch. 3. 8. John 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. & 6. 37.
n Is. 60. 20. Zech. 14. 7. ch. 22. 5.
o Is. 60. 6—8, 11—17. Ps. 22. 27—30. & 72. 8—17. Zech. 2. 11.
p Joel 3. 17. Zech. 14. 21. Ezek. 44. 9. Is. 52. 1. & 60. 21. & 62. 12. ver. 8. ch. 22. 14, 15. Is. 35, 8. 1 Tim. 4. 1. 2 Thes. 2. 11, 12. Hab. 1. 13. Jer. 44. 4. 3. ch. 3. 5. & 13. 8. & 17. 8. & 20. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 19. Rom. 8. 30. Luke 12. 10. Is. 4. 3.
q Phil. 4.

Verses 22—27.

1. No temple was found in this celestial city, immediate communion with the eternal God being there enjoyed, which renders all the present ordinances of approach to God needless.

2. No sun or moon were wanted, where the uncreated Light himself abode; the glory of God and the Lamb, one in essential union with the Father and Spirit, is the light thereof.

3. There all the nations, saved through the atoning blood of Jesus, walk in the light of the Lord; and the potentates, who through grace partake of his salvation, bring thither their glory and honour, counting that they reign indeed when made kings and priests unto God in this eternal state of blessedness.

4. The gates stand open continually by day, and there is no night there, nor fear of invading foes: all that hath ever appeared valuable and glorious among the nations here, with

infinitely surpassing excellence is found there, and every thing defiling is forbidden admission; no liar, no idolater, especially, can enter there, but only those whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb. *Note*, Into the present churches upon earth hypocrites will insinuate themselves, but into heaven nothing unholy or impure can be admitted; all there are perfected in holiness.

CHAP. XXII.—ANNO DOMINI, 96.

In this chapter we have, 1. *A farther description of the heavenly state of the church,* ver. 1—6. 2. *A confirmation of this and all the other visions of this book,* ver. 6—20. 3. *The conclusion,* ver. 20, 21.

1. AND he shewed me [a] a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the [b] throne of God and of the Lamb. 2. In the midst of [c] the street of it, and on either side of the river, [d] *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: [e] and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. 3. [f] And there shall be no more curse: [g] but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and [h] his servants shall serve him: 4. [i] And they shall see his face; and [k] his name *shall be* in their foreheads. 5. [l] And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: [m] and they shall reign for ever and ever.

a Ezek. 47. 1—10. Zech. 14. 8. Ps. 36. 8, 9. John 7. 38, 39. & 16. 14. & 4. 10, 14. Hab. 2. 14. Gen. 26. 19, 22.
b Ch. 3. 21. & 4. 3. & 5. 6 & 7. 17.
c Ch. 21. 21. ver. 1.
d Gen. 2. 9. Ezek. 47. 7, 12. Ps. 92. 12—14. ch. 2. 7. John. 11. 25.
e Exod. 15. 26. Mal. 4. 2. Ps. 107. 20.
f Gal. 3. 11. Rom. 8. 1. Is. 11. 13. Zech. 14. 11. Gen. 3. 16—19.
g Ch. 21. 3. Ezek. 48. 35.
h Ch. 4. 8. & 19. 5.
i Mat. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 John 3. 2. Ps. 17. 15. John 17. 24.
k Ch. 3. 12. & 14. 1. Exod. 28. 36, 38. Heb. 4. 14. & 10. 23. Eph. 4. 13.
l Ch. 21. 23, 25. Ps. 36. 9. & 27. 1. Is. 60. 1, 19, 20. Zech. 14. 6, 7. John 8. 12.
m Ch. 3. 21. & 5. 10. & 20. 4. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Rom. 5. 17. Dan. 7. 27.

Verses 1—5. The angelic guide here further leads the apostle to view some other emblematical glories of this celestial city.

1. *A river of water of life, clear as crystal,* flowing from the *throne of God and of the Lamb,* the figure of those eternal consolations, and that vital influence immediately derived from communion with the fountain of eternal bliss.

2. *The tree of life,* the emblem of Jesus the Lord of life and glory, here spread its branches on both sides the river, or several in a row were planted on the river's bank, yielding perpetual fruit, new every month, and the very leaves are for the healing of the nations; intimating the rich provision of unceasing delights that is here made for the faithful, and their perfect preservation in soul and body from all decay or infirmity.

3. No curse can there enter; the eternal felicity and impeccability of the saints are secured, and before the throne of God and of the Lamb they shall pay their unceasing adorations, enjoy the beatific vision of the God of glory, and bear his bright image on them visible as if his name was engraven on their foreheads.

4. No night is there, nor need they the sun or a candle, where the Lord God is their everlasting Light, and they reign with him for ever and ever. O blessed abode! my soul, aspire after it, and eager press for an entrance into this everlasting kingdom of thy God and Saviour.

6. And he said unto me, [n] These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the [o] Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel [p] to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. 7. [q] Behold, I come quickly: [r] blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. 8. And I John [s] saw these things and heard *them.* And when I had heard and seen, [t] I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. 9. Then saith he unto me, See *thou do it* not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. 10. And [u] he saith unto me, [x] Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. 11. [y] He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: [z] and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12. And, behold, [a] I come quickly; and [b] my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13. [c] I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14. [d] Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have [e] right to [f] the tree of life, and may enter in through [g] the gates into the city. 15. [h] For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. 16. [i] I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am [k] the root and the offspring of David, *and* [l] the bright and morning star. 17. And the [m] Spirit and [a] the bride say, Come. And let [o] him that heareth say, Come. [p] And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. 18. For [q] I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, [r] If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the [s] plagues that are written in this book: 19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, [t] God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* [u] the things which are written in this book.

n Ch. 1. 1, 3. & 19. 9. & 21. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 15.
o Ver. 16. Heb. 1. 1. Joel 2. 28. ch. 1. 1. 2 Tim. 3. 16.
p Ps. 25. 14. Amos 3. 7.
q Ver. 6, 12, 16, 20. Mat. 25. 31. Heb. 10. 37. 2 Thes. 1. 8. Heb. 9. 28. ch. 3. 11. 20. & 16. 15. & 1. 7.
r Ch. 1. 3. & 3. 11.
s John 19. 35. & 21. 24. 1 John 1. 1—3. 3 John 12.
t Ch. 19. 9, 10. Acts 10. 25, 26. & 14. 13—15. with Mat. 4. 10. Deut. 6. 13. & 10. 20 John 5. 21.
u *Christ.* Ver. 12. 13, 16, 20.
x Mat. 10. 27. Ezek. 2. 7. ch. 1. 13. with ch. 10. 4. Dan. 8. 26. & 12. 4, 9.
y Ezek. 3. 27. Dan. 12. 10. 2 Tim. 3. 13. Mat. 15. 14. Hos. 4. 17. Ps. 81. 12.
z Rom. 8. 1. ch. 7. 14. 15. ver. 3. Job 17. 9. Prov. 4. 18. Mat. 24. 13. Eph. 5. 27.
a See ver. 7.
b Is. 40. 10. & 62. 11. Mat. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. & 14. 12. ch. 20. 12.
c Is. 41. 4. & 44. 6. & 48. 12. ch. 1. 8, 11. & 21. 6.
d Mat. 7. 21. & 5. 3—9. 1 John 3. 23. ch. 2. 7. & 1. 3. ver. 7. Dan. 12. 13. Is. 3. 10. Rom. 2. 7, 10.
e Or *privilege, or power.* John 1. 12.
f Ch. 2. 7. ver. 2. Song 2. 3. John 11. 25. & 14. 19. Gal. 2. 20.
g Ch. 21. 12, 13, 21, 25. Joan 10. 7, 9. & 14. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 11. Eph. 2. 18.
h Ch. 21. 8, 27. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 19—21. Eph. 5. 5. Col. 3. 6. Phil. 3. 2. & 3. 18, 19. ch. 9. 20, 21. Mat. 7. 6. & 22. 13.
i Ch. 1. 1, 11. Deut. 18. 15. Mat. 28. 20. 1 Pet. 3. 22.
k Ch. 5. 5. Is. 11. 1, 10. Rom. 15. 12. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Is. 9. 6, 7. Mat. 22. 42, 45. John 1. 14.
l Mal. 4. 2. Zech. 6. 12, 13.
m Ch. 1. 4. & 19. 10.
n Ch. 19. 7. & 21. 2, 9, 10.
o Ch. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29. & 13. 9. Mat. 11. 15. & 13. 9, 43.
p Is. 55. 1—7. ch. 21. 6. John 7. 37—39. Ps. 81. 10. & 34. 8. Mat. 11. 28. John 6. 37. & 3. 16.
q Ver. 16. 17, 20. ch. 1. 5. & 3. 7, 14.
r Deut. 4. 2, 9. & 5. 32. & 12. 32. Prov. 30. 6. Mat. 15. 9.
s Ch. 2. 23, 23. & 13. 10. & 14 9—11. & xvi. xviii. & 19. 20, 21. & 20. 10, 15.
t Exod. 32. 33. Ps. 69. 28. ch. 13. 8. & 17. 8. & 21. 27. ver. 15.
u Ch. 1. 3. & 2. 7, 11, 17, 26—28. & 3. 4, 5, 12, 21. & 7. 9—17. & 14. 13.

Verses 6—19. We have here,

1. A solemn ratification given by the angel of the certainty of these events. *These sayings are faithful and true,* and he was sent expressly from the Lord Jesus to reveal to John the things that would begin shortly to be accomplished, and continue fulfilling until the end of time.

2. The Lord Jesus himself speaks. *Behold, I come quickly;* prepare to meet me; the whole period of time is comparatively short and momentary: *blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book,* faithfully adheres to the gospel word, and confidently expects the fulfilment of the promises.

3. Overcome with what he heard and saw, and scarce himself, through rapture, he fell before the angel, and is ready to adore him, but again is reproved and prevented; God is the only worthy object of adoration; angels are but our fellow-servants.

4. The Lord again addresses him, and bids him not seal up the prophecies of this book, but deliver them to the church, the time for their fulfilment now approaching, and when they are accomplished, men's everlasting state will be fixed unchangeably. He that in the great day is found filthy and unjust, must remain so for ever under the wrath of God; and he that is found righteous in the Lord, and made holy by his Spirit, shall be eternally blessed.

5. He repeats his assurance for the comfort of his people. *Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be,* whether good or bad. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last,* unchangeable in love to my people, eternally the same in faithfulness, grace, and power, to protect and preserve them for ever. And it will shortly appear how *blessed are they that do his commandments,* and approve their fidelity to God, *that they may have right,* through the promise, *to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city,* partaking of all the inconceivable blessedness prepared for the faithful: whilst those who shall be found disobedient, unholy, and profane, shall be eternally excluded from these bright mansions. *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth or maketh a lie;* whoever lives and dies under the guilt of any of these things perishes irrecoverably.

6. The Lord Jesus confirms to him what the angel had told him. *I Jesus,* your Lord and Master, *have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in,* or *concerning the churches,* and their future state and condition. *I am the root and offspring of David;* as God, his root; as man, his offspring; *and the bright and morning star,* leading my people in paths of everlasting peace.

7. *The Spirit and the bride say, Come,* welcoming the Saviour and waiting the fulfilment of his promise. *And let him that heareth,* even every faithful soul, take up the word and *say, Come. And let him that is athirst* for spiritual blessings, *come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely:* and out of these wells of salvation, the Scriptures, draw the living streams of grace, and consolation. *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things,* now the canon of revelation is complete, by new pretended visions, or wilful perversion of their meaning, *God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.* An awful sanction, which guards the sacred records, and binds the heaviest vengeance upon those who dare, by base adulterations, to add thereto, or to diminish therefrom.

20. [x] He which testifieth these things saith, [y] Surely I come quickly; [z] Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. 21. [a] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

[x] Ch. 1. 1. ver. 10—19.
[y] Ver. 7, 12. 2 Pet. 3. 8. ch. 1. 7.
[z] Song 8. 14. & 2. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 8. Heb. 9. 28.
[a] Ch. 1. 4, 11. Rom. 16. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23. 2 Cor. 13. 14. Gal. 6. 18. Eph. 6. 23, 24. Phil. 1. 2. & 4. 23. Col. 1. 2. 1 Thes. 1. 1, &c.

Verses 20, 21. The Lord Jesus closes his Revelation,

1. With a solemn confirmation of the whole. *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly,* certainly and speedily, for the comfort and salvation of my people.

2. The apostle, in the name of all the faithful, professes his confidence in the promise, *Amen!* Lord, I believe, fulfil it in due season. *Even so* be it, *come, Lord Jesus,* and bring our complete and final salvation.

3. He concludes with his benediction. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!* May you experience the riches of his sovereign favour and love, be strengthened by his Spirit mightily in the inner man, faithfully to stand in every evil day, comfortably and confidently persevering in the truth: may you, when all your conflicts end, enter into that eternal state of rest and blessedness which is here revealed. *Amen!* Such are my prayers for thee, Reader; may we now, without ceasing, be found uniting our supplications before a throne of grace; and together may we meet around a throne of glory, and spend a happy eternity in the praises of our adored Jesus. *Amen!*

THE END OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

TABLES, &c.

TABLES OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE.

MEASURE OF APPLICATION.

A Hair's-breadth, *48th part of an inch.*
A Finger, *somewhat less than an inch.*
A Hand's-breadth, 3 *inches.*
A Span, 9 *inches.*
A Foot, 12 *inches.*
A Cubit, *a foot and a half.*
A Holy Cubit, *a yard.*
The King's Cubit, *a foot and nine inches.*
A Reed, 6 *cubits and a hand's-breadth.*
A Pace, 5 *feet.*
A Furlong, 125 *paces.*
A Mile, 1000 *paces.*
A Sabbath-day's Journey, 600 *paces.*

MEASURES OF CAPACITY OF THINGS THAT ARE DRY.

A Kab, *a quart.*
An Omer, 3 *pints and a half.*
A Measure, or Seah, *a gallon and a half.*
An Ephah, *half bushel and pottle.*
Half Homer, or Sethec, 12 *bushels and a quart.*
A Homer, or Cor, 24 *bushels and a pottle.*

MEASURES OF LIQUIDS.

A Log, *half a pint.*
A Hin, 3 *quarts.*
A Bath, 9 *gallons and* 3 *quarts.*
A Pot, or Sextary, *a pint and a half.*
A Measure, or Choenix, *a quart.*
A Firkin, 4 *gallons and a half.*

WEIGHTS OF APPENSION, OR COUNTERPOISE.

A Shekel in Weight, *a quarter of an ounce.*
A Shekel of the Sanctuary, *half an ounce.*
A Pound, 12 *ounces.*
A Talent, 62 *pounds.*
A Mule's Burden, 200 *weight.*

TABLE OF MONEY

A MITE, *half of a farthing.*
A Quadrant, or Farthing, *two mites.*
An Assary, or Farthing, *halfpenny farthing.*
A Gerah, or Piece of Money, *penny halfpenny*
A Drachm, or Penny, *sevenpence halfpenny.*
A Didrachm, or Shekel, *one shilling and threepence.*
A Stater, or Shekel of the Sanctuary, *two shillings and sixpence.*
A Mina, or Pound, £3: 2: 6*d.*
A Talent of Silver, £187: 10*s.*

GOLD COINS.

A Shekel of Gold, Piece, a Darcon, Darius, or Drachm of Gold, *fifteen shillings.*
A Pound of Gold, £75.
A Talent of Gold, £2250.

A TABLE OF TIME.

1 ABIB, or Nisan, 1.	*March, April.*	7 Ethanim, or Tizri, 7.	*September, October.*
2 Zif, or Ijar, 2.	*April, May.*	8 Bul, or Marchesvan, 8.	*October, November.*
3 Sivan, 3.	*May, June.*	9 Chisleu, 9.	*November, December.*
4 Thamu, 4.	*June, July.*	10 Tebeth, 10.	*December, January.*
5 Ab, 5.	*July, August.*	11 Shebat, 11.	*January, February.*
6 Elul, 6.	*August, September.*	12 Adar, or Vedar, 12.	*February, March.*

Days of the Week.

1 DAY, of the Week,	*Sunday.*
2 Day,	*Monday.*
3 Day,	*Tuesday.*
4 Day,	*Wednesday.*
5 Day,	*Thursday.*
6 Day,	*Friday.*
7 Day, or Sabbath,	*Saturday.*

Hours of the Day.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Morning.
From 6 to 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.
Afternoon.
From 12 to 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
Watches.
The first Watch, from evening to nine at night.
The second, or middle Watch, from nine to midnight.
The third Watch, or cock-crowing, from midnight till three in the morning.
The fourth, or morning Watch, from three till morning.

NUMBERS OF BOOKS, CHAPTERS, VERSES, &c. IN THE HOLY BIBLE.

The Old and New Testaments contain,

BOOKS	39	In the New 27	Total 66
CHAPTERS	929	———— 260	——— 1,189
VERSES	23,214	———— 7,959	——— 31,173
WORDS	592,439	———— 181,253	——— 773,692
LETTERS	2,728,100	———— 838,380	——— 3,566,480

The APOCRYPHA contains,

Books	14
Chapters	172
Verses	6,081
Words	152,185

The Middle Chapter, and the least in the Bible, is Psalm CXVII.
The Middle Verse is the 8 of the CXVIII. Psalm.
The Middle Time is the 2 of Chronicles, IV. chap. 16 verse.
The word *and* occurs in the Old Testament 35,543 times.
The same word in the New Testament occurs 10,684 times.
The word JEHOVAH occurs in the Bible 6,855 times.

In the OLD TESTAMENT.

The Middle Book of the Old Testament is Proverbs.
The Middle Chapter is Job XXIX.
The Middle of the Verses is 2 Chron. XX. chap. between 17 and 18 verses.
The Least Verse is 1 Chronicles, I. chap. and verse 25.
The 21 verse of the VII. chap. of Ezra, has all the Letters of the Alphabet.
The XIX. chap. of 2 Kings, and XXXVII. of Isaiah are alike.

In the NEW TESTAMENT.

The Middle Book of the New Testament is 2 Thessalonians.
The Middle of the Chapters is between the XIII. and XIV. of Romans.
The Middle Verse is in XVII. chap. Acts, 17 verse.
The Least Verse is in XI. chap. John, verse 35.

FINIS.